



**FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING &
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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MINUTES

Regular Meeting – October 30, 2023

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners conducted the Regular Meeting of the Authority on October 30, 2023, via Zoom. at 5:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

F. Williams called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present (via roll call): F. Williams, L. Brown, S. Worgaftik, L. Bezio, M. McClintock

Absent: M. Cucchiara

Staff Present: G. Govoni, L. Cornish, N. Garrett, K. Kelley

Guests: Penny Herzig

2. Actions

HRA September Minutes: L. Brown noted a typographic error towards the end of the document. K. Kelley will correct the error before publishing.

Commissioner Brown moved, and Commissioner McClintock seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2023, regular meeting of the Board as corrected.

17-4416 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

September AP Warrant: Commissioner Worgaftik moved, and Commissioner McClintock seconded a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant for September 2023.

17-4417 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Employee Sick Leave Benefits: N. Garrett explained that the Personnel Committee approved the proposed employee sick leave benefit changes. HRA does not offer Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) or short-term medical leave. Employees can earn up to 450 sick time hours; any employees hired before 2003 can earn an additional 450 hours. The Personnel Committee assessed how much sick time employees are using on average, the associated value of sick time, and how HRA sick leave benefits compare to similar local employers.

PFML only pays a partial percentage of wages. However, as of November 1, the MA Department of PFML allows individuals using PFML to supplement their pay with accrued sick time. The proposed adoption of PFML was presented to staff members, who raised concerns regarding the percentage

of pay offered by PFML, which has now been alleviated by the aforementioned state-wide policy change.

It is proposed that HRA adopt the PFML program as an employee benefit. HRA will cover 100 percent of contributions owed to the Massachusetts Department of PFML. The current sick time accrual rate will remain unchanged, but the maximum number of hours employees can earn will be reduced to 225 hours. The sick time donation policy will be terminated. If approved, the proposed changes will go into effect in 2024.

F. Williams noted that the Personnel Committee had thoughtful conversations regarding this topic. The feedback from staff members was taken into consideration when drafting the proposal. The proposed changes are more transparent and are affordable within the budget. L. Brown echoed these comments.

G. Govoni added that this conversation's scope was greater than previously anticipated. This policy change should be positive and manageable.

L. Brown noted that having the Commonwealth approve and deny cases benefits HRA.

L. Cornish noted that this proposed policy change makes HRA a more competitive employer. M. McClintock echoed these comments, adding that staff members having the ability to match the PFML pay with accrued sick time is a benefit to staff members.

S. Worgaftik thanked N. Garrett and L. Cornish for consulting staff members before proposing the policy changes to the Board. F. Williams added that the Personnel Committee did their best to listen to staff members' feedback.

Commissioner McClintock moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to adopt and implement the proposed changes to the employee sick leave benefits, as presented.

17-4418 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Compensation Study: G. Govoni stated that the proposed changes are within the budget.

N. Garrett explained that this compensation study clarifies how much employees should be earning and transparency as the employer.

Over the past six to nine months, a step-by-step process was followed to ensure structure around the compensation study. With assistance from the Directors, all job descriptions were reevaluated to ensure accuracy. Following this, all positions were evaluated by scoring according to the Managers Association of America rubric and compared to compensable factors. The pay grades were determined by comparing federal, local, and online market data.

Penny Herzig left at 5:23 p.m.

N. Garrett continued, explaining that each individual within the respective positions was assessed to ascertain if the pay rates were maintained when compared to the value of work over time. With all said factors in mind, each employee was evaluated to determine where wage changes would be appropriate. Ideally, each individual should earn at least the minimum of their proposed salary range.

Only a portion of the budget could be allocated towards salaries this year. In addition to adjusting individual compensation, managers were able to identify areas to add or shift positions.

L. Cornish noted that N. Garrett completed the majority of the work on the compensation study. There will always be potential adjustments, though the work was good.

S. Worgaftik questioned what defines the minimum and maximum within the salary ranges. N. Garrett explained that new hires will start at the lower end of the salary range except in cases of exceptional experience. The maximum end of the salary range is largely reserved for employees who have longevity or take on additional responsibilities.

G. Govoni noted that the public portion of the budget is 24 percent of the overall budget. The proposed budget will be submitted to EOHLIC for approval. HRA is asking for more than the minimum allotted for maintenance employees, which has not been done in the past.

Commissioner McClintock moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to adopt and implement the findings of the compensation study.

17-4419 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Construction Coordinator Job Description: G. Govoni stated that this job description has been in place previously. The current employee in the Housing Rehabilitation Specialist position will take on this proposed position. One of the FTE increases will be for a new Housing Rehabilitation Specialist, as the Construction Coordinator position is intended for an individual with experience in the Housing Rehabilitation Specialist position.

Commissioner Worgaftik moved, and Commissioner Bezio seconded a motion to approve the job description for the Construction Coordinator position, as presented.

17-4420 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Approval of the Highland Village Kitchen Project Designer: F. Williams stated that this designer has been approved by the Shelburne Selectboard.

G. Govoni explained that this is the next step in the Highland Village Kitchen Project. Studio Umbra was recently rejected due to EOHLIC incorrectly bidding out the project by not incorporating the previously completed designs. The work was downgraded to a \$25,000 budget, and Studio Umbra rebid at a lower price; they were the only ranked firm for this project.

Commissioner McClintock moved, and Commissioner Worgaftik seconded a motion to approve Gina Govoni to enter into contract with Studio Umbra for FISH #358151.

17-4421 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

SEMAP Certification: G. Govoni stated that this is a good year for SEMAP as HRA is in compliance and is 100 percent this year.

Commissioner McClintock moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve of the Section 8 Management Assessment Program Certification, as presented.

17-4422 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Certificate of Substantial Completion Fish# 358127 - Charlemont Well Pump Generator: G. Govoni stated that this special project funding has had multiple extensions; a CFC is expected by the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Worgaftik moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to authorize Executive Director, Gina Govoni, as contracting officer, to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion for Fish Project 358127 Charlemont Well Pump Generator.

17-4423 Vote 5 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

3. Staff Report

N. Garrett noted an error in the Operations section of the Staff Report. The final line of this section should say 30 – 37.5 hours.

4. Other Business

F. Williams explained that the Executive Director performance evaluation is coming up. New formats will be explored for this evaluation.

G. Govoni reminded L. Bezio and M. McClintock to send copies of their electronic signatures to K. Kelley in order to execute all documents approved by the Board.

5. Public Participation

No discussion.

6. Adjourn

L. Brown moved, and M. McClintock seconded a motion to adjourn the regular meeting of the HRA Board of Directors as there was no further business to discuss.
The meeting convened at 5:47 p.m.