

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON MARCH 27, 2019

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 March 27, 2019.

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

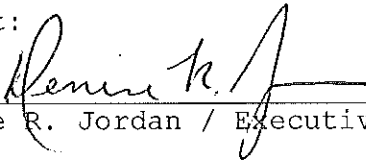
Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:30 PM on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
/s/Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director
March 25, 2019

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, Denise R. Jordan, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on March 25, 2019 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 R. Jordan / Executive Director/Secretary to the Board

Chairman Labonte 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
Kathy Hardy
John Healy
Denise Jordan
Marieli Roman
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of March 19, 2019. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was by a unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of February 19, 2019.

Chairman Labonte indicated that item E-3 will be reviewed first.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the hiring of Fidan Gousseynoff as Director of HR. Kathy Hardy provided information about the hiring process - the position was posted on 2/6/2019, a panel consisting of the HR Director, the Executive Director, the Deputy ED and the Board Chairman reviewed resumes, and 6 candidates were interviewed. The panel unanimously agreed on the selection of Fidan Gousseynoff to recommend to the Board of Commissioners for the position of Director of Human Resources. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the hiring of Fidan Gousseynoff as Director Of Human Resources with an annual salary of \$75,000 effective April 8, 2019.

Denise Jordan notified the Board that Marieli Roman will be cross-trained until a new Executive Department Manager is hired.

Executive Director Denise Jordan expressed her gratitude to Ms. Hardy for all her hard work and for her diligence in working on the succession planning. Ms. Jordan told that Kathy Hardy has been spending a lot of time on training the staff, preparing notes and instructions so that the transition goes as smooth as possible. She stated that Ms. Hardy will be missed by everybody at the SHA.

Kathy Hardy left the Conference Room at 4:35 pm.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept Amendment 10 to the State Capital Improvement Plan. John Healy reminded that back in October 2018 the Board voted to accept Amendment 10 but it has been decided to amend the Amendment by adding one more item - the FY22 Formula Funding Award. In response to Commissioner Thomas's question Mr. Healy confirmed that the money listed in the Amendment are not additional money - every year DHCD needs an approval for the items that were included to the Capital Plan. In response to Commissioner Warren's comment Mr. Healy confirmed that there can be additional items as well, for example - the Compliance Reserve Award for asbestos removal or rebates for extra money spent on e-bidding. Upon a motion made By Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept **Resolution** #9733 to accept Amendment #10 to the Capital Improvement Work Plan 5001 with an award of \$919,086.88 which funds the SHA's Formula Funding for the following items: 2021,2022 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 Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the FY20 operating budget. Finance Director JoAnn White referred to the provided documents and explained that one spreadsheet is the actual budget and another one shows the difference in the last year's and this year's budget. In response to Chairman Labonte's question Ms. White explained that the 7% state budget only includes state subsidy but the actual revenue will be higher once rental income is added to it. She added that 400 is the only program receiving direct subsidy and three projects receive state administered (project-based) Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher subsidy. She also explained that 63% of all budget is for utilities (for which the SHA does not have any control) and wages, so it is really hard to cut the expenses.

Commissioner Warren questioned whether the proposed budget includes increased wages and benefits. Ms. White explained that it does include some slight salary adjustments and reminded that Union negotiations are starting soon. Ms. White also confirmed that the scheduled increase in pension costs will be reduced from 14% in FY18 and FY19 to 9% for FYE 2020 and 2021.

Ms. White noted that the projected deficit is a worst case scenario and since the subsidy has been pretty high in last couple of years, there are some extra funds that have to be reserved rather than spent to offset the expected decrease in funding. She stated that if the President's proposed budget for housing programs goes through, there will be big cuts in funding so conservative approach to spending is important. Commissioner Warren and Labonte questioned whether having too many reserves would put the agency under jeopardy of recapturing some funds by HUD. Ms. White explained that most if the time only Section 8 reserves can be recaptured. Nicole Contois noted that a few years ago HUD did recapture \$1.7 millions to penalize for underspending. In response to Commissioner Warren's request JoAnn White promised to provide information on the RAO cash reserves. She reminded that Section 8 program includes HCVP, MRVP, Miracle House and a new program - Mainstream Vouchers - a grant that was awarded to the SHA to provide vouchers to persons with disabilities.

Ms. White completed her review of the budget by stating that there are some plans in place to evaluate the financial situation including bringing a consultant. She expressed her hope that with the good management, the leadership skills of the new ED, the savings from implementing the software project and other measures the situation with the budget will improve. She expressed her gratitude to Ms. Jordan and Ms. Contois for their contribution to the budget preparation and Chairman Labonte thanked Ms. White and all other staff members for their hard work on the budget. Commissioner Warren also gave Ms. White credit for preparing the narrative which was very helpful.

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

VOTED: to accept **Resolution** #9734 to approve FYE 2020 operating budget.

Denise Jordan started her Executive Director's report by providing information about the plans on organizing coaching sessions for the Accounting to evaluate the best tools for better fiscal oversight coming

out of the finance Department. Ms. Jordan reported that she has been discussing with John Healy, Ms. Contois and Ms. White how to better utilize the warehouse and control the expenditures.

The report was continued by providing information on a meeting with Attorney Sullivan on the subject of the pay equity law. Ms. Jordan told that the meeting that lasted all day was very helpful for analyzing many positions, the workforce needs as well as to prepare for the upcoming union negotiations.

Ms. Jordan told about a program organized at Dorman School which was attended by a representative of the Springfield Police Department and two City Councilors and there were discussions about partnership between the school and TRS Program. Chairman Labonte inquired whether the ED has been able to evaluate funding opportunities for TRS, including organizing a fundraiser. Ms. Jordan explained that during her recent meetings with the Representatives Puppolo and Welch they both expressed their commitment to supporting the program. She also noted that she is planning to meet with Mary Walachy to discuss prospects of getting some support from Davis Foundation.

The report was continued by providing information about Ms. Jordan's visit to Riverview to review issues with rodent infestation. She told that she works with John Healy and the foreman Steve Monteiro to identify ways of managing the situation including exploring the possibility of taking out the trash outside, extra baiting and other measures. Chairman Labonte emphasized the need to educate the residents to properly discard trash.

Ms. Jordan completed her report by informing about her recent visit to the Hobby Club which coincided with Mass Senior Action Day.

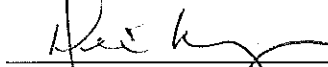
Chairman Labonte stated that the Board has to prepare to the ED evaluation. He told that Commissioners Robles and Thomas have agreed to serve on a committee to prepare an evaluation form and a special Board meeting needs to be called to set up objectives for 6 months, to discuss about the criteria, and to determine what questions are to be included. It was decided to hold a Special meeting on 4/2/2019 at 1:30 pm.

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

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of a Special Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:20 PM.

ATTEST:


Thomas Labonte, Chairman


Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director