

MINUTES.
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PORTSMOUTH HOUSING AUTHORITY
February 13, 2019 - 2:00 p.m.
245 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH

Meeting began at 2:05pm.

I. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Vice Chair Schwartz
Commissioner Kennedy
Commissioner Ferrini

LATE ARRIVAL

ABSENT

Chair Griffin
Commissioner Pickering
Commissioner Leith

Also present: Craig Welch, Valerie Labrie, Peter Roche, Attorney John Bosen.

Vice Chair Schwartz acted as Chair for today's meeting, in lieu of Chair Griffin's absence. Quorum was determined to be met, so the meeting could continue.

II. READING OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Kennedy motioned to waive reading of the minutes dated January 9, 2019 and accept as presented. Commissioner Ferrini seconded the motion. There were no additional comments. The motion carried with all in favor.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Welch mentioned the siren on top of a pole near one of the PHA buildings is one of 120 for the nuclear power plant and does not have to move. The RAD application has been submitted, choosing PBV. The Meadows preschool opened, with 4 enrolled. Two more students have enrolled since. The program currently is a half-day program ending at 1:30pm, but we believe the demand would be higher for a full-day program and by April or May, we may do that so the school would be open until 4:30pm. The preschool has 2 teachers. PHA is the landlord. Seacoast Community School is doing their own fundraising for scholarships for the preschool. The ribbon cutting will be pushed from Feb 21 to April or May.

Mr. Welch gave an update on the Wamesit Mold lawsuit and said most of the mold problem in one PHA building was due to construction deficiencies, the most notable being that the bathroom fans were not vented to the outside, but was blowing moist air directly into the insulation in the ceiling. Vice Chair Schwartz asked if residents could claim health conditions caused by PHA. Mr. Welch says it is not black toxic mold.

Mr. Welch reported the Facility Director Michael Gingras has been chosen to participate in the Emerging Leaders program at Primex. There were 200 applicants and only 16 were chosen

including Mr. Gingras. Mr. Welch also reported that Finance Director Valerie Labrie is being appointed to the Board of Directors of the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation. (COAST). Portsmouth Planning Director Juliet Walker is the Chair of this Board. Ms. Labrie's appointment is welcomed because of the inextricable link between affordable housing and transportation and the PHA is proud to have Ms. Labrie serving in this role.

Commissioner Ferrini motioned to accept the Executive Director's Report. Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

The group agreed that Old Business was covered in the Executive Director's Report.

V. NEW BUSINESS

VOTE TO ACCEPT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR THE MC3 AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Mr. Welch explained that the PHA's MC3 After School Program applies for City of Portsmouth public agency grants each year and is typically awarded between \$5,000 and \$10,000 for this program. The funds go into the general fund, day trips, and summer camps. The funding ranges from \$5,000-\$10,000.

Commissioner Kennedy motioned to approve funding for the after-school program for Gosling. Commissioner Ferrini seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

VI. OPERATIONAL REPORTS

Financial Reports

Ms. Labrie mentioned the 2018 Operating Fund proration ended up over 94% and we only budgeted 90%. The operating fund eligibility for each AMP went up as well, so the overall increase we experienced was more than just 4%. There were unexpected funds from CDBG for the playground at Gosling. Rents have been higher. The 2018 capital fund operations and admin fees were higher.

Commissioner Kennedy commented that the PHA continues to build up reserves, and cautioned that while reserves are important, we should be sure to make appropriate investments in PHA properties and warns that there is precedent for HUD taking back reserves.

Discussion ensued about whether additional Central Office Cost Center funds could be allocated to new housing development including our Court Street project. Ms. Labrie explained that in consultation with our Fee Accountant and Auditor, we've confirmed that COCC funds that are earned from property and asset management fees and all the work we do can be used for new

affordable housing development, but that the AMP funds are restricted to investments in those particular properties.

Mr. Welch reported that Unifil is prepared to bring natural gas to Betty's Dream Apartments, but that Betty's Dream has been reluctant to make additional investments in their property, including converting their oil furnace to natural gas. This reluctance stems partially due to the uncertainty of their Property Tax treatment when their PILOT agreement with the City ends next year.

Wait List

Commissioner Kennedy commented that 25% of the people on our waiting list were considered homeless. A discussion ensued about what constitutes homelessness and how we track that percentage.

Vacancy Report

There were no questions or comments.

Rent Collection Report

Ms. Labrie says Rent collected correlates to previous years. Gosling and Wamesit are income-based.

Housing Choice Voucher Utilization Report

Commissioner Kennedy motioned to approve operational reports. Commissioner Ferrini seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Court Street Predevelopment Budget and Expense Summary Reports

Commissioner Kennedy commented on the Architect and Engineering contract and inquired about how much was left to spend to complete construction drawings. Discussion ensued about Court Street costs and timeline.

VII. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

There were no questions or comments.

Commissioner Kennedy motioned to enter into non-public session to discuss personnel matters. Commissioner Ferrini seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Commissioner Kennedy motioned to come out of non-public session to discuss personnel matters. Commissioner Ferrini seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

February 13, 2019

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Ferrini motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig W. Welch
Secretary

Accepted by: Ruth L. Griffin
Chair

Amy Schwartz
Vice Chair

Date