

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
- OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON JANUARY 23, 2018

The members of the Springfield Housing Authority met in Open Session at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts at 4:30 PM on January 23, 2018.

A copy of the Notice of Meeting, pursuant to Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Certificate as to Service of the Notice, was ordered spread upon the minutes of the meeting and filed for records.

NOTICE OF MEETING

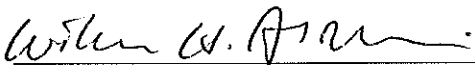
Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
/s/William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director  
January 19, 2018

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, William H. Abrashkin, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on January 19, 2018 I filed in the manner provided by Section 23B, Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Clerk of the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, a Notice of Meeting of which the foregoing is a true and correct copy.

Attest:



William H. Abrashkin/Executive Director/  
Secretary to the Board

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte  
Jessica Quinonez  
Angela Robles  
Willie Thomas  
Raymond Warren

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

William Abrashkin  
Michelle Booth (arrived at 4:50 pm)  
Roland Butzke, Siemens  
Nicole Contois  
Howard Coro  
Fidan Gousseynoff  
John Healy

Keith McBrien, GDS Associates  
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of December 12, 2017. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Minutes of December 12, 2017.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of December 19, 2017. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Minutes of December 19, 2017.

On the Old Business Executive Director Abrashkin provided an update on the status of the request to transfer the Eastern Avenue properties. He reported about a recent phone call with DHCD and that it is expected that a conditional letter of approval on the transfer of the property will be received soon. The SHA will have to provide a zoning opinion, a commitment letter on financing the project, and a draft deed stipulating that the property will be used for educational purpose as approved by the Board.

On the New Business Chairman Thomas invited representative from Siemens and GDS Associates to make a presentation about energy performance contract. John Healy explained that his department, GDS and Siemens have been working together to audit the energy consumption data and prepare a contract. Keith McBrien from GDS Associates Roland Butzke introduced himself and provided brief information about their background and work with the SHA. Mr. McBrien explained that Energy Performance Contract is supported by HUD and he praised the assistance they have been receiving from HUD regional office and HUD EPC specialists who have been involved into entire process and helped to move things faster. Mr. McBrien explained that EPC is a turnkey energy savings infrastructure improvement project that will allow the SHA to get new equipment paid by the savings from energy efficient measures, rebates, and financing options. He indicated that Siemens and GDS with the assistance of Howard Coro have been working at all SHA sites to identify energy consumption and utility costs in all developments. Mr. McBrien emphasized that the savings are guaranteed by Siemens.

Mr. McBrien continued the presentation by providing information about the ESCO bidding process. He told that the response to the SHA RFP issued in March 2017 was pretty good with 7 companies expressing their interest and conducting pre-bidding site visits. 5 firms submitted their bids, interview process narrowed initial pool to three based on different criteria (project capacity, cost factors and overall approach) and SHA selected Siemens as the preferred choice. Keith McBrien provided information about key dates and steps in the process, including initial facility walkthroughs, data collection and analysis, investment grade audits and their review, discussing and reviewing energy management services agreement (which is planned to be presented to the Board in February) and the financing plan (expected to be presented in March). The project is planned to start in July. Mr. McBrien explained what various abbreviations mean, including EPC (energy performance contract), IGA (investment grade audit), ESCO (energy service company) etc. and what are prescriptive and custom energy conservation measures are.

Michelle Booth entered the Conference Room at 4:50 pm.

Mr. Butzke explained that at least 10% of units in each development have been audited and data for one year of usage for 376 electric meters and 175 gas meters has been collected and analyzed to come with a comprehensive list of opportunities. Mr. Butzke stated that with the \$3,553,634 utility costs the savings are expected to be at \$710.727 (20%). Answering Judge Abrashkin's question Mr. Butzke explained that the project will be funded as an operating lease, not as a debt. The best financing options will be analyzed and recommended for the Board's approval. He indicated that Siemens has recently completed similar analysis for Malden (MA) and Manchester (CT) housing authorities. The savings will be generated at the expense of new efficient equipment. Nicole Contois added that installing new equipment through this project will allow to allocate capital funds to so many other capital needs. Ms. Booth indicated that most boilers are very old and installing new ones is a really necessary measure. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Mr. Butzke stated that the new tax law will not affect the rebate program.

Mr. Butzke continued the presentation by providing information about potential energy conservation measures including quicker payback measures (sensor installation, temperature controls upgrade, lighting upgrade, insulation, appliances upgrade, hot water heater replacement) and longer payback measures (complete boiler replacement, electric-to-gas conversion, windows replacement, computerized control for energy management systems). Answering Commissioner Warren's question he explained how water treatment system can help saving money. Executive Director Abrashkin expressed his concern about very high water bills and inquired what can be done to limit wasting water resources by the residents and reducing water usage bills. Mr. Butzke responded that the easiest solution will be installing efficient showerheads, toilets, aerated faucets or eliminating washer hookups in the units and providing a central laundry for the residents where efficient washers and dryers will be installed. Mr. McBrien added that installing sub-meters will be a useful tool to identify excessive usage however it is a very expensive measure. Mr. Butzke commented that leaking pipes due to old plumbing can also be a factor that costs SHA so much money. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Mr. Butzke stated that the City of Springfield does not offer any rebates or other cost savings program that would help SHA to conserve water resources. Mr. McBrien indicated that the SHA team had identified reducing water bills as a task of high priority and GDS and Siemens are looking into what can be done to address this issue. Answering Commissioner Robles's question Mr. Butzke explained how conservative annual savings are estimated and stated that the indicated 20% is a reasonable estimate number however the actual savings can be more than 20%.

Chairman Thomas thanked Mr. McBrien and Mr. Butzke for the presentation.

Keith McBrien, Roland Butzke and Howard Coro left the Conference Room at 5:29 pm.

Judge Abrashkin started his Executive Director's report by providing an update on the earmark for TRS. He stated that the previously vetoed money for the earmark contract will be soon released by the governor. DHCD has recently sent the Contract and it is expected that the payment for the 1<sup>st</sup> 7 months will be received as a lump sum and monthly payments will be sent after that. Next year the SHA will continue its work with the legislative delegation to get more funding. Judge Abrashkin praised the support by the state legislators especially by Senator Welch.

Michelle Booth provided update on the disaster relief issue. She reported that the agency has received 52 requests to port to Springfield from Puerto Rico. 19 voucher holders have been housed, some are looking for apartments or waiting for inspection. Ms. Booth stated that most families need 3 or 4 bedroom apartments and it is really tough to find something they could afford. She praised the work of Jose Camacho, the portability specialist at the RAO who has been working hard to assist all these families. On the public housing side the agency received 235 applications for state and federal public housing. All the applicants were found to be preliminary eligible but it is very hard for the Applications Department staff to obtain landlord references and conduct credit checks for many of disaster victims. Ms. Booth indicated that Holyoke Housing Authority has also been accepting emergency applications from the hurricanes victims but there is no coordinated effort from DHCD and not enough support from other local housing authorities to assist these people. Commissioner Warren stressed the importance of getting some guidance from DHCD and making sure not only the Springfield Housing and Holyoke Housing but other local agencies work together. Executive Director Abrashkin expressed his concern about the scale of the problems local schools, housing authorities and other agencies have to deal with to assist the victims of natural disasters.

The Board reviewed the Letter from HUD on 12/13/2017 regarding the Voluntary Compliance Agreement and Judge Abrashkin's letter to DHCD on 1/9/18 regarding SHA's federalization reimbursement request.

The Board accepted the Accounts Payable and Finance Report for the month of November 2017. JoAnn White noted that the funding has been better than expected and all the projects are still operating in black though some utility cost spike is expected due to cold weather. In response to Chairman Thomas's question regarding a big amount posted in the Accounts Payable report Nicole Contois explained that John Healy's corporate credit card is used for many online purchases including expensive items for the IT Department.

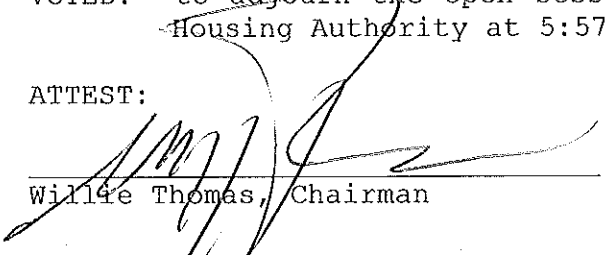
Michelle Booth and Nicole Contois left the Conference Room at 5:53 pm.

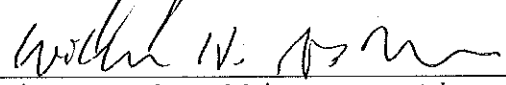
The Board was updated on the status of publishing ad for the executive director search.

There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority Board, upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:57 PM.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Willie Thomas, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director