

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING  
- OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON OCTOBER 16, 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 October 16, 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 the annual Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
/s/Denise Jordan, Executive Director  
October 11, 2018

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, Denise Jordan, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on October 11, 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:



Denise Jordan / 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

Nicole Contois  
Fidan Gousseynoff  
John Healy  
Howard Coro

Denise Jordan  
Mary Ellen Lowney  
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of September 18, 2018. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was by a majority vote (Commissioner Warren abstained)

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of September 18, 2018.

Election of Officers of the Springfield Housing Authority took place. Chairman Thomas thanked the Commissioners and SHA staff for their help and support in the last two years. He suggested adopting a new slate of officers. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: to appoint Thomas Labonte as Chairman; appoint Angela Robles as Vice Chair; to appoint Raymond Warren as Treasurer; to re-appoint Jessica Quinonez as Assistant Secretary, and appoint Willie Thomas as Commissioner.

Newly elected Chairman Thomas Labonte took over presiding over the meeting.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve closing of waiting lists effective November 30, 2018. Nicole Contois explained that the Application Manager Jacque Banks has recently conducted purging of the waiting list. She mailed out a letter to every single applicant to check if they are still interested in remaining on the waiting list. 75% of applicants responded positively. Due to the very high number of active applicants the anticipated wait time has increased up to 5-6 years and it is recommend to close it. Ms. Contois added that the only waiting list to remain open will be the federal list for 4 and 5 bedroom. In response to Commissioner Thomas's question Nicole Contois explained that there is no emergency federal waiting list but the state emergency list will remain open. In response to Commissioner Robles and Commissioner Thomas's question Ms. Contois indicated that based on the current occupancy numbers the waiting list can be closed for several years and reopening it will require the Board's vote.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9725 to approve closure of waitlists, effective November 30, 2018, for family public housing, state 1,2,3 and 4 bedrooms and federal family 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms; for elderly public housing, state land 2 bedrooms; federal elderly 1 and 2 bedroom and Riverview 1 and 2 bedrooms.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept change order #1 for ADA renovation project at 258 Shady Brook Lane. Howard Coro passed out several pictures of the project and provided information on the change order which included replacing all flooring inside the house and installing rubber membrane and skirt board around entire perimeter of the house outside to address some issues that came out during the project. Mr. Coro noted that the changes were recommended by a DHCD representative who visited the site every week.

Chairman Labonte expressed his concern over spending so much of taxpayers money on this project which came out so expensive even before this change order. Howard Coro stated that when the project was first brought to the Board the contractors could not foresee many problems that were revealed later, when the floors and the siding were removed exposing so much damage to

the concrete floor and the walls. He added that asbestos had to be removed too. Mr. Coro agreed that the project cost a lot but noted that the main reason was that the SHA had to pay prevailing wages and the finished product is a water-tight house with a new plumbing, lighting, electrical system, roof, windows, and doors. John Healy also expressed his frustration but indicated that the positive thing is that a family with a severely handicapped child will be now living in this house which corresponds to all modern ADA standards. Answering Commissioner Thomas's question Mr. Horo indicated that the project is completed except for the two storm doors that were back ordered. In response to Commissioner Quinonez's comment regarding landscaping Howard Coro stated that he has been discussing with the foreman that some low-maintenance bushes need to be planted. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve Change Order# 1 to FISH# 28116, Development #689-1 in the amount \$13,222.32 [for ADA renovation at 258 Shady Brook Lane], this will increase the amount of the contract and the new contract amount will be \$316,597.23, and maintain the substantial completion date at September 21, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept the Certificate of substantial completion for the Shady Brook Lane project. Commissioner Warren recommended making sure that complete addresses (including street numbers) are included to the punch list. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the certificate of substantial completion and Change Order for \$13,222.32 from Inglewood Development, Corp. and authorize certification for payment in the amount of \$49,280.41 for 258 Shady Brook Lane, Development# 689-1, hereby accepting the project, effective on September 21, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve Change Order #1 to the contract for site improvements at Sullivan and Central Street Apartments. Howard Coro indicated that the Change order includes 11 items. He explained that when the digging at Sullivan started it was discovered that there was clay under the concrete and the contractors had to put processed stone there. At Central Street where a whole new parking lot was put an old foundation (filled with junk like a boiler, bikes, tires) was discovered so the contractors had to remove everything and put gravel. Mr. Coro indicated that they had to dig up to 18 feet, remove asbestos piping and also put 3 drainage systems to eliminate flooding. In response to Commissioner Thomas's question Mr. Healy confirmed that Central Street was one of the developments damaged by tornado so a new roof was installed after 2011.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve Change Order #1 to the contract [from Mass-West Construction Inc.] for site improvements at Sullivan and Central Apartments FED #35-C2018-6-1 in the amount of \$61,001.00, this will increase the amount of the contract and the new contract amount will be \$458,886.00, and maintain the substantial completion date at October 3, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept the certificate of substantial completion from Mass-West Construction Inc. Mr. Coro confirmed that the punch list is done. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Certificate of Substantial Completion from Mass-West Construction Inc. and authorize certification for payment in the amount of \$74,243.25 for Contract Fed #35-c2018-6-1 [in the total amount of \$458,886.00], hereby accepting the project, effective on October 3, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept the amendment to formula funding contract from DHCD. John Healy explained how DHCD amend their formula funding every year and the SHA accepts money for amendment to the capital plan, as well as money from rebates spent on some products. He added that sometimes DHCD awards extra money from different funds, for example, for asbestos removal. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Mr. Healy confirmed that the balance of awards is almost \$4 million starting from 2008-2009 and the funds are awarded by projects which are included to the plan after discussing with the foreman what the biggest needs are. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner are Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept Amendment #10 to the Capital Improvement Work Plan 5001 with an award of \$511,862.88 which funds the SHA's formula funding for the following items: 2021 formula funding, compliance reserve award for asbestos removal at Carpe Diem, design rebate for Harry Hogan driveway/sidewalk replacement, and rebates for e-bidding for Egan Street furnace replacement. The amendment also extends the formula funding contract date through fiscal year 2021. The funds will come from DHCD.

The Board entered into a discussion regarding approving extension to contract with the Sheriff's Department for painting vacant units. Nicole Contois explained that the HCSD is increasing their rate from \$64,000 to \$74,000 and having this contract for over a year saved the agency around \$300,000 comparing to what was paid in the past to a contractor or when there was an in-house painter. Ms. Contois stated that according to the foremen's feedback the quality of service was pretty good though there have been some problems when the painting crew was falling behind due to the crew leader's absence. She indicated the need to work out a backup plan in case the leader has to take time off. Ms. Contois indicated that the SHA will be reviewing other options like using ROCA crew, discussing back up painting services during next union negotiations, or paying extra to the HCSD for supplemental supervision services.

In response to Commissioner Thomas's question she confirmed that the contract only includes labor, not supplies and the crew usually paints 30 units per month though due to increase of transfers it is expected that the number will soon increase up to 40 units a month. Since the number of units to be painted every day is so high, the crew has not been used for painting common areas. She reminded that the SHA strives to turn units online in 21 days.

All Board members expressed their concern that only one person at the Sheriff's Department is assigned to supervise the crew working at SHA sites and that his long absence negatively affects the maintenance staff's schedule and increases unit turnaround time. Commissioners questioned whether it is fair for the SHA to pay extra money to cover the period when the crew leader is absent. Ms. Contois confirmed that the issue was discussed with the Sheriff's Department last week and they stated that only if the crew leader is on a prolonged medical leave, they will assign a new supervisor but according to the Contract, the SHA only pays for salary of one crew leader.

Answering Chairman Labonte's question Nicole Contois explained that Naomi DeChristopher from the Capital Improvements Department deals with scheduling painting services and the foremen make sure the quality is up to the standards. Commissioner Quinonez noted that she has heard positive comments about the quality and efficiency of the painting crew but she emphasized the need to work out a plan so that the SHA is not behind.

Denise Jordan indicated that according to the feedback she has received from the maintenance crew there are no complaints about the quality but there are concerns about the crew accountability and the turnaround time. She stated that it is very important that the SHA staff and she meet with the Sheriff's Department to discuss all the issues and concerns one more time. She stressed the importance of involving the foremen to the discussion.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to postpone approving contract extension with Hampden County Sheriff's Department for painting services.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a contract for towing services to CJ Towing. John Healy indicated that only one company - the current vendor - responded to RFP. He reached out to other contractors and the reason for them not submitting their bids was the lack of proper equipment or not having the capacity to meet other RFP requirements. He noted that there is an automatic towing system (unless there is a construction project), signage at all developments and all tenants have stickers for specific properties. The SHA does not pay to CJ Towing and the rates they charge for unauthorized parking are \$108 for towing and \$35 for daily storage fee. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a 3 year contract with two additional one year options from November 1, 2018 until October 31, 2021 to CJ's Towing Unlimited, Inc.

The Board accepted the Annual Report.

Denise Jordan started her Executive Director's report by providing information about the meetings she has had with the staff including meet and greets with departments and visits to the districts. Ms. Jordan explained that the purpose of the meetings was to hear about the employees concerns, issues and suggestions and also discussing whether any past practices that are no longer in place should be revisited. Ms. Jordan shared some feedback she has received from the staff members, including their concerns about old equipment, transfer and vacancy, not enforcing parking policy to the full

extent which is a big issue during snowstorms, not being involved in adopting some important decisions, not feeling appreciated as much as it used to be. The Executive Director expressed her opinion that the SHA staff is committed to work and most of the employees she has met so far are enthusiastic about their jobs.

Ms. Jordan also reported about attending the conference at Martha's Vineyard, the RAB meeting and a meeting at Saab Court organized by State Representative Gonzalez.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Accounts Payable and Finance Report for the month of August. In response to Commissioner Warren's question regarding a big payment in the amount of over \$400,000 Mr. Healy explained that it was for a site job at Riverview, including parking lot renovation, drainage system, curbing, paving, and sidewalk repairs. Mr. Warren inquired whether the complaint he had received regarding the site work at Riverview has been addressed and Mr. Healy responded that he is working on getting the contractor back to fix it and still has money in retainage. Ms. White also provided brief information on the cost of legal services including for the investigation and a Section 8 case.

JoAnn White provided a quick overview of the finance report. She noted that most projects are still doing well except for AMP 4 which requires a closer look, including why the resident rent portion is lower than expected (37% instead of 41%). Nicole Contois noted that no high balances were identified when she was reviewing the delinquency report with the property manager so more detailed review of the accounts will be conducted. Ms. White also explained that the auditors recommended making some changes to the way the SHA makes its large pension payment which happens in June because allocating so much money in the beginning of fiscal year is not good for the SHA books.

The Board entered into a discussion regarding reviewing investigation reports and it was decided to consult with the General Consul to see what issues can be discussed at the open meeting.

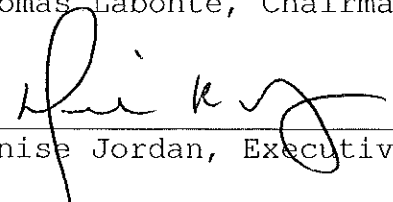
Commissioner Warren thanked Willie Thomas for his guidance and work in the last two years as the Chairman of the Board.

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

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 6:09 PM.

ATTEST:

  
Thomas Labonte, Chairman

  
Denise Jordan, Executive Director