



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, November 17, 2021 Wallace Tower Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

A Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chairperson, Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, in the Wallace Tower Community Room at 54 Wallace Avenue in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Present:

FHA Board Members:

Linda Byrne, Chair
Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair
David Rousseau, Treasurer
David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer
Adam Goodwin, Member

FHA Staff:

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director
Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director
Kim Hergert, Finance/HR Director
Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper

David Eisen, Architecture of Abacus (Left at 9:30am)
Interim Commissioner Nicholas Erickson, Fitchburg Public Works Department (Two officers left at 9:45am)
Fitchburg Police Officer Boudreau, Traffic Unit Supervisor
Margarita Morales, MUPHT (Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants)

FHA Tenants:

Canton Valley-Kathy Deery, President of CVTA
Daniels Heights- Janice Spellane
Wallace Tower-Ann Ratila, June Sears, Richard Avant, Sandra Texidor

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: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

The Chair announced that Douglas Bushman, Executive Director successfully passed MA BAR Exam, will sworn in on December 14, 2021. The Board and the residents congratulated on him.

Margarita Morales, MUPHT, congratulated on the Executive Director's passing BAR Exam. She stated that FHA website is informative, but the Minutes stopped to update 6 months ago. The Executive Director said that it will be updated shortly. Kathy Deery, Canton Valley Tenant Association gave positive feedback on the FHA maintenances' work.

3. Motion to Approve Minutes of Regular Session Meeting held on October 27, 2021.

Move: David Rousseau

Second: David Basilio

Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair, requested to make a correction on the October Minutes as she mentioned Growing Places at the discussion of planting tree at Green Acres.

4. Motion to Approve FHA Payables for October-November FY 2021 (Attachment A)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

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5. Motion to Approve January-October Financials FY2021 (Attachment B)

Move: David Rousseau Second: Mary Giannetti **All in favor**

David Rousseau, Treasure, stated that maintenance is improved. Mary Giannetti, the Vice Chair, asked if the FHA is short staffed. The Executive Director answered it is overstaffed. Swing-shift position reduced maintenance over time cost. Benefits, Health Care and Pensions are over the budget, all other line items are under the budget Last year the FHA got extra money for maintenance. The State 4% increase in revenue, so, the Executive Director will try to request budget exemption for maintenance one more year. The Board discussed about the maintenance cost.

6. Locations and time of FHA Regular Meetings

Board Meeting locations and times were presented by the Executive Director. Next meeting place is C. J. Durkin. - on Wednesday December 15. The Board discussed about next year’s meeting schedule, then they decided the meeting date is 4th Wednesday of each month from FY2022.

7. Review and Modifications of FHA Personnel Policy Handbook

The Executive Director updated that Kim Hergert, Finance & HR Director has been editing the draft. Labor Subcommittee needs to review the draft in Dec or Jan.

8. Annual and CIP Plan

Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director, updated that DHCD was able to change allocations of FISH funds. Annual and CIP plan meeting may be held in January 2022.

9. COVID -19 Corner.

The Executive Director updated that there were more responses for SHERA program. And he thanked Erica Shorts, Elderly Housing Director, Elizabeth Resto, Admin clerk for Elderly Housing, and Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistance for COVID Booster clinic setting up. (**Attachment C**)

- C.J. Durkin December 2nd, 2021 (9am-3pm)
- Wallace Tower December 14th, 2021 (9am-3pm)

10. Update on Trees at Green Acres

The Executive Director thanked Mary Giannetti for tree program introduction.

11. Construction FISH097076 (Basement Project) Updates

David Eisen, Architect from Abacus, joined the board meeting and explained the history of the basement project and explained to the Board why the program needs additional CO#004(the gutters and downspouts installation) for this project. The change order was due to an error made by the Abacus when bidding the project which called for more gutters to be installed than what was specified in the bid. The Board questioned about if the gutters and downspouts installation made better solutions for current problems. Mr. Eisen explained that the gutters may not completely solve the issue due to an extraordinarily high water-table resulting from heavy rain this year and the last few years. Mr. Eisen had recommended several other options which were ruled out by DHCD due to the cost. Gutters were only added into the scope of work in 2019.

A. Motion to Approve Change Order#002 (\$32,072.76) (Attachment G)

This Change Order is a compilation of 8 previous change orders but combined they exceed contract amount, so a motion is needed for final approval.

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Basilio **All in favor**

B. Motion to Approve Proposed Change Order#004 (\$33,354.01) (Attachment H)

This Change concerns funds for additional gutters and downspouts.

Move: Mary Giannetti Second: David Rousseau **All in favor**

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12. Discussion about location of Administrative Building with two traffic officers

Interim Commissioner Nicholas Erickson, Fitchburg Public Works Department and Fitchburg Police Officer Boudreau, Traffic Unit Supervisor joined the meeting and spoke about their opinions about Option 1 and 2 after they looked the sites.

The Traffic Officer Boudreau said Option 2 has a problem because the location of the entrance and exit at Wanoosnoc Rd. is one way from Water St. Cutting out the island on Wanoosnoc Rd. could be a problem, and Option 1 has an issue on Canton St. depending on where the admin building is constructed but the residents may feel safer if the building is there. The Interim Commissioner of DPW agrees with Officer Boudreau that traffic on Wanoosnoc Rd. gets backed up if the Option 2 is selected. Mary Giannetti, the Vice Chair, concerned about the safety issue for pedestrians from the bus stop at the intersection of Water St/ Wanoosnoc Rd.. and questioned if the crosswalks are there at the Wanoosnoc Rd. DPW officer answered yes and can be repainted. Also, the Vice Chair expressed her concerns for losing the big green filed if the Option 1 is selected.

13. Vacancy & HAFIS Report (Attachment D)

The Deputy Director updated that the Vacancy rate for November 1st, increased from 35 units to 39 units, and the vacant unit days increased from 12,370 to 13,263. The vacant days drops to 646. However, of the 39 vacancies, 18 units are off-line for asbestos at Wallace Tower, 3 units are off-line for handicapped remodel at C.J. Durkin, 3 units are offline for ADA accessibility project at Canton Valley, and 2 unit is RTO leaving only 13 needing rehab.

14. Resident Service

- Fall Festival Saturday October 30th – The Executive Director thanked Erica and Liz.
- Poetry Reading-Sentinel Enterprise Article on November 10, 2021 (**Attachment E**)
- **Motion to Approve Funds for Wallace Tower Tenant Association (\$780.00) (Attachment F)**
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor
- Application and Interview Process for Resident Service Coordinators

15. 689 Housing Program

Proceeds of 132 Pleasant St & 16 Prospect St -Still waiting

16. Local ARPA Funds

The Executive Director updated that the application was submitted. \$100,000 for Wallace Tower Project (1st FL & Medical Clinic) and \$100,000 for Green Acres admin Building project (Micro Library which MOC and City will support & Medical Clinic).

17. Construction Update:

1. CLOSED OUT FISH097122
2. TO BE RE-BID FISH097124
3. AUI FISH097127
4. CLOSE OUT FISH097129
5. Wallace Tower Exterior FISH097131-Completed
6. FISH097132 (Wallace Tower MOD-PHASE)

Motion to Approve UNITIL Grant ASHP Wallace Tower FISH097132 (Attachment I)

Move: Mary Giannetti Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

7. FISH097134 (Overland Driveway & Sidewalk Replacement Project)

Motion to Approve Substantial and Final Completion FISH 097134 (Attachment J &K)

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Basilio All in favor

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8. FISH097147 Green Acres Air Source Heat Pumps Pilot Project
Need to give a plan to the state.

9. FISH097153

Motion to Approve Location of Administrative-Community Building (Attachment L, M, &N)

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

The Executive Director stated that on Wednesday November 10th, 2021, FPD Traffic Safety Officer Sergeant Daniel Boudreau reviewed the potential locations for the building and made recommendations concerning both locations. Please see the **Discussion about Location of Administrative Building with two traffic officers.**

MOC which participated in the grant process and would be using the community space classroom has reviews the issue of site locations and submitted a letter indicating which location is more appropriate for their program needs. They have concerns with the back meadow being vacant and not watched due to various individuals residing in the woods and general lack of upkeep of the area. In addition, Linda E. Byrne, FHA Chair has submitted her rational concerning the site location. The Motion to approve the location of the admin-community building was tabled last month is up for review and vote for the November meeting.

Adam Goodwin, Member of the Board, commented that MOC has some good points, and asked if the building going to be used for more than admin. The Executive Director stated that the community section for not only children but for adults for better educations to stay employed that turns Green Acres workforce housing, will be added to the building plus space where office (2 residential units) is now can be units for tenants. David Rousseau, Treasure, stated his point of view after looked at both sites and said that Option 2(Dollar Tree Location) would become major safety factor, is not enough space, not adequate parking. Also mentioned it would need elevator cost \$100,000, also thought Leyte Rd. was plenty wide & massive space for building, parking +activities. So, the field location is better site, and it is benefit for Canton Valley residents. David Basilio, Assistant Treasure, commented that soccer & basket field are needed at the site. Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair, commented on the field, requested to preserve the field as much as possible for family resident can use for BBQ and other outdoor recreations. She would like the parking location changed; public transportation has to walk if the field location is chosen. David Rousseau suggested that FHA could consider contacting with MART for a free service to access to the new field location building for Elderly Housing residents. Adam Goodwin requested that the Board made a recommendation to the architect to preserve the green space on the field location as much as possible as majority of the Board commented.

The Board Voted for the location of Administrative-Community Building:

Motion to Approve Option 1 (Back field location)

Move: David Rousseau

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

18. Motion to Authorize Chair to Select Low Bidder -FISH097164 for 4th Floor Office at C. J. Durkin. (Attachment O)

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

19. Motion to Adjourn (Meeting adjourned at 10:25 am)

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

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