

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING  
- SPECIAL/OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON APRIL 2, 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 1:30 PM on April 2, 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 1:30 PM on Tuesday, April 2, 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 29, 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 29, 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 1:30 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte  
Jessica Quinonez  
Angela Robles  
Willie Thomas  
Raymond Warren

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

Fidan Gousseynoff  
Denise Jordan

The Board reviewed the Minutes of March 27, 2019. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was by a unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of March 27, 2019.

Chairman Labonte commenced discussion regarding the Executive Director's evaluation. Chairman Labonte addressed Commissioner Willie Thomas and Commissioner Angela Robles to discuss their initiation on formulating an evaluation criterion that measures the job performance of Executive Director Denise Jordan.

Commissioner Thomas informed the board that after having reviewed notes and documents from attending a number of Mass NAHRO sessions and while having worked at the West Springfield Housing Authority, he and Commissioner Robles would like to propose a first draft to include two documents listing suggested itemized objectives and goals that can be used as an evaluation criteria, subject to modifications. Commissioner Thomas requested the board and Executive Director to review these documents and request to reconvene by the end of October 2019.

The Board reviewed the materials. Chairman Labonte addresses the board for any questions, add-ons, eliminations, or amendments.

Commissioner Labonte addressed ED Denise Jordan and stated that the purpose of the discussion is to work collectively in proposing measurable goals and objectives resulting in clear expectations of job performance.

Commissioner Warren suggested an objective to guide the implementation of the new software system and ensure full training and utilization. Some questions to ask: Are we ready yet with the software system? How well are we doing with implementation in the agency and are we ensuring that it gets used by all levels of the organization?

Another suggestion by Commissioner Warren is to continue to include the outreach and communication to all levels of the organization to generate ideas for improvement. Commissioner Warren proposed the possibility of creating the opportunity for the residents to learn trade(s), for the agency to work with vendors and/or training programs, possibly as an apprentice or an internship in the industries we utilize i.e. elevators/painting/design shops. Commissioner Warren addressed another goal objective to propose ways to reduce the burden on maintenance staff, to reduce the demands placed on them by reasonable accommodations as mentioned in prior meetings.

Chairman Labonte revisited Commissioner Warren's suggested objective to create opportunity for apprenticeship and explained that an SHA staff member in this role creates possible union contract issue, adding to that another issue that vendors have their own union stipulations which in turn affect who will bid. Executive Director Denise Jordan elaborated on the difficulty to obtain apprenticeship availability and the time consumption involved, suggesting the possibility of revisiting the authority's past involvement/relationship with Putnam High School.

Commissioner Warren withdrew the proposed objective to consider the creation of an opportunity for possible trade apprenticeship and/or internship as it is too entangled.



Chairman Labonte requested to review each proposed objective starting with question 1 - Vacancies.

Commissioner Thomas requested a review on vacancies, review on handbook policies and establishing the priorities to implement a faster turnover than the current approximate twenty (20) days.

ED Denise Jordan added that the turnover rate of the authority has been a problem thus far and referred to today's demand of reasonable accommodation that makes it harder to manage. ED Denise Jordan discussed performance objective for the Foreman.

Commissioner Warren addressed ED Denise Jordan and the board on the goal to create measures to obtain achievable goal objectives. Commissioner Robles added her perceived expectation to this task is to review policies to work on reducing vacancies. ED Jordan stated that her and staff have started the review of policy and procedures.

Chairman Labonte moved to question two(2)- DHCD Performance Management Review (PMR).

Commissioner Thomas continued and recommended a report of where the agency stands with the PMR.

There were no further questions or suggestions on this matter.

Chairman Labonte moved to question three (3) - Completing certification requirement. Chairman discussed dates for NAHRO certification conference in Maryland: May 7, 2019; May 13, 2019; May 17, 2019.

There were no further questions or suggestions on this matter.

Chairman Labonte moved to question four (4) Elevator plan. Chairman discussed objective to create a plan of action if elevators break down and cannot be fixed.

There were no further questions or suggestions on this matter.

Chairman Labonte moved to question five (5). Commissioner Thomas addressed anonymous complaints and proposed a solution in utilizing an evaluation system to identify strengths and weaknesses, holding staff accountable and possibly creating a merit system. ED Jordan agreed that without evaluations, there is no incentive to become a better employee. Commissioner Jessica Quinones agreed stating a need for a system that addresses issues of promotions and transfers of staff who may not be qualified but might have seniority. Commissioner Warren discussed the difficulties in the rank and file principle. Commissioner Thomas responded that Managers and Foremen have to ensure accountability.

There were no further questions or suggestions on this matter.

Chairman Labonte moved to question six (6)- Feasibility of Avery building. Chairman recommended an update. Commissioner Warren expressed

his concern that the Finance Department has not been involved in the approval of spending. ED Jordan responded to the board indicating this is being fixed. Commissioner Thomas added that it is important that the finance director approves spending.


Chairman Labonte thanked ED Jordan for her first 6 months of service to the authority and thanked her for exceeding the expectations.

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 Special Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 2:25 PM.

ATTEST:

  
Thomas Labonte, Chairman

  
Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director