

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
of the
PORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**

March 2, 2017

The meeting of the Portland Housing Authority was held at 14 Baxter Blvd., Portland, Maine. Upon roll call, quorum is declared. Meeting called to order by Shirley Peterson, Chairperson, at 5:38pm.

PRESENT	ABSENT
Shirley Peterson, Chairperson Evan Carroll, Vice-Chair Mariar Balow, Commissioner Faith McLean, Commissioner (call-in) Christian MilNeil, Commissioner Mark Adelson, Executive Director Jay Waterman, Development Director Trevor Nugent, Director, Public Housing Jan Bosse, Director, Housing Services Richard Biggs, Acting Director, Facilities Lourdes Alvarez, Administrative Support Specialist	Siyad Ahmed, Commissioner Tom Valleau, Commissioner

1. Resolution to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting of February 2, 2017.

Resolution #2852

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the minutes of the regular meeting of January 5, 2017, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Christian MilNeil, Commissioner and second by Evan Carroll, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

AYES

Shirley Peterson, Chairperson
 Evan Carroll, Vice-Chairperson
 Mariar Balow, Commissioner
 Faith McLean, Commissioner
 Christian MilNeil, Commissioner

NAYS

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

2. Development update/Executive Director's Report

Development Director Jay Waterman presented his update. The permanent loan closing for Bayside Anchor has not been completed as final requisitions are being submitted by Ryan Construction. The project's soft costs were higher than estimated but there is still money in the contingency budget which will allow the project to break even. The building's passive house certification is in the works and AVESTA Housing is applying for a reader's choice award for the project. He continued his report with an update on the 58 Boyd Street and Front Street projects. He is currently working with the City of Portland looking into the changes in zoning through the Division 30 clause for affordable housing. If present proposal is approved, no zoning changes will be required for these projects to move forward. Jay Waterman reviewed the detail in the City's proposal with the Board. He added that the City may take the lead on the zone changes; more neighborhood meetings will be required. The environmental review is in progress and a relocation consultant has been hired to begin planning relocation of current residents at Front Street. Mr. Waterman is also looking into a property for sale near the development whose lot size would increase real estate foot print for the Front Street Project.

Mr. Adelson reminded board members of the upcoming meeting dates, including the next board meeting on April 6, and the next Finance Committee meeting on March 21.

3. Finance Committee

Commissioner Christian MilNeil reviewed meeting discussion as presented in the committee minutes. He highlighted a few noticeable facts on the budgets. Currently, rental income is tracking higher than projected and Public Housing operating subsidies and utilities are tracking below budgeted amounts. Central Office (COCC) reserves were also discussed in regards to HUD's possibility of re-federalizing these funds. A portion of the monies was suggested to be transferred into a different business account while still keeping reasonable reserves in place and will seek board approval for transfer. Current cell tower lease on Harbor Terrace was discussed due to Verizon's interest in leasing space for an antenna on the roof of the building.

4. Resolution: Adoption of Amended and Restated Code of PHA By-Laws

Mr. Adelson reminded the board members of the changes as reviewed by attorney and discussed at the last board meeting. He proceeded to summarize the changes as written in the by law and presented in the meeting agenda packet. Most of the changes were clarifications in the language and indemnification clause was added.

Resolution #2853

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the amended and restated by-laws (see attached), be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Evan Carroll, Commissioner and second by Christian MilNeil, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

AYES

NAYS

Shirley Peterson, Chairperson
Evan Carroll, Vice-Chairperson
Mariar Balow, Commissioner
Faith McLean, Commissioner
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

5. Resolution: Authorization to transfers \$1.5 million from the Central Office Cost Center (COCC) reserve account to the Business Activities Account for the purpose of funding a variety of housing activities, to include but not limited to; housing development, capital improvements, resident services and program deficits.

Mr. Adelson again reviewed the proposal discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting and the reasoning behind the transfer based on HUD’s intention to re-federalize funds in the Central Account. Business activities account transfer will provide more flexibility for the use of the funds. The recommendation by Finance Director Larry Giddinge is to move half the funds from the COCC to a PHA business activities account. There are no concerns with the transfer as the pension liability will still be well funded with the reserve left in place in the COCC account.

Resolution #2854

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the above authorization for money transfer, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Christian MilNeil, Commissioner and second by Evan Carroll, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

AYES

NAYS

Shirley Peterson, Chairperson
Evan Carroll, Vice-Chairperson
Mariar Balow, Commissioner
Faith McLean, Commissioner
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

6. Review proposed 2017 Annual Agency Plan and Capital Fund Program

Mr. Adelson commented that the review of the draft plan is in the middle of the public comment period. The public comment meeting will be held prior to the next board meeting on Thursday, March 23. The draft was

presented at the Resident Advisory Board meeting last week and was well received. Most of the issues discussed were connected with the no smoking regulations at the developments. He reviewed the change summaries as presented in the meeting agenda.

Trevor Nugent, Director of Public Housing, proceeded to review the ACOP changes. He focused on the major changes on the criminal background check to balance resident safety with reasonable opportunity to client. Revised policy is in line with HUD recommendations. Change is also in line with the voucher program policy. Mr. Nugent clarified the difference between convictions and arrests with no conviction, in regards to eligibility. With no disposition, an investigation will be required before a decision is made on a new resident. Board members suggested a possible wording change – criminal activity could be replaced with criminal conviction to make the policy crystal clear, especially in drug related incidents. Board member stated that drug related criminal activity should be held to a higher standard. Jan Bosse, Director of Housing Services, mentions that criminal activity covers instances where HCV inspectors find evidence of activity in units. Mr. Adelson said that items discussed will be redrafted to incorporate suggestions on language changes. Mr. Nugent also reviewed the proposed change on the waitlist preferences regarding the homeless preference. The change would cap the number of residents receiving the homeless preference. He discussed the background behind the decision to incorporate this change. PHA data revealed a high correlation between homelessness with problem behavior at properties. Safety is the recurring theme behind the decision and a way to address issues at developments with the goal of improving the management and safety issues at all the properties. Concerns are expressed in regards to the policy as it appears to go against the goal of housing homeless. Mr. Nugent reiterates that the agency is trying to keep safety concerns under control while still assisting homeless applicants. Discussion ensues on this moderate policy change in light of what is fair to clients and the key to their success in case management and services available to them. Other proposed changes include: the clarification of costs and who bears the costs when residents are transferred within development properties, a policy in regards to Tenant Participation funds and updated VAWA guidelines.

Jan Bosse presented the proposed administrative plan changes. She highlighted the changes as documented, reviewing the additional changes to criminal activities policies that go with eligibility and termination of assistance. She reviewed the changes in the criteria for denial of assistance and the clarifications on investigations of reported criminal activities. Also, she reviewed income considerations when student financial assistance is part of the reported income and educational fees as part of reported expenses. She added that this is part of the income verification process when a voucher is assigned. Language was added to clarify fee charges when re-inspections are required. HUD regulation does not allow costs to be passed on to the residents by the landlord. The major change is the establishment of a new preference in regards to rent burden – consideration of applicants that pay 50% or more of their income for housing – and how the preference would be weighed in the process. This is in response to the amount of folks who already receive assistance who have received vouchers in the past year. The question – is receiving a voucher while being in public housing seen as a step up or step out? Board members discussed the the pros and cons of instituting this preference. Board members suggested that the preference language should be amended to include PHA households who are participating in FSS to keep the door open to Public Housing residents to move up in their housing opportunities and be able to move into home ownership. Mr. Adelson concluded the presentation thanking the commissioners for their input on these complicated issues. The re-draft with possible changes will be presented at the April meeting for approval.

He proceeded to review the plan for the Capital Improvement Programs. Two of the programs are currently open with priorities in Fiscal Year 2016 being reviewed. Mr. Adelson presented the Board with a summary of the foreseen projects with the caveat that some of these may be split between Fiscal Year 2016 and Fiscal Year 2017. Of note, is the fire alarm system at Franklin Towers, and the move of the Head Start program from Sagamore Village to Riverton Park. Opportunity Alliance is also providing funds for the Head Start renovations. Water meters need to be installed at Riverton Park , one for each of the residential circles, as currently only one water meter services the whole development; and water lines are in need of updating . Special projects were highlighted noting that monies are still being balanced between the two open programs. Again, final version will be presented at the April meeting for approval.

With no other business on the agenda, motion to end meeting moved by Commissioner Christian MilNeil, second by Commissioner Evan Carroll.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14pm.