

FALMOUTH HOUSING AUTHORITY  
COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, December 19, 2022

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The Falmouth Housing Authority conducted a General Session Commissioners Board Meeting on Monday, December 19, 2022. The general session began at 4:30 p.m. The meetings will be held 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 were invited to join in the general session meeting by going to:

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89107171176> Meeting ID: 891 0717 1176  
Audio Access: 1-646-558-8656 Meeting ID: 891 0717 1176

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patricia Favulli  
Michael Galasso  
Kathleen Haynes  
Steve Patton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Robert Mascali

STAFF PRESENT: Bobbi Richards, Executive Director  
Leslie Pearce, Assistant Director  
Chuck Starr, Fiscal Officer  
Michael Coffey, Maintenance Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT: Laura Bancroft  
Tricia Rush, Power Options; Derek Howell, Power Options  
Maureen McIver, Independent Recording Secretary

OPEN SESSION

At 4:30 p.m. Patricia Favulli called the meeting to order.

Patricia Favulli requested a motion to take items out of order to accommodate a presentation.

Resolution 2023-054

Steve Patton moved to take items out of order. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

PowerOptions- Tricia Rush and Derek Howell

-Presentation:

Tricia Rush noted that she has been handling the FHA energy accounts for many years. She reviewed that 1.5 years ago, the Board had agreed to a gas contract through December of 2023. The issue under consideration today involved electricity. Tricia Rush's professional opinion was that energy prices would continue to increase, and she offered several scenarios for the Board to consider as they contemplated the issue.

The Board was in agreement that it seemed likely that energy prices would continue to rise and that it was best to lock into prices for a defined term.

-PowerOptions Energy Strike Price – VOTE

Resolution 2023-055

Steve Patton moved to accept the 2-year option for electricity as presented by PowerOptions at the next available strike price. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Minutes

-Executive Session 11/21/22 – VOTE

Resolution 2023-056

Kathleen Haynes moved to approve but not release the minutes of the executive session on 11/21/22. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye  
4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)                      0-Nays                      MOTION CARRIED

-General Session 11/21/22 – VOTE

Resolution 2023-057

Kathleen Haynes moved to accept the minutes of 11/21/22 as recorded. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)                      0-Nays                      MOTION CARRIED

Public Comments

None.

No Smoking Policy – Establishment of a Designated Smoking Area – VOTE

Bobbi Richards reviewed her understanding of the issue:

Several years ago, when the federal government established no smoking on federal property, one year was given to allow tenants to move if they could not comply with the policy. Some housing authorities have no designated smoking area, some of them do have designated areas, some of which are covered, some of which are 25' from the buildings.

A discussion included the following:

- The cost to renovate a smoker's unit is 2-3 times the cost to renovate the unit of a non-smoker.
- Evicting a tenant for smoking by the court process is seldom successful. Instead, there is usually an agreement put in place with the tenant.
- It should be remembered that smoking is an addiction, with all that that implies.
- People are not stopping smoking.
- About 50% of tenants are smokers.
- Neighboring businesses have complained that tenants are smoking on their properties.
- HUD requires and FHA offers smoking cessation programs.
- A tenant has requested a smoking monitor. Even though requested, the legalities of a monitoring device in a unit are questionable.
- The fire at Tatakot, believed but not conclusively determined to be caused by tenant smoking, cost \$40,000 to remediate.
- The present policy is very strict with no smoking allowed on the grounds, including cars. Tenants have no option.
- A designated smoking area would not mean that the Board or the FHA approves of smoking. People are smoking in units and damaging property.
- A tenant has requested that if a smoking area is designated that it be located to not allow smoke to drift into nearby units.

Resolution 2023-058

Steve Patton moved to direct the administration to proceed with the building of smoking shelters with the consideration that smoke from the shelters not drift into nearby units, understanding that

smoking is not allowed in the property or within 25' of the buildings. The shelters should be covered. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

3 Ayes (Favulli, Haynes, Patton)

1-Nays (Galasso)

MOTION CARRIED

#### Maintenance Department update and portfolio review

Michael Coffee noted that the staff is outstanding. Supply issues have been a concern. The 705s that are already offline are being winterized. Michael Galasso said that he would like Michael Coffee to be involved in the rehab projects. Michael Coffee said that a regular maintenance walkthrough could help get maintenance more involved. Bobbi Richards noted that Michael Coffee has been involved with an electrician as work is done upgrading lighting at Tatakot.

#### Report of the Fiscal Officer

-Payment of bills and HAP payments – VOTE

#### Resolution 2023-059

Steve Patton moved to accept bills and HAP payments as presented today. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

-Review of monthly financials, public housing aging reports

Chuck Starr said that work with tenants and support agencies is ongoing to get tenants caught up on their rents. Bobbi Richards noted that thanks to the good memory and diligent work of Leslie Pearce, approximately \$2,000 was recovered from a decades-old debt owed the FHA.

#### Report of the Assistant Director

-Leased housing report:

Leslie Pearce noted that the focus lately has been on Mainstream vouchers where the number of lease ups has increased; the numbers in the regular housing portfolio have dropped slightly. All else is status quo. Leslie Pearce observed that last year at this time there were 50 vacancies, many due to people passing away. This year there are 9 federal vacancies and 4 state vacancies, not including units approved to be offline by DHCD or HUD.

#### Report of the Executive Director

-January meeting date:

The commissioners agreed to a meeting date of January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

-Development of Solar Array Committee

The committee determined the following:

- Michael Galasso and Kathleen Haynes will serve on the committee. Michael Galasso will chair.
- Members must be Falmouth residents.
- Bobbi Richards has sought members of the public to serve.

- Dan Webb and Megan Amsler have expressed an interest in serving.
- Harold David Leslie has also expressed an interest. His CV will be reviewed at the next meeting.

**-Portable Space Heater Guidance – DHCD – VOTE**

A concern was expressed about liability and heaters provided by the FHA. Bobbi Richards will seek clarification from Rogers Gray to provide to the Commissioners at the next meeting.

-Bobbi Richards reported that HUD has asked for additional clarification regarding the emergency request for Tatakert apartments. Winslow has been invited to the next meeting to provide the revised scope to the Commissioners for comment.

-The request for approval to advertise the RFPs for project-based units still awaits HUD final approval.

- Michael Galasso requested that the Town of Falmouth’s grant RFP be discussed at the January meeting.

Resolution 2023-060

At 5:40 p.m. Kathleen Haynes moved to adjourn. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

4 Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Patton)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

Next meeting: Monday, January 23, 2023

Items for agenda due by: Tuesday, January 10, 2023

Relevant Documents

HUD Flyer: Smoke-free Policy – Preparing for Your Smoke-Free Home and information from HUD (Email 8.31.22), FHA Tenant comments

Vacancy Review – December 2022

Draft Portable Heater Policy December 2022

PowerOptions Energy Review December 2022 & Sample strike point

Draft Minutes of Executive Session November 21, 2022

Draft Minutes of General Session November 21, 2022

Responses from MA Housing Authorities regarding Smoke Free Designated Areas December 2022

Leased Housing Report December 2022

HAP Accounting Cash Payment/receipt Register, November 2022

Year to Date Landlord Payment History Report, November 2022

Public Housing Aging Report, November 2022

Draft Portable Heater Policy Draft, November 2022

Portable Space Heater Guidance from DHCD, November 2022

Portable Space Heater Policy, W. Bridgewater Housing Authority, December 2022

Portable Space Heater Policy, Dennis Housing Authority, December 2020

Advertisement for Solar Array Committee, December 2022