



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, September 21 2020

C. J. Durkin Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

Pursuant to Massachusetts Governor Baker's Executive Order issued on March 12th, 2020 in response to the declared Covid-19 State of Emergency epidemic and per the guidelines set by DHCD's Public Housing Notice 2020-11, and 2020-16, a Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chairperson, Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Monday, September 21, 2020. The FHA Board met remotely and physically in the C. J. Durkin Community Room in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The public was invited to listen to the meeting via phone and in person.

Present:

FHA Board Members:

Linda Byrne, Chair

Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair (left at 10:56am)

David Rousseau, Treasurer

David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer

Adam Goodwin, Member

FHA Staff:

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director

Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director

Kim Hergert, Finance Director

Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper

Kathy, Kathy, Wilda, Jean, Susan- Tenants

Dan Chen-Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc

Thomas Hughes-More than Conquerors

Absent:

Quorum: Yes (Quorum Requirement: Three FHA Board Members)

1. Motion to Open Meeting

Chairperson, Linda Byrne opened the meeting at 8:30am.

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Kathy-Durkin tenant, made a presentation regarding the Durkin Survey results for the FHA Annual Plan.

3. Motion to Close Public Comments

Move: David Rousseau

Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

4. Motion to Approve Minutes of Meeting held on August 19th, 2020

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

The Board discussed about the mask wearing order issue. David Rousseau, Treasurer commented the FHA Board can issue the wearing mask order since the DHCD mentioned if the Board voted. Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director will verify it to the DHCD or BOH. Also, the Board discussed about the Advisory Committee member composition. Without a formal Motion, the Board voted that tenant Rep are not joining in the advisory committee.

5. Motion to Approve Executive Session Minutes of Meeting held on August 19th, 2020

Move: David Rousseau

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

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6. **Review and Modifications of FHA Personnel Policy** – No Updates
7. **Motion to Approve FHA Payables for August-September FY 2020**
Move: Mary Giannetti **Second:** Adam Goodwin All in favor
8. **Motion to Approve August Financials FY 2020.**
Move: Adam Goodwin **Second:** David Basilio All in favor
9. **Motion to Approve DHCD Amendment #20 Contract for Financial Assistance-**
\$1,1105,017.83
The Executive Director was please announced the DHCD is granting the FHA and additional \$1,080,017.83 for the Green Acres basement Project (FISH 097076) bringing the total budget for this project to over \$3 Million. The \$25,000.00 is for reimbursable asbestos abatement costs at the Taft & Forest Street single-family rehab project.
Move: Mary Giannetti **Second:** David Rousseau All in favor
10. **No Update from FPD Officer**
11. **Census Assistance-No updates**
12. **Motion to Approve Payment of Annual Fee for KIOSK Sharp Disposals:**
The Fitchburg Board of Health is seeing estimated \$1,000.00 on annual basis to dispose of the sharp contained in the Sharp KIOSK disposal Containers. Kim commented that this KIOSK is needed for maintenncance and Tenant Safety issue.
Move: David Basilio **Second:** Adam Goodwin All in favor
13. **COVID-19 Updates, Budget, & Event –**
Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director updated that there was No COVID-19 case. The FHA made purchase of disinfecting equipment (\$4,022.00), it saved wiping down time for Maintenance staff from the COVID funds. David Rousseau, Treasurer suggested that the FHA get non-contact Forehead Thermometers to the tenants. The Executive Director answered CARE Act funds are or the Federal Public Housing, Section 8, Fitchburg Place. Durkin Office can justify to use the funds because Section 8 office is located. Also used Section 8 Youth Fitness Activities on Sundays. Also added that maintenance crews resumed 7 days disinfecting. COVID Testing is not scheduled in September. DHCD Vacancy Fee waived 1/1/20-6/30/20, but are in effect from 7/1/20 and going forward LHA should apply for vacant waivers to avoid fees. The DHCD authorized the FHA reopen and resume occupied unit inspection.
14. **Revised FHA By-Laws.** -Reviewing, will update hopefully by next Board Meeting in Oct.
15. **Record Destruction -Round 2.-on-going.**
16. **Blueprints & Architectural & Technical Drawings Organizing:** will be separated and organized.
17. **Audits & Management Reviews:**
Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director updated the Audits, and will present to the Board at the Oct. Board meeting. Filing system needed be fixed.
18. **Procuring of Supplies & Services System**
Kim Hergert, Finance Director explained that the FHA’s new Procurement procedure and system. Maintenance Crews need to schedule for one week’s supply.

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19. Disposition Status of 132 Pleasant & 16 Prospect

Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director updated the BID results. BID opening conducted by Kim Hergert, Director of Finance & HR. Per State law the FHA has to offer two sales offerings per property. The first Option A is to offer the property for \$1.00 IF the purchaser can develop as affordable housing. Option B is an offer to purchase the property for highest price. Option B proposals can only be accepted IF there is NO viable Option A offers. The preliminary review of the bids showed that two Option A proposals were submitted by More than Conquerors (Mr. Thomas Hughes). However, they have withdrawn Option A-the proposal for 132 Pleasant Street. Due to this confirmed written withdrawal of the bid the Option-B bid for \$117,000.00 is the highest price offer (by Paula Morales Sanchez).

A. Motion to Approve Disposal of 132 Pleasant Street for \$117,000.00 (Appraised Value-\$11,000.00)

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

B. Motion to Forward for Disposal 16 Prospect Street to DHCD-Option A (Appraised Value -\$200,000.00)

Move: David Rousseau

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

20. Vacancy & HAFIS Report

Andrew Skoog, the Deputy Director updated the Vacancy Report. The Vacancy rate for September 1st, decreased from 30 units to 26, and vacant unit days increased slightly from 5,827 to 6,213. However, of the 26 vacancies, 3 are Ready to Occupy (RTO) units, 14 units are off-line for asbestos, 2 are off-line for handicapped remodel, leaving only 7 needing rehab. Also, he explained the applicant appeal issues and that the FHA has had several Hearings for denied applicants. In the process, he has overturned some denials. The Offline units Vacancy assessment fee are waived for the first and second quarter of 2020 but will resume at the end of the third quarter. The Executive Director updated that Housing Managers have been trained for the HAFIS system to ensure that waivers are requested for units that will be vacant for more than sixty (60) days.

21. Security Camera

The Deputy Director updated that the FHA is continuing to monitor the camera at Day Street and it has proven to be effective. Complaints about the package theft has decreased.

22. Congregate Housing Management

The Executive Director updated about the Congregate Housing program. After a review of the operations of the FHA's Congregate Housing Program, an agreement has been made with MHCC for them to discontinue as September 30. The FHA is in the discussion with SUMMIT to manage to the Congregate program. However, if an agreement cannot be reached by that date, the FHA is prepared to step in to provide assistance to the residents of the Congregate wing. The Board discussed the Congregate Housing Assistance issues and breakfast program.

23. Construction Updates -The Board discussed the GA Project, and the Executive Director explained that the Durkin apartment office will have some staff and services.

24. Motion to Approve DHCD Design Selection Committee Recommendations –

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director updated that the FHA's Construction Advisory Committee met on Friday, September 11 to review the submittals for design services for the Wallace Tower project. The CAC selected two primary firms, Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc and Dietz & Co. Architects. On Tuesday, September 16th, the CAC participated in a Zoom meeting with the DHCD-Design Selection Committee to review six applicants. After the review of the applicants, DHCD-Design Selection Committees agreed with CAC's recommendations that BHA was more suitable as having the experience and the capacity to undertake one of the largest projects. The next step in the process is for the FHA Board to vote on the three recommendations and then the FHA will conduct an interview with the first ranked firm BHA. If the FHA is not satisfied with the interview then it can move on to the second and if necessary, it goes to the third firm.

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

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25. Motion to Approve Change Order 3 and 4 –FISH 097136 Conversion from DHCD to HUD

Housing.

The project is currently under construction by Dandis Construction, Inc with a total development cost of \$562,000 for two of the three homes (24 Forest Street and 28 Taft Street). Two additional Change Orders have been requested that have been approved by Richard Alvord (Architect), FHA staff and the contractor.

Change Order #3-28 Taft Street- \$9,738.04

Change Order #4-24 Forest Street - \$4,207.97

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

26. FISH 097137 Boilers at Green Acres.

The Deputy Director stated that MOC Energy may be able to assist us for the Boiler Project at Green Acres with no Cost.

27. Motion to Approve Contractor FISH 097076 Green Acres Basement Project

The Bid Due Date was August 26th, 2020 with the lowest responsive bidder Diversified Construction Services, LLC (Amherst, MA) with a bid of \$2,223,199.00 with alternates an additional \$385,944.00.

Move: David Rousseau

Second: David Basilio All in favor

28. BID PHASE FISH 097122: 76 Mechanic Street (689-1) Window Placement Project

The bids are due on October 1st, 2020.

29. FISH 097125 Green Acres Replacement of Electrical Panels.

The Deputy Director updated that the construction was completed at Green Acres. All approval will be made at next Board Meeting.

30. Richard Alvord Selected as Architect-FISH 097127 Accessibility Unit Initiative

This work should be completed by end of summer 2021.

31. Motion to Approve Contractor for FISH 097134 Overland Driveway & Sidewalk

Replacement Project: The Executive Director explained that it is probably the largest drive way in Fitchburg including Safety patio. This project could be completed this year.

Move Adam Goodwin

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

(Break 10:10-10:15am)

Annual Plan Meeting (started at 10:18am)-Public Meeting

Resume to Open Public Comments (Due to technical difficulty at the Public Comments)

Wilda- GA tenant claimed that she could not join and make a comment virtually due to technical difficulties at the Public Comment segment during the last Board meeting. Linda Byrne, the Chair stated that next Board Meeting will be back to in-person meeting which will be held on October 21st at Canton Valley Community Room. All tenants are welcome to participate in the Board Meeting as long as keeping 6 feet distance due to the COVID-19. Wilda-GA Tenant made a public comment that she wants a place for kids to play. The Green Acres Grant will make a community room for kids. However, she is afraid that the new office plan may lose a safe space for kids to play basketball outside. The Executive Director stated that there were two Green Acres Tenant Meetings back in January upon the Grant Submittal. At that time tenants liked the idea that a community room and GA administrative office construction was planned. There was no negative input at that time. At this moment, No Architectural design has been made. Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair commented that it is good to continue to add more inputs from Green Acres Tenants now. Jean, Green Acres Tenant addressed a disagreement for the offices to move to Green Acres because it may eliminate the grass space outside for kids to play. Then, the Board and Jean discussed about the employment policy.

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Also, she has concerns about her situation by the GA neighbors and the FHA staff. Mr. Bushman responded that Mr. Skoog would follow up with her in a private setting to hear her concerns.

Resume to Annual Plan Meeting (at 10:49am)

C.J. Durkin Apartment

Kathy stated Annual Plan Requests; repair roof ventilation, replace apartment door locks, self-cleaning ovens, new refrigerators, New windows, heat pumps, new screens and screens in trash rooms, return cooked breakfast program, paint apartments, fix leaky roofs, new sinks, clean trash room daily, replace garbage disposals, fan for ceiling in laundry room, power wash outside of windows.

Wallace Towers (Results from Survey conducted on Labor Day weekend)

Renovate the front lobby, replace the main entrance, install security cameras, replace building HVAC, asbestos removal and mold abatement, walk in showers, improve traffic flow, improved stairway maintenance. Also, former tenant association officer submitted the survey result-security cameras on each floor, replace main entrance, update fire alarms, new windows for each apartment, new door locks, building wide cable access, replace building HVAC, access ramp to building patio.

Daniel Heights

Requested a large TV for Community Room and area wide Wi-Fi internet access.

Canton Valley

Kathy & Susan-CV Tenant Association requested a TV for Community Room and area wide Wi-Fi internet access, clothes lines in the yard, trees and community garden. 387 Canton – Structure damage floor sank, wall cracking -needs to be fixed.

Green Acres (Results of Green Acres Survey on September 2020)

Repair walkways, repair and maintain clothes lines, upgrade back porch lights, clean/ power wash trash and recycle canisters bi-monthly, at least two dumpsters for tenant large disposal, permanent dehumidifiers in basement, tenant access to complaint policies and procedures, also attached to lease, Stop robo calling, send letters, Unbiased independent tenant representative, no conflict of interest in FHA employees, access to policies for all use of common areas, clearly posted NHLP domestic violence policies, procedures, direct access to Fitchburg Board of Commissioners, right to privacy when voicing a concern, rain gutters on all buildings, self-cleaning ovens, new stoves, access to information to obtain free pr inexpensive refrigerators, check and secure toilet, bathtubs, sinks, drainage, new windows, new screens, suggestion box, easy access to administration and office personnel, no smoking in units or community including marijuana, GED program, computer training, paint units, stop loitering on our porches/steps, fix leaking roof, new sinks and cabinets in bathroom, maintenance 48 hour notice for unfinished tasks, repair vents or add vent in kitchen and bathroom, return calls from office voicemail, clean trash from common area and street including gutters leaves and branches, Fix ceiling after leaks and repairs, new locks in units, add garbage disposals to all kitchens, seasonal power wash buildings, clean outside windows, fix kitchen floors, clean mold on regular basis at no charge to tenant, removal of molded trash from flooded basement, all policy changes in writing, bring back Janel.

32. Motion to Adjourn Meeting adjourned at 11:12am

Move: David Rousseau

Second: Adam Goodwin

All in favor

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