



**FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING &  
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING – February 5, 2018**

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners conducted the regular meeting of the Authority on **February 5, 2018** at the Montague Town Police Department Community Room located at 180 Turnpike Road, Turners Falls, MA.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Cottrell called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM

Commissioners Present:           L. Brown           S. Hamdan  
  B. Parkin           S. Cottrell  
  M. Slowinski      J. Atwood

Commissioners Absent:           D. Prest           J. Tuttle

Staff Present:                       F. Pheeny        J.Carey    T. Dowd

Guest: None

**2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

F. Pheeny provided the board with updates regarding the agency relocation process.

F. Pheeny also asked the board members to consider participating in the bid opening committee for the new location.

F. Pheeny updated the board with the results of the Title 5 Inspection. The Montague Board of Health is requesting that a 1,500 gallon tank be installed and that the tank in the lower parking lot have a steel plate placed over the current cover. They are expecting this work to be completed by the agency by the end of February. Further negotiations will be made between the buyer and the agency regarding who is the responsible party to implement these repairs, and to negotiate a realistic time frame for completion.

The staff report was also reviewed, the agency has received an additional \$80,000 in RAFT funds. Sixty seven thousand (\$67,000) will be used for “non-traditional” families (individuals, elders, households seeking reunification of children with DCF). Also highlighted that under RDI section there is a house for sale in North Orange, which is a great opportunity for first time home buyer. Concerns were expressed regarding the possibility of a Federal Government Shutdown. There will be enough funds for Section 8 for the month of March. If the shutdown continues past March, there won't be any funding left for the Section 8 programs.

## **ACTIONS**

**Minutes:** Commissioner Atwood moved and Commissioner Parkin seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2018 regular meeting of the Board as prepared.

No further discussion.

17-129 Voted 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

**AP Warrant:** Commissioner Brown moved and Commissioner Atwood seconded a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant for January 2018.

No discussion.

17-130 Voted 5 in favor; 1 opposed; 0 abstaining

**Public Participation Policy:** Commissioner Atwood moved and Commissioner Hamdan seconded a motion to review and discuss the SHA Public Participation Policy.

F. Pheeny began by informing the board that the SHA Board requested that topic matters from the tenants get screened by staff (T. Dowd and G. Gagne, J. Rodriguez) before they are presented to the board.

J. Atwood commented that she feels that the staff should be the main contact and not the board members themselves. All board members present agreed.

J. Atwood made a request for the HRA Public Participation Policy to have an introduction stating that the reason for this policy is to meet the requirements of Open Meeting Law. J. Atwood also suggested that the allotted time for the public participation be allotted at the end of the board meetings.

F. Pheeny explained that the agencies attorney experience with other housing authorities is that the public participation occurs at the beginning of the meeting as it's easier to keep the speakers to the 3 minute time limit.

J. Atwood recommended that the participation begin from 6:00-6:15 p.m. and not earlier as it could conflict with some members work schedules.

All members agreed that starting at 6:00 p.m. was most feasible for everyone.

F. Pheeny informed the board that she will present the HRA Public Participation Policy to the board at the March board meeting.

Commissioner Parkin moved and Commissioner Brown seconded, to table the motion to approve Public Participation Policy to the next scheduled board meeting in March.

17-131 Vote 6 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

**Vote of Support:** Commissioner Brown moved and Commissioner Parkin seconded a motion for a vote of confidence and support for the Director of Property Management, Tim Dowd and to the Executive Director, Frances Pheeny. The board members thank Fran and Tim for their dedication and hard work. M. Slowinski extended his full hearted support to both Fran and Tim.

17-132 Vote 6 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Revised Executive Director Salary Calculation Worksheet and updated FAQ from original PHN 2018-10:** F. Pheeny informed the board that the agency's Fee Accountant came in last week to review these documents. The Fee Accountant has spent a lot of time with DHCD working on how they want to implement these changes. F. Pheeny explained to the board that rather than accepting a significant raise for herself, she would prefer the monies be put in staff salaries. By doing this, it will bring staff salaries up to a more significant and desirable levels which will better ensure staff retention and competitiveness with other agencies. F. Pheeny stated that the goal is to work on the FY19 budget beginning in May, with the goal of being in a new building and incorporating those costs.

No discussion.

**Leslie Brown RDI Update:** L. Brown informed the board that RDI has not met since the last HRA board meeting. The next RDI meeting will be held on February 27. However, there was a Relocation Conversation held. Each member was provided with a Relocation Binder with information similar to what the HRA board was given at the January meeting. L. Brown reported that the RDI Relocation Conversation members were enthusiastic about the news that HRA can obtain their own loan towards a mortgage for a new site. However, they also expressed much concern about their ability to be able to carry rent for the agency over an extended period of time as they

are currently running a deficit. The meeting members really emphasized that the HRA board be made aware of this concern.

F. Pheeny expressed her understanding for their concern regarding the deficit. However, she reassured the HRA board that RDI does have a significant monetary cushion. There is also the Sunderland project in place, which will be bringing in revenue, and other future projects in the works.

L. Brown informed the board that she will have more concrete information to share after the RDI board meeting at the end of February and another Relocation Conversation Meeting once that is scheduled.

**Staff Report:** Already reviewed during the Executive Director's Report.

No further discussion.

**Other Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance:**

**3. DOCUMENTS USED**

- Minutes of the regular meeting held January 22, 2018
- AP Warrant January 2018
- SHA Public Participation Policy
- Revised Executive Director Salary Calculation Worksheet
- Executive Director Salary and Qualifications PHN 2018-01 FAQ
- Public Housing Notice PHN 2018-04 Direct Cost Exemption for Operating Reserve Augmentation in FY2018 Budget & New Operating Reserve Thresholds
- Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) FY ending 9/30/17
- NAHRO February 2018 Newsletter
- Article- Point of View: HUD Plans to Increase Rents and Impose Work Requirements-by Diane Yentel, NLIHC President and CEO.
- Staff Report

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Brown moved and Commissioner Atwood seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Pheeny, Secretary ex officio