



**FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING &
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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**MINUTES
Regular Meeting – November 21, 2022**

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners conducted the regular meeting of the Authority on **November 21, 2022**, via Zoom. at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Executive Director Gina Govoni called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Commissioners Present (via roll call): M. Slowinski M. Cucchiara S. Worgaftik L. Brown S. Cottrell F. Williams A. Bresciano

Absent: None

Staff Present: G. Govoni L. Cornish N. Sauber K. Kelley

2. Actions

Regular Minutes: Commissioner Brown moved, and Commissioner Slowinski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022, regular meeting of the Board as submitted.

17-4343 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Annual Minutes: Commissioner Slowinski moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022, annual meeting of the Board as submitted.

17-4344 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

October AP Warrant: Commissioner Slowinski moved, and Commissioner Worgaftik seconded a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant for October 2022.

17-4345 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

FY23 Budget Review: L. Cornish stated that the budget mainly focuses on the controllable factors dictated by DHCD guidelines. This year, a nine percent ANUEL increase was allowed. Starting on October 1, a five percent increase to internal salaries is being proposed. While a compensation benefit analysis comparing the wages and

fringe to other similar organizations is being planned, the overall feeling is that current salaries are low.

The net income is driven primarily by CDBG, Section 8, MRVP, and HCEC. CDBG's budget is conservative this year as they have been budgeted aggressively in the past. Section 8 historically brings in cash, which must be put towards applicable expenses. MRVP is typically budgeted at break even, and HRA is showing a slight positive. HCEC overall nets out slightly negative, though there has been the ongoing issue of the inability to staff the department. The maximum amount allowed to take is 15 percent for overhead, which has been taken. For Section 8, the administrative overhead has also been maxed out.

For the budget expenses, SHA's budget is going to be negative this year. The reserve augmentation received last year from DHCD has been requested again.

L. Brown questioned the current contracts for oil have the rate locked in place. L. Cornish responded, stating that there are no contracted prices. Though, the utilities are subsidized 100 percent by the state, except in the central office and private entities.

L. Brown questioned the difference created by the inability to open Sanderson Place will be. L. Cornish responded, stating that the difference was \$11,000 for the entire period of the year. Overall, this should not affect HRA.

G. Govoni stated that, regarding the use of utilities, it should be noted that the Bernardston mini-split project will be completed on Wednesday, with Shelburne beginning directly afterward.

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Slowinski seconded a motion to approve the HRA agency-wide annual operating budget for FY2023 as presented.

17-4346 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

FY22 Financials and Certifications: L. Cornish stated that the budget certifications are typical year to year. The forms present the budget, which is actual and correct.

The Top 5 Certification form compares the year-end numbers to the salary numbers. The Real Estate Project Manager/Housing Development Director and the Director of Operations positions were not budgeted to be in the Top 5 due to their hire dates.

For the year-end, the bottom line is positive. Of note, internally, HRA does not budget for depreciation or OPEB liabilities. A new actuality study was completed, which produced a higher liability for the OPEB, likely due to inflation. There will be an impact of \$535,781 which will show as a difference between the HAFIS report and the budget.

A fringe reconciliation was completed, showing a \$70,000 decrease in health insurance costs to budget.

For the COLA increases, as previously stated, there will be a five percent increase in salaries due to the nine percent increase provided by DHCD.

S. Worgaftik questioned if any upcoming maintenance projects are not included for any reason. G. Govoni stated that all upcoming projects were included in the previously presented Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the Top 5 Compensation Form in which the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority Board Members and Executive Director certify under pains and penalties of perjury that the Board Members have been provided with a copy of the Top 5 Compensation Form Submitted to DHCD for Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority for fiscal year ending 9/30/22 and that the information presented is true, correct, and complete to the best of our knowledge.

17-4347 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Slowinski seconded a motion to approve and certify the year-end financial statements on behalf of Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority, we certify under pains and penalties of perjury that the facts and information provided in the attached year-end financial statements for the following programs, Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority for the fiscal year ending 9/30/22 are true, correct, and complete to the best of our knowledge and that the statements fairly and accurately represent the physical condition of the development and the Housing Authority for this period.

17-4348 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

SHA-HRA Management Agreement: G. Govoni stated that this management agreement is an extension of the current agreement with no changes aside from the dates.

Commissioner Slowinski moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the SHA Management Agreement as presented.

17-4349 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

ED Contract: G. Govoni stated that the Executive Director contract is largely unchanged from the previous year. L. Cornish added that the contract does include a five percent increase, as all applicable HRA staff members will be receiving this increase.

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Slowinski seconded a motion to approve the At Will Executive Director Contract for HRA Executive Director, Gina Govoni as presented.

17-4350 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

HMLP Contract: G. Govoni stated that HRA was approved to be a provider for the HMLP program. The goal is to produce nine loans this year, with staffing to come.

Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Worgaffik seconded a motion to approve the HMLP contract as presented.

17-4351 Vote 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstaining

Winslow Wentworth Redesign Study: G. Govoni stated that approximately \$90,000 of reallocated Health and Safety formula funding would be spent on this project. Winslow Wentworth is the only congregate property in the portfolio. 16 of the 17 units share a sink and toilet. The project aims to restructure the existing closet space to provide each unit with a bathroom, as well as assess the feasibility of installing an internal elevator or like devise while retaining as much common space and units as possible. L. Brown questioned if any leftover funding could be used for the actual work. G. Govoni responded, expressing that this is the hope.

S. Worgaffik suggested having built-up closets installed in the units due to the removal of the closet space. G. Govoni stated that this suggestion will be presented to Mike Terounzo to determine feasibility. M. Slowinski added that doing so may affect accessibility.

L. Cornish asked if any space exists on land for an addition. G. Govoni responded, stating that this concept had not been explored.

S. Worgaffik questioned if there is any space for additional storage on the property. G. Govoni responded, stating that downsizing is promoted as shared storage has been proven to be problematic.

M. Cucchiara asked if this is being done through RDI and if a contract for services could be put into place. G. Govoni responded, stating that this is through a DHCD program that outlines specific contractors for use.

705 Repositioning and Local Preference Discussion: G. Govoni explained that this project would be done through partnership with RDI. Through researching its feasibility, it has been determined that units cannot be taken out of towns and repositioned into different ones as it removes the availability of local preference. When questioned, DHCD stated that a regional preference must be proposed. This would be a legal change that would require the filing of legislation.

The worry with this is that there may be concern from other housing authorities in the area and the potential implications for creating a template. Though, the data shows that this would make sense for Franklin County. Prior to CHAMP, more than half of the applicants were from this area. Since the installment of CHAMP, the percentage of Franklin County applicants has dropped from 43 to 2 percent.

M. Cucchiara suggested moving forward with filing legislation, citing that it is the only way to do the project. G. Govoni expressed concern for the time and money that would be spent on legislation if the project proves unfeasible.

S. Worgaftik raised the concern that with the majority of applicants coming from Suffolk County, there may be a question of racism. G. Govoni responded, stating that the authority does not want to appear unwelcoming. Though, the outstanding rural equity issue must be addressed. M. Slowinski emphasized the need for educating the urban authorities on the needs of the rural regions.

L. Brown questioned if there are not fewer Franklin County applicants but instead more people applying from elsewhere. G. Govoni responded affirmatively.

M. Cucchiara suggested that putting together a deck of the proposals would likely prove helpful. G. Govoni responded, stating that the SHI would be lowered for some communities through this program. M. Cucchiara stated that, fundamentally, SHI is part of 40B. S. Worgaftik added that she and Linda Dunlavy are currently looking into how towns receive SHI credits for those who do not reside in their towns.

G. Govoni stated that the authority will move forward with this concept.

3. Staff Report

G. Govoni stated that there have been a series of successful tours at Sanderson Place, though a certificate of occupancy has not yet been issued. The majority of applicants have been reviewed and approved by MHIC in advance of moving in.

For the receivership pilot program, a formal partnership will be made with the Attorney General's office; an application for funding through RDI is planned.

4. Other Business

No discussion.

5. Documents for Informational Purposes

No discussion.

6. Other business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

No discussion.

7. Adjourn

M. Slowinski moved, and M. Cucchiara 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 5:51 p.m.