

FALMOUTH HOUSING AUTHORITY
COMMISSIONERS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom
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The Falmouth Housing Authority conducted a General Session Commissioners Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. via a virtual meeting pursuant to Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law dated March 12, 2020. The public could join in the meeting by going to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81612379938>; Meeting ID: 816 1237 9938 or dial 1-646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 816 1237 9938; and follow the instructions to join virtual meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Patricia Favulli
Linda Howard
Robert Mascali
Stephen Patton (*arrived at 4:34 p.m.*)

STAFF PRESENT: Bobbi Richards, Executive Director
Leslie Pearce, Assistant Director
Kimberly Conn, Fiscal Officer

OTHERS: Laura Bancroft
Carrie Gentile

Call to Order

Ms. Favulli called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.
She noted that Mr. Mascali had to leave the meeting at a certain time and so requested a vote to take items out of order.

Resolution 2020-133

Ms. Howard moved to take items out of order. Mr. Mascali seconded.
3-Ayes (Favulli, Howard, Mascali) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes – General Session, December 29, 2020 - VOTE -

Resolution 2020-134

Mr. Patton moved to approve the Minutes of December 29, 2020. Mr. Mascali seconded.
4-Ayes (Favulli, Howard, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

Annual budget- VOTE

Ms. Favulli informed the Commissioners that the vote on the annual budget would be tabled.

-Flat rent increase from \$1000 to \$1100 per month – VOTE

Ms. Howard requested an abstention from the vote. Ms. Richards recommended an effective date of April 1st, 2021 to allow for a full 60-day notice to tenants in preparation of the change.

Resolution 2020-135

Mr. Patton moved to approve the flat increase, effective 4/1/21, to \$1100 for federal public housing. Mr. Mascali seconded.

3-Ayes (Favulli, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays 1-Abstention (Howard) MOTION CARRIED

-Emergency revision to federal 5-year plan for public housing to include additional items related to the Harborview piping project and portfolio-wide needs – VOTE

Ms. Richards reported that the housing authority has worked with HUD to reopen its capital plan as an emergency, which does not require a (public) comment period. It has been reopened to address the cost for relocation for tenants during the piping repairs. The estimated stay for alternative household has increased to approximately 9- 10 days. The cost is estimated to be \$90k for. She sought the commissioners' approval for this emergency revision.

Resolution 2020-136

Mr. Mascali moved to approve the revised Federal Capital Fund Plan as presented for 2020-2024. Mr. Patton seconded.

3-Ayes (Favulli, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays 1-Abstention (Howard) MOTION CARRIED

-Falmouth 5001 Amendment 6: FY2022/FY2023/FY2024 State Formula Funding Awards and others – VOTE

Ms. Richards reported that this additional funding (approx.. \$130k) could be used assist in the rehabilitation of two 705 units located on Oak Street and on Brick Kiln Road.

Resolution 2020-137

Mr. Patton moved to approve Falmouth 5001 Amendment 6 FY2022, FY2023, FY2024. Ms. Howard seconded.

4-Ayes (Favulli, Howard, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

New Business

Public and Tenant Representative comments: None offered.

Report of the Maintenance Department

-Harborview piping project update

Ms. Richards reported that materials are on site and investigative work is being done. The building permit, required for work to commence, has not yet been approved. Mr. Patton asked if there was a reason for the delay. Ms. Richards shared that the contractor filed the building permit the week prior. Ms. Favulli noted that the permit process may take up to 30 days.

-Harborview administrative office generator project update

Ms. Richards reported that has been completed and testing will be done on the 25th. Tenants will be informed about possible, brief power outages as testing is done. As this is a separate generator, it may not affect the tenants located in the Harborview building. Notices will be given as a precaution only.

Report of the Fiscal Officer

-Payment of Bills and HAP. Ms. Richards asked for comments on the change in format for the presentation of the HAP payments by monthly allocations to landlords. Mr. Patton commented that the revised format was acceptable; Ms. Conn shared that both formats will be provided to Commissioners moving forward since the vote is based on the HAP register calculation. Ms. Favulli asked if two (2) would be required, Ms. Conn noted that only one (1) vote would be needed – for the HAP register.

Resolution 2020-138

Mr. Patton moved to approve the payment of the bills and HAP payments. Ms. Howard seconded.

4-Ayes (Favulli, Howard, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

-Financial reports review for November 2020

Ms. Conn shared that for the month of December there will be increased extraordinary maintenance expenses due to apartment rehabilitations. The actual budget should also be available when this month is reviewed.

Report of the Executive Director

-Portfolio update, vacancies, and late rents review

Ms. Richards reported that the housing authority is working to get units online. It is studying whether temporary housing could be used by accessing vacant units in Harborview. This requires the furnishing and sanitizing of furnishings provided if vacant apartments are to be used to house tenants. Ms. Richards shared the areas within the tenant units that have to be cleared in order for work to be performed.

The FHA is working on late rents. Tenants must have been affected by Covid-19 to qualify in most cases. In many cases tenants have retained employment through the pandemic. In many cases tenants have been reluctant to apply to entities for help with rents. The FHA is just starting to serve notices. Phone calls are being placed to tenants almost weekly. The goal is to not serve notice and evict but rather to have tenants honor their lease agreements.

In the state public housing family units (705s) the rate of those behind in their rents is approximately 60%. In public elderly/disabled housing, the rate of those with past due rents is lower but there are delinquent rents even though their rents are primarily based on fixed incomes (not employment-based). Ms. Howard shared that some tenants have experienced higher grocery costs, which may have led to delinquent rents.

-Annual Town of Falmouth Campaign Finance Report due January 22, 2021

FHA submitted the annual Town of Falmouth's Campaign Finance report to the Town clerk on today.

-No Smoking Policy

Ms. Richards asked that the Commissioners consider granting relief for the smoking policy. She noted that HUD requires a smoking policy but that some housing authorities have designated smoking areas for their properties. FHA does not have a designated area for smoking. She asked that the Commissioners consider a designated smoking area since tenants can not now smoke on grassy areas or in cars. Smoking is a health concern but this is a difficult issue for administration to enforce. Two (2) eviction notices were issued for smoking last week. The housing authority provides no smoking resources, such as the patch or other options. FHA recently had a fire that is related to smoking in the unit. If a designated location is granted for the properties, the housing authority would work with the fire department to find an appropriate location. Mr. Mascali asked for a copy of the current policy to be forwarded to the Commissioners to review. Ms. Howard noted that there are tenants with serious issues, such as COPD.

-Board Meeting Date for DHCD in March for State Capital Plan

Notification published for the public hearing required for the state capital plan for 3/16/21. The housing authority will send a copy of the state capital plan for FHA to all state tenants. A board vote will be requested in March.

-Update regarding eviction moratorium for federal and state properties

It was expected that the moratorium will be extended. Tenants are being urged to apply for relief funding. Traditionally the housing authority has accepted payment agreements at the court house because historically payment agreements made in house had no weight. The agreements would be made, then generally not followed and the housing authority would have to go to court to establish new agreements. DHCD has recommended, under COVID, that housing authorities engage tenants to sign in-house agreements so the housing authority will follow this recommendation at this time. It appears that the recent extensions under the moratorium are now addressing landlord relief, which is helpful to the housing authority and its landlords.

Ms. Favulli noted that the review of the leased housing summary was not included on the agenda. Comments can be addressed, if any, at the next meeting when the summary listed.

Mr. Patton asked about the waiting list and the closing procedure. Ms. Richards shared that the waiting list for Section 8 is approximately 6-10 years. Ms. Richards also shared that the waiting list for Section 8 is reviewed to determine if any Mainstream Vouchers can be issued based certain information such as age, disabled status, etc. Mr. Patton requested information regarding the size of the waiting lists for various programs.

Resolution 2020-139

At 5:06 p.m. Mr. Patton moved to adjourn. Linda Howard seconded.

4-Ayes (Favulli, Howard, Mascali, Patton) 0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

Relevant Documents

Falmouth 5001 Amendment No. 6, Award letters, and sample vote and meeting formats from DHCD

FHA Tenant Flat Rent Public Housing Summary – 3 tenants

General Session Minutes of 12/29/20 Draft

FHA Newsletter for January 2021

FHA Vacancy Turnover Report

Falmouth Financial Statements for November 2020

HUD Revised 5 Year Capital Plan for 2020-2024

Monthly Leased Housing Summary for January 2021

State Public Hearing Agenda (including capital improvement plan)

Monthly Landlord Payments Register for December 2020