

HRA. In addition, CDBG applications may require towns to have provide their ADA self-evaluations and transition plans. Although all towns in Massachusetts technically should have these prepared, many do not, or do not have updated plans. This is not expected to present a major hurdle as long as towns can present a letter stating they will work with the MA Office of Disability to develop these plans. Next, CDBG applications have required the towns to submit Community Development Strategies, which can be a great deal of work for small communities to prepare. For now that requirement will remain in place; however, FRCOG has worked with many towns in the county to develop these plans and HRA has extensive experience in coaching towns as to how to make sure their CDS meets CDBG requirements.

DHCD has eliminated the Target Area aspect of the CDBG program, meaning that Montague and Deerfield (the only towns in the county with target areas) can now apply for housing rehabilitation programs that cover the entire town. Additionally, administrative expenses are now capped at 15%, down from 18%. As HRA's administrative expenses generally come to 12-13%, this will not be an issue.

Finally and most significantly for HRA, the maximum grant amounts have been changed. A single town may now apply for only \$800,000, down from \$900,000. Regional groups of 2-3 towns may apply for \$1 million (this is unchanged), and groups of four or more towns may apply for \$1.3 million, up from \$1.1 million. The deadline for grant applications this year has been extended by a month, given the scope of the changes. B. McHugh added that it is expected that next year the grant length may change as well: currently grants are for 15 months and are generally extended to 18-24 months, but next year grants may be 24 months by default. That could impact HRA because the allowed administrative expenses for any given grant would increase, but not nearly double, whereas the time for each grant would nearly double.

B. McHugh then reviewed the applications that HRA is currently working with towns to submit: a small application for Montague (small because of the 2-year cap on funding any given town may receive), and a regional application involving Leverett, Sunderland, Deerfield, and Conway.

The board thanked B. McHugh for his presentation. B. McHugh left the meeting at 6:21.

F. Pheeny presented a memo from the Interim Director of Finance regarding the state of the finance department. She summarized it for the board, pointing out that more internal control weaknesses have been discovered than were originally thought. She emphasized the need to bring on a full time Director of Finance as soon as possible. The search firm that HRA had been using has not presented strong candidates. She proposed engaging instead with Robert Half, a search firm that specializes in accounting positions. Their fees are high, usually around 30%, but they have agreed to a 20% fee with a 90-day guarantee.

After discussion regarding the position, advertising, and the pay structure, the board agreed that in the interest of finding a qualified candidate, HRA should engage Robert Half. The board clarified that RDI would be asked to carry half the cost of the fee.

Search Firm: Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Director to engage Robert Half at a fee not to exceed 20%

16-155 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

3. ACTIONS

Minutes: Commissioner Tuttle moved and Commissioner Parkin seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2016 annual meeting of the Board as prepared.

No discussion.

16-145 Voted 6 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining (D. Prest)

Minutes: Commissioner Tuttle moved and Commissioner Parkin seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2016 regular meeting of the Board as prepared.

No discussion.

16-146 Voted 6 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining (D. Prest)

AP Warrant: Commissioner Atwood moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant for October 2016.

No discussion.

16-147 Voted 5 in favor; 2 opposed (J. Tuttle, B. Parkin); 0 abstaining

RCAT Advisory Board Election: Commissioner Atwood moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Director, as Authorized Voter, to enter the following nine votes for election as a slate of members to the Central-West Region RCAT Advisory Board:

John O'Brien (Northbridge)
Michael Sullivan (Charlton)
Sharon Cottrell (FCRHRA)
Rita Maccini (Shelburne)
Judy Cezeaux (Wilbraham)
Lynda Byrne (Fitchburg)
Elisabeth Earle (Sterling)
Fred Johnson (Clinton)
Cedric Flower (Charlton)

F. Pheeny pointed out that the board will have nine members and nine people were nominated, including Sharon Cottrell from HRA.

16-148 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

SEMAP Submission: Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Tuttle seconded a motion to approve the submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development of the Section Eight Management Assessment Program Certification Report for fiscal year ending September 30, 2016.

F. Pheeny explained that HRA received a score of 100% on last year's Section 8 Management Assessment Program and expects to receive that score again this year.

16-149 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

HRA Office Closure (November 25, December 23): Commissioner Tuttle moved and Commissioner Parkin seconded a motion to authorize the closure of the HRA office on November 25, 2016 and December 23, 2016 and to designate those days as paid holidays under the HRA personnel policy.

F. Pheeny explained that this motion did not represent a permanent change to the personnel policy, although she recommends that when that policy is reviewed, holiday dates be reviewed as well.

16-150 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Job Description (Housing Counselor): Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the job description for Housing Counselor as prepared.

J. Day explained that the Board had approved a substantially similar job description in April, but upon review the position has been made full-time. One of the Housing Placement & Stabilization Workers will be moving into this role to focus completely on budgeting workshops, financial education, homebuyer counseling, housing search, and related functions.

16-151 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Change Order #4 (Project #358090): Commissioner Tuttle moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute Change Order #4 to the contract with CD Davenport Trucking, Inc. in connection with the Stoughton Place repaving project increasing the maximum obligation under that contract by \$155.01 for a total maximum obligation of \$181,040.71.

F. Pheeny shared that the paving project had gone well and quickly.

16-152 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Change Order #5 (Project #358090): Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Director to execute Change Order #5 to the contract with CD Davenport Trucking, Inc. in connection with the Stoughton Place repaving project increasing the maximum obligation under that contract by \$1,284.20 for a total maximum obligation of \$182,324.91.

No further discussion.

16-153 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Certificate of Substantial Completion: Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Director, as Contract Officer, to issue a certificate of substantial completion effective November 7, 2016 to CD Davenport Trucking, Inc. for Paving Repair Project #358090.

No further discussion.

16-154 Voted 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

As the certificate of final completion had not yet been delivered to HRA no vote was taken on that item.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Agency Mission Survey

In response to recent changes at the agency, the changes that are to come from the RCAT program and beyond, and the hopeful expansion of RDI's development capacity, Commissioner Banks put together a survey to collect thoughts and ideas both from the HRA board and the RDI and SHA boards as to the missions and future of the related agencies. She pointed out that RDI has a significant financial role in HRA, and that she feels the two boards should have a better understanding of one another and of their interconnected roles and responsibilities.

The board briefly discussed the current draft of the survey. The board agreed to provide feedback by the 18th of November, in anticipation of sending the survey out on the 21st. Given holidays, the board decided to have the survey close on January 9th and to then discuss the responses at the February meeting.

State Ethics certification

The board was reminded to complete their Conflict of Interest training if they had not already.

Public Housing Notices 2016-32 and 2016-33

F. Pheeny explained that neither notice represented a huge change. The AIMM no longer applies to HRA, and HRA already has veteran-specific language in its leases.

NAHRO Newsletter

The newsletter was provided for the board's information.

5. OTHER BUSINESS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE

None

6. DOCUMENTS USED

- CDBG One-Year Action Plan FY2017 Final Changes
- Minutes of the annual meeting held 10-17-2016
- Minutes of the regular meeting held 10-17-2016
- AP Warrant 10-2016
- PHN 2016-31 re: RCAT Advisory Board Elections
- SEMAP Certification
- Job description: Housing Counselor
- Change order #4 for project #358090
- Change order #5 for project #358090
- Certificate of substantial completion for project #358090
- PHN 2016-32 re: Implementation of Changes in the Law Pertaining to Veterans
- PHN 2016-33 re: New AIMM Program Rules and Application
- MA NAHRO November 2016 newsletter
- Staff report dated November 2, 2016

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Banks adjourned the meeting at 7:03 P.M.

The next regular meeting of the HRA Board of Commissioners is scheduled for December 5, 2016 at 6 P.M. at the Greenfield Savings Bank located at 282 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Pheeny, Secretary ex officio