



**FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL HOUSING &  
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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**MINUTES  
Regular Meeting – June 26, 2023**

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners conducted the regular meeting of the Authority on June 26, 2023, via Zoom. at 4:51 p.m.

**1. Call to Order**

F. Williams called the meeting to order at 4:51 p.m.

**Commissioners Present (via roll call):** F. Williams, L. Brown, M. Cucchiara, R. Bowen Weld, S. Worgaftik

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** G. Govoni, K. Kelley, M. Terounzo, L. Cornish, N. Sauber, P. Parmakian

**Guests:** Anne Marie Derr, Barb Hoffman, Mary McClintock, Nicholas Beauchamp, Penny Clark

**2. Actions**

**FY24 Annual Plan for State Public Housing:** Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Worgaftik seconded a motion to approve the annual plan as presented in June 26, 2023, public forum with revisions to the CIP as discussed.

17-4379 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

N. Beauchamp joined at 4:53 p.m.

M. Terounzo and P. Parmakian left 4:54 p.m.

**HRA FY22 Audit and SHA FY22 AUP Review with EFPR:** L. Cornish introduced Nicholas Beauchamp from EFPR, the accounting group that performs the HRA audit.

N. Beauchamp explained that the audit process began in February and continued through May. Financial statements were drafted on May 22, 2023, and can be finalized once they are approved by the Board. Everything was done remotely and went smoothly. The financial statements and compliance came out as unmodified/clean. EFPR identified a financial statement finding.

The finding was related to ERAP, which had a recurring issue. All federal expenditures must be reported, and regrettably, ERAP funding, which was contracted to HRA from the state, was not identified as federal. Going forward, HRA's accounting staff members have a corrected process to ensure proper separation of federal funds.

L. Cornish added that HRA has a financial trial balance that is set up in the chart of accounts. After being set up, it must be reformatted to EOHLC standards in the format they wish to receive it. After 15 days of the reports to EOHLC, these numbers must be reported to HUD with their specific line items and roll-ups. Programs run by HCEC funding are typically only state and not federal and were thus set up as such. Staff members identified in the listing of federal programs that the ERAP funding was not rolled up in the reporting for the December HUD submission.

N. Beauchamp continued, stating that ERAP has ended, so this will not happen again. However, it is vital to double-check funding sources before reporting them. The findings and questioned costs show a significant deficiency here; as there was a finding this year, HRA is no longer considered low risk, which will result in more test work next year.

N. Beauchamp then reviewed the financial results, which were overwhelmingly positive. The cash flow shows that the current ratio of HRA is in a healthy cash position; there is about \$4,400,000 in cash.

S. Worgaftik asked if there are any policies that the Board should be reviewing over the next year to potentially put into place to avoid findings. N. Beauchamp responded, stating that there have been no findings or issues within the authority over the past few years; this was a small oversight of a large dollar amount that caused the finding. Next year HRA will have GASB 96, which will require reporting of software contracts as assets.

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Worgaftik seconded a motion to approve the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority FY22 Financial Audit as presented by EFPR Group, LLP.

17-4380 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

N. Beauchamp left 5:16 p.m.

**HRA May Minutes:** Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2023, regular meeting of the Board as submitted.

17-4381 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

**May AP Warrant:** Commissioner Brown moved, and Commissioner Cucchiara seconded a motion to approve the accounts payable warrant for May 2023.

17-4382 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

**PHA-Web Contract:** N. Sauber stated that PHA-Web is a software company that provides property management and financial management capabilities. HRA has used HAB, an MRI software product, for the past few years; it is outdated and inefficient. PHA-Web offers a better user experience and more transparency with the financials. HRA has struggled to communicate interdepartmentally regarding the budgets; staff members are hopeful that this new software will assist with said communication and make reporting easier for property management. Multiple products have been

compared, and PHA-Web appears to be the best option. It is approximately the same annual cost as HAB, though there is a one-time up-front cost that will be additional.

L. Cornish added that PHA-Web could make HRA a paperless office. N. Sauber noted that this software has document imaging capabilities as well.

F. Williams asked how long the conversion would take. N. Sauber responded by stating that this would likely take a few months as the historical data must be converted before implementation.

S. Worgaftik questioned if HRA staff members were familiar with any other entities currently using this software. N. Sauber responded, stating that over 100 housing authorities in Massachusetts are using PHA-Web. While none of them are known personally, this software company is deeply intertwined with Massachusetts housing authorities. One industry partner was consulted, and they recommended PHA-Web.

G. Govoni added that peers in Taunton and Somerville who use this software have reported being pleased with the product.

N. Sauber continued, stating that the implementation of PHA-Web will begin in December 2023/January 2024.

Commissioner Brown moved, and Commissioner Cucchiara seconded a motion to authorize Gina Govoni, Executive Director, to sign the contract for Computer Software, Maintenance, Training and Support Services with Management Computers Services, Inc. (vendor of PHA-Web software).

17-4383 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

**Updated Job Descriptions:** G. Govoni explained that HRA currently has a policy in place that requires all job descriptions to be presented to the Board for approval if any substantive changes are made.

N. Sauber stated that five job descriptions have had substantial changes made to them; two for HCEC and three for Property Management.

For HCEC, the job descriptions are reflective of a recent change in staffing opportunities. The Housing Counselor will be reduced to 30 hours per week with adjusted responsibilities. The Housing Programs Assistant will increase to 37.5 hours per week with added responsibilities.

L. Brown asked what would occur if these two staff members left their positions, specifically if the job descriptions that are changed to fit the individuals in question would be changed again. G. Govoni responded, stating that this change realigns some of the responsibilities that have been managed by the HCEC Director that suits the staff members in place. Job descriptions are not typically crafted around individual staff members, though this situation was a clean swap. Over this upcoming year, there may be more changes for individuals who wish to grow in their positions. N. Sauber added that within HCEC, there are a lot of opportunities for changes in funding. This change is right-sizing the responsibilities given the shift in the number of hours.

L. Cornish added that HCEC's budgeting year begins on July 1. There are annual discussions around this time to assess how the allotted funding will be spent, which has also affected the job description changes.

F. Williams questioned if the job descriptions could be written to open the positions up to full- or part-time employees. If the job class could state a range of hours, then they may need to be brought to the Board less. L. Cornish responded, stating that the job descriptions are used as hiring tools and are often presented to potential employees, which may complicate this proposal. F. Williams added that two separate job descriptions could be made for each position, one full-time and one part-time. Keeping them as presented poses no issues, but this could be an opportunity to consider.

N. Sauber continued, stating that three Property Management job descriptions are being updated. As the Director of Property and Asset Management and the Modernization and Maintenance Coordinator positions have now been securely held for some time, the job descriptions are being updated to reflect the reality of their workloads. The procurement responsibilities have largely been shifted to the Modernization and Maintenance Coordinator, while the Director of Property and Asset Management retains the reporting and compliance responsibilities, which have been clarified. The Modernization and Maintenance Coordinator's management and oversight of the Maintenance Mechanic Laborers and Custodian has also been added. The Affordable Housing Property Manager job description has been updated to clearly identify the role.

L. Brown asked how many staff members are certified for procurement. N. Sauber explained that Mike Terounzo and Lisa Cornish are the only certified individuals. L. Cornish added that she has delegated each department head as procurement officers in an attempt to equip each department with the knowledge needed to follow all applicable procurement rules.

F. Williams questioned why the Affordable Housing Property Manager is not simply titled the Property Manager, as abridging the title may lead to ease of transition into other potential agency opportunities. G. Govoni responded, stating that this could be changed if so desired. N. Sauber added that there are no objections, and this title change can occur.

Commissioner Worgaftik moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the job description updates for the Housing Counselor, Housing Programs Assistant, Director of Property and Asset Management, Modernization and Maintenance Coordinator, and Affordable Housing Property Manager as presented.

17-4384 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

**Personnel Policy:** N. Sauber explained that administrative language and substantive content changes were made to the HRA Personnel Policy.

The language changes were made specifically regarding references to the Personnel Coordinator. Currently, HRA no longer has an employee who officially functions under that title as the responsibilities have been delegated to other positions; the Executive Administrative Assistant unofficially functions as the Personnel Coordinator, and the Director of Operations similarly functions as the Human Resources Director. As position titles are subject to change, the language in

the Personnel Policy has been adjusted to refer to either human resources staff or the human resources director, where appropriate. Additionally, all references to DHCD have been changed to EOHLC, and the phone numbers listed in the disciplinary policies have been updated.

The major substantive content change is the addition of Section 4.4.6, Workplace Violence Prevention. This section outlines how staff members should behave, the methods in which HRA will react to hostile behavior and HRA's stance on weapons in the workplace. Going forward, staff members will not be permitted to have weapons on any HRA property, including in their vehicles. The Montague Police Department encouraged adding this information to the Personnel Handbook during planning meetings for an active shooter training, which staff members have requested.

S. Worgaftik questioned the exclusion of cyber threats in the new section. N. Sauber clarified that the new section prohibits the use of HRA resources to threaten, stalk, or harass other staff members. S. Worgaftik added that a situation might arise where employees have a disagreement regarding the workplace that could escalate outside of the workplace after online communications. L. Cornish noted that this might be addressed in the Harassment Policy, which N. Sauber echoed.

F. Williams questioned if HRA is authorized to restrict the carrying of guns. N. Sauber responded affirmatively, based on a review of current state laws.

Commissioner Cucchiara moved, and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve of the updated HRA Personnel Policy as presented.

17-4385 Vote 4 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining

### **3. Staff Report**

G. Govoni noted that the housing secretariate is official. HRA staff members are working to replace all mentions of DHCD with EOHLC. Regarding Sanderson Place, the final electrical components have arrived, and installation will begin at 11 p.m. tonight. The installation should be completed within the next three days, with construction slated to occur in the evenings to ensure minimal disruption to residents. Finally, a notice to proceed was received for the Stratton Manor Trombe Wall removal; this project will begin in mid-July.

### **4. Other Business**

R. Bowen Weld announced his resignation from the Board, stating that this would be his final meeting and that a formal resignation letter would be sent.

### **5. Public Participation**

No discussion.

### **6. Adjourn**

M. Cucchiara moved, and L. Brown 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 5:55 p.m.