

MINUTES OF THE
HINGHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

A Regular Meeting of the Hingham Housing Authority was duly called and held on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., 30 Thaxter Street, Hingham, MA and upon a call of the roll, the following Commissioners were found present and absent:

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Janine Suchecki	None
James Watson	
Megan Buhr	
Irma Lauter	
Gregory O'Meara, Chair	

Also present were: James Marathas, Executive Director, Terry Champion, Recording Secretary, as well as members of the public

Pledge of Allegiance

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading and Consideration of the Minutes from the February 11, 2020, Regular Board Meeting

Commissioner Buhr asked that the second paragraph on page two of the minutes be separated into two paragraphs and that the sentence, "Mr. Marathas sent a letter to tenants to address concerns." be re written to say "Mr. Marathas sent a letter to tenants to address concerns regarding the new management agreement."

The Recording Secretary stated she would make that change.

Commissioners Watson said that although he voted no on the adoption of the management agreement, he would like the minutes to reflect that he voted no, due to the process being too quick. It was agreed by the Commissioners that this will be reflected in this evenings' minutes.

Commissioner Lauter made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Suchecki, to approve the Minutes from the February 11, 2020, Regular Board Meeting, as amended, with Commissioner Buhrs' revisions. The motion passed unanimously.

Report from Tenant Association

Mr. Marathas said the staff will work on notifying tenants, delivering flyers, and holding meetings on the procedure to form a formal Tenant Association.

Motions

Mr. Marathas passed around a new design for the Hingham Housing Authority logo. It was briefly discussed and decided this should be sent to Town Hall to see if they have any objections to using the new logo.

Commissioner Lauter made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Buhr, to approve the new Hingham Housing Authority Logo. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Marathas explained the new proposed Tenant Rent Collection Policy.

Commissioner Buhr asked if arrangements could be made for tenants who were unable to pay their rent. Mr. Marathas said that the tenants are charged 30% of their income for rent, however, stated yes payment arrangements can be made in extreme situations.

Mr. Marathas said that meetings would be held with the tenants to explain the Tenant Rent Collection Policy and tenants that opt not to participate in direct withdrawal could mail their payments. These payments would be made to a bank and treated as lock box payments. After a brief discussion on the proposed policy, the following vote was made:

Commissioner Suchecki made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lauter, to approve the new Tenant Rent collection Policy with an effective date of April 1, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Marathas explained that the next motion is involving landlord payments under the Section 8 Voucher Program. This would enable landlords to receive their payments via direct deposits. There are currently 25 participants in the Section 8 program. The Board did not have any objections to this policy.

Commissioner Suchecki made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lauter, to approve mandatory direct deposit payments to all Housing Choice Voucher landlords. This procedure will be effective on April 1, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Marathas asked the Board to vote on the approval of the purchase of a public official's management and employment practices liability insurance policy.

Commissioner Suchecki made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lauter, to approve the purchase of a public official's management and employment practices liability insurance policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Marathas said the inspections have resulted in several hundred work orders being issued. There are a lot of plumbing issues that are being addressed.

The painter has been in and has painted the vacant five units. A nice neutral color was chosen.

The Floor Coverer has completed new flooring on the five vacant units.

Mr. Marathas went over the new work order procedures with the Commissioners.

Mr. Marathas explained the vacancy check lists for the elderly and family units.

Mr. Marathas explained the time sheet adjustment form to the Commissioners. This form would need to be filled out in the event an employee forgets to clock in or out using the time system.

The new hours are in effect.

The new payroll system is up and running.

Mr. Marathas explained that the current employee works six consecutive hours a day, and has not been taking the required ½ hour lunch break. This employee has asked to be allowed to work the six hours without a ½ hour break. Mr. Marathas has asked the employee to sign a release that this request is being made by her. Commissioner Suchecki opposed the employee being able to opt out of the required lunch break. All other commissioners were fine with this. No vote was necessary on this request.

The recertifications are being done by staff and will be reviewed by a staff member at QHA to ensure accuracy in rents.

QHA staff will be sending out screening packets and interviewing applicants for tenancy. Under the new state mandated CHAMP system, this is a cumbersome process that would be too burdensome on one office employee.

Lease enforcement is underway. The Property Manager will meet with all residents who are violating the no smoking policy.

Other items as may not be reasonably known within 48 hours of the meeting.

Commissioner O'Meara brought up the Coronavirus. Mr. Marathas explained that flyers will be handed out to each resident and posted in the buildings. These flyers were downloaded from the CDC's website and explained the Authority will do its best to keep tenants informed following the Governor and DHCDs guidelines for Housing Authorities.

Chairman O'Meara asked for a new vote on the amendment to the management agreement. The Chairman rewrote the agreement and handed out the amendment for the Commissioners review.

Commissioner Lauter made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Suchecki, to adopt the amendment to the management agreement as presented tonight. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Suchecki asked that the e by laws be reviewed and revised at some point in the future.

The next Board Meeting will be held on April 14th at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business, Commissioner Lauter made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Watson to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Champion
Recording Secretary