

FALMOUTH HOUSING AUTHORITY -GENERAL SESSION COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

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The Falmouth Housing Authority conducted a General Session Commissioners Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 2022. The general session began at 4:30 p.m. and was 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/85955974196> Meeting ID: 859 5597 4196
Audio Access: 1-646-558-8656 Meeting ID: 859 5597 4196

MEMBERS PRESENT: Patricia Favulli
Michael Galasso
Kathleen Haynes
Robert Mascali - *(left meeting at approx 6:08 pm; returned to meeting at approx..6:20 p.m.)*
Stephen Patton

STAFF PRESENT: Bobbi Richards, Executive Director
Leslie Pearce, Assistant Director
Chuck Starr, Fiscal Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Laura Bancroft
Judy Ellis
John Massey, Director - Southeast Regional Capital Assistance Team, Taunton Housing Authority
Kyle Moore, Project Manager - Southeast Regional Capital Assistance Team, Taunton Housing Authority
Craig Bardsley, Top Neck Design
Linda Clark, Falmouth Housing Corporation
Carrie Gentile, Falmouth Enterprise

Call to Order

At 4:35 p.m. Patricia Favulli called the meeting to order.

Items were taken out of order to accommodate the schedules of those in attendance.

Public Comments

Judy Ellis, a Harborview tenant for the past 13 years, said that she is concerned with animosity at Harborview, both among the tenants themselves and directed at Bobbi Richards by the tenants. As a tenant, she has been in contact with Bobbi Richards as well as with 2 previous Directors. She said that Bobbi Richards is most amicable and is doing what should be done for the Falmouth Housing Authority. She added that tenants find fault and blame the Director for anything even if the Director is in no way responsible.

Patricia Favulli said that the comments were appreciated but the Commissioners could not comment at this time because of Open Meeting Laws.

Report of Maintenance Department

-Tatakot Apartments – 138 Teaticket Hwy – Power Outage Update

Bobbi Richards and Leslie Pearce reported that a transformer failed causing a power outage in Teaticket. Part of the Tatakot building lost power. A second transformer then failed affecting only Tatakot in the area. Eversource provided emergency generators and staff knocked on doors checking on tenants. Coffee and donuts were provided in the community during the early morning hours as tenants waited for the electricity to come back on.

-Administration Building – Flood

A pipe burst on the first floor and water flooded into the basement. An alarm alerted at 4:30 a.m. and maintenance met with the Fire Department at that time. An insurance claim has been filed and staff is working to save documents affected by the flood. The \$10,000 deductible will likely be exceeded. Funds set aside for general emergencies could be used to cover. Plans had been underway to shred or digitize the 40-50 years' worth of documents stored. The plumber said that this kind of unit that failed is no longer made and options are being investigated.

-Contract Awarded to Top Neck Design (Pocasset) for two (2) unit turns at Rose Morin Lane - \$34k – VOTE

A discussion included the following:

- Bobbi Richards reported that HUD had been contacted to determine funding options for two (2) unit turns that require extraordinary maintenance.
- The contract went out to bid on the 2 most damaged units. It is anticipated that work will take 5-7 days. Top Neck Design was the only respondent to the invitation to bid.
- Michael Galasso asked what the scope of work was.
- Bobbi Richards noted it was provided in Commissioners packets sent out previously.
- Michael Galasso said that he got the packet and requested that Bobbi Richards read aloud the scope of work; Bobbi Richards read the scope of work aloud.
- Michael Galasso asked how long the units had been vacant.
- Leslie Pearce said that one since the end of August and the other since the end of November. Both had housed tenants long term, tenants were deceased and had significant damage from heavy smoking.
- Michael Galasso asked for estimated completion and lease up dates.
- When completed one unit will be staged and videoed for marketing purposes.

Resolution 2022-051

Kathleen Haynes moved to grant the Contract Awarded to Top Neck Design (Pocasset) for two (2) unit turns at Rose Morin Lane - \$34k. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Robert Mascali-aye

Steve Patton-aye

5- Ayes (Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Mascali, Patton)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

-Certificate of Substantial Completion – J.W. Dubuis- DHCD #096075 – 42 Jamie Ln Septic Repl – AMEND VOTE

Bobbi Richards explained that last time a vote was taken for final completion rather than substantial completion. The Town sign off has been received. The original resolution number for this vote will not change.

Resolution 2022-043

Robert Mascali moved to amend the vote from final completion taken previously to substantial completion. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye
Michael Galasso-aye
Kathleen Haynes-aye
Robert Mascali-aye
Steve Patton-aye

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

-Certificate of Final Completion – J.W. Dubuis – DHCD #096075 – 42 Jamie Ln Septic

Repl- \$6878.00 – VOTE

Resolution 2022-052

Kathleen Haynes moved to grant Certificate of Final Completion to J.W. Dubuis – DHCD #096075 – 42 Jamie Ln Septic. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye
Michael Galasso-aye
Kathleen Haynes-aye
Robert Mascali-aye
Steve Patton-aye

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

-Certificate of Final Completion – MaxiClean, Co, inc. - \$6,700.00 re: 130 Edgewater Dr W – VOTE

Leslie Pearce reported that cleaning was done down to the subfloors. Next week insulation is being installed at no cost to FHA. Heat pumps are under consideration. Michael Galasso observed that no locals bid on the contract. What can be done to attract local contractors?

Patricia Favulli noted there were no local respondents to several offers to bid. Bobbi Richards suggested asking John Massey this question. The work had been listed in the Central Resister.

Michael Galasso again asked what could be done to attract local contractors. Bobbi Richards said that FHA regularly contacts local vendors to solicit pricing and invite vendors to bid on available projects noting that they regularly take pictures of the back of work vehicles during their commutes and contact those vendors to introduce themselves. It seems that many contractors do not either have the time or are interested in additional work at this time.

Michael Galasso again asked what could be done to attract local contractors. Bobbi Richards asked Michael Galasso to share recommendations. Michael Galasso said that getting people together, inviting people to a talk or a meeting would be good. EDIC, the Chamber and Mike Duffany could participate and he would be happy to organize.

Resolution 2022-053

Robert Mascali moved to approve the Certificate of Final Completion for MaxiClean, Co, Inc. - \$6,700.00 for contract services provided at 130 Edgewater Dr W. Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye
Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye
Robert Mascali-aye
Steve Patton-aye

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

-Department of Housing & Community Development – John Massey; Craig Bardsley, Top Neck Designs (Pocasset).

A discussion included the following:

- John Massey explained that his team did not work directly for DHCD but worked through the Taunton Housing Authority which has a contract with DHCD. He had been a Superintendent of Maintenance for 13 years.
- Bobbi Richards explained that she had invited John Massey to speak to the Board of Commissioners as he has worked with FHA on planning projects. FHA is currently working with John and Kyle on Capital Improvement Plan for state properties. She said questions and concerns could be directed to John Massey that had previously been posed to FHA regarding the process of obtaining funding and selecting projects, as well as any other state project concerns.
- Michael Galasso said that he has been in affordable housing for 40 years and obviously there is a housing crisis. Turnovers are a concern. He said he owns affordable units and he takes a week for turnovers.
- John Massey said that this topic could be a lengthy conversation. He noted that he had previously worked in the private sector and had to learn a lot when he began work in the public sector. Things are different in the public sector. Here there are layers when dealing with maintenance issues, lots of hoops to jump through and it takes time to get things done. If the project is less than \$10,000 then it can be quicker but even then, there are requirements that must be met. For example, if a project bid was approved the day after this meeting, a vote of the board would be needed but not taken up until a month from now. If a project is greater than \$10,000, it must be in the Central Register for 2 weeks. Even a small project is likely to take 3 months to move. If a project can be done in-house, it could be done more quickly.
- Michael Galasso said that he has heard all the reasons. He is interested in how to improve so things can get done more quickly.
- John Massey said that if he doesn't know all the pieces, it is hard to answer. One consideration is the Capital Plan. Funding is a problem for FHA. For example, there is an estimated cost of \$500,000 to replace windows at Salt Sea and Choate Lane.
- Bobbi Richards reminded that the Board of Health cited the FHA for the failing thermopane glass windows at Salt Sea. Bobbi stated that the rehabilitation at Edgewater is estimated to cost \$200,000k. Each of these items exceeds the annual funding.
- Michael Galasso said that the state is giving \$150 million to housing authorities. He is tired of hearing about money as an excuse. He wished for a master list of existing problems that could be presented to representatives. He said that he did not buy into the excuse of there being no money.
- John Massey said that the funding help is very welcomed, absolutely. Additionally, he said that he has provided a list with needs identified and has helped the housing authority to write grants. Under a new funding formula, funds will be divided by the 242 housing authorities in the state. This may not work in favor of FHA. Figured into the calculations is the number of units and the condition.
- Steve Patton noted that they have a list. The 705s may be the biggest issue. Is there a volunteer corps that could be utilized?
- John Massey said yes, although there were some boxes to check.
- Kathleen Haynes observed that Bobbi Richards has been seeking and applying for grants successfully for several years.
- Patricia Favulli said that they have a list; they see it every year. Commissioners may make suggestions and be helpful, but it is up to the staff to do the day to day work. Are the FHA units vastly different from other housing authority units?

- John Massey said they are not. He noted that the 705s are always harder to manage being out in the community and single units.
- Craig Bardsley said that over the past 3 years as he has done work for FHA, he has observed that the properties are not maintained properly. There is a need for planned maintenance on a regular basis. The buildings appear structurally sound but they need maintenance. Bobbi Richards and Leslie Pearce are working away at it but they are only 2 people. Painting and power washing, for example, done regularly, can save on maintenance costs.
- Michael Galasso said that we have identified the problems. What's needed is a plan to go after the problems and fix them. What's our plan?
- Patricia Favulli said that ideas should be sent to Bobbi Richards. She has sent a suggestion that the tech school be queried about volunteers that may be available. State reps could be contacted individually or by the board as a whole.
- Michael Galasso asked John Massey how much money is needed to fix things.
- Patricia Favulli suggested review of the packet where Bobbi Richards has included the list of needs.
- Bobbi Richards cautioned it is updated every year but costs have risen dramatically, doubling or more in some cases.
- John Massey said he could email some additional figures tomorrow.
- Michael Galasso asked about administrative costs that FHA has not added. Do other housing authorities add these costs?
- John Massey said that some do; this is a double-edged sword, however. Any fee like this that is taken reduces funding that can be spent on the project. Additionally, it goes back to DHCD for approval adding another layer and time spent waiting for approval.
- Bobbi Richards asked about the allocation of funding. It appears that the new formula eliminates special projects. Also, volunteers have not been permitted on some projects because of insurance issues. Can this be clarified?
- John Massey said that the state had been concerned with funds being spent on emergencies and reworked the funding to address issues before they became emergencies. Septic systems were addressed first and next is expected to be fire/smoke detectors. Sarah O'Leary is an attorney who works for DHCD and she may be able to clarify the volunteer and insurance issue.

-DHCD's Emergency Reserve Fund Award (#096083) to cover cost to replace failed hot water heater – Choate/Mayflower - \$4,677:
Presented for the Board's information.

-DHCD's Emergence Reserve Fund Award (#096084) to cover cost to replace failed hot water heater at Salt Sea Apts - \$5,121
Presented for the Board's information.

Portfolio Vacancy and department update

-Unit turn time goals; waiting list pulls:

Bobbi Richards reported that 3 tenants have passed away since the last meeting.

One tenant gave a 30-day notice and moved out.

A tenant that owed a significant amount of money died. The tenant had been in negotiations with the state to repay the money and after the tenant's death, the state refused to repay any money. The amount owed to the Authority was approximately \$10k; the tenant began the process with the state in August 2021.

All state units have waivers to allow more time for a thorough unit turn. The state is being asked to evaluate what is needed to get units back online. Leslie Pearce said that there are a number of issues with a number of units. She noted that she has never seen so many deaths or vacancies. Some units are waiting for materials to arrive such as cabinets. One maintenance worker is out on worker's compensation and one is out with Covid - 19.

Michael Galasso asked if there was a rent ready date list. He would like to see the rent ready dates listed. Bobbi Richards said she could add this column to the report but the estimation of a rent ready date may be difficult based on the reasons stated earlier.

-Current COVID-19 waivers affecting maintenance work orders and unit turns:

Bobbi Richards reminded that the housing authority was still operating under the constraints of Covid-19. Unless a repair is an emergency, it may not be done without the tenants' permission. Bobbi referred the Commissioners to review the COVID-19/Infectious Disease policy passed last year as it addressed this issue based on the state's guidance.

-Maintenance uniforms

Bobbi Richards said that there is a clothing allowance of \$500 per year. The union contract negotiates uniform issues and it does not require uniforms with the name of FHA on them; maintenance purchases their own uniforms based on the language in the union contract.

Michael Galasso asked how a tenant would know if the maintenance person was from FHA.

Bobbi Richards indicated that tenants can see who is at their door by using their peep holes; badges are being worked on. Bobbi also shared that work orders are scheduled and staff contacts tenants in advance of arriving to their units. Kathleen Haynes suggested lanyards.

-Customer service personnel in maintenance

This position was added 2 years ago to manage workorders and provide a quality control measure for the department. The new position was negotiated with the union. It is a full time position. Michael Galasso asked Bobbi Richards to state the name of the staff employed in this position. Bobbi provided the name of the staff.

-Boiler & Hot Water Heater Replacement at Choate/Mayflower – DHCD #096078 - \$215k

Bobbi Richards said that this project has been worked on for some time. The bid is being reviewed and expected to be out in 30-45 days. Estimated cost is \$215,000. Leslie Pearce added that the boilers were installed in 1961.

-2021 Emergency and Disaster Grant extension of obligation date and application for additional funding requests

Bobbi Richards reported that the federal government has approved the extension of the obligation date and the application for additional funding. This process has taken 7-8 months; a formal letter has not yet been issued but the information has been shared with the housing authority.

Report of the Accounting Department

-Payment of December bills and HAP payments – VOTE

Resolution 2022-054

Steve Patton moved to approve payment of December bills and HAP payments. Michael Galasso seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Robert Mascali-aye

Steve Patton-aye

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

-Review of October & November 2020 financials and current public housing aging reports:

Chuck Starr reviewed.

ACH Accounting practice and policy from payroll company to Falmouth Retirement -

VOTE

Bobbi Richards explained that there was a request to automate the process. Chuck Starr reviewed areas within the policy with the Board.

Resolution 2022-055

Steve Patton moved to approval of the transactions as described in the policy. Kathleen Haynes seconded.
Patricia Favulli-aye
Michael Galasso-aye
Kathleen Haynes-aye
Robert Mascali-aye
Steve Patton-aye

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

Report of the Executive Director

-Response to Falmouth Enterprise/letter to the community:
Commissioners acknowledged seeing the published letter.

-Reminder: Public Housing Notices should be reviewed on a regular basis:

Bobbi Richards urged commissioners to keep informed about protocols and initiatives from DHCD and HUD since these can change and evolve. Last year, for example, DHCD was active in dictating Covid-19 protocols and this year they are seeking feedback on procedures. Information on how to review the notices was provided. PHN 2022-01 from DHCD was provided for Commissioners to review.

-DHCD:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/public-housing-admin-notices>

1 PHN 2022-01: COVID-19 Omicron Variant and State-Aided Public Housing

-HUD: https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/administration/hudclips/notices/pih

-Commissioner Training update:

Bobbi Richards inquired if all commissioners had completed the training. Bobbi noted that the housing authority is scored on Commissioner trainings as part of the annual portfolio management review conducted by DHCD. Michael Galasso said he had not taken the training and asked that the link be sent to him again. Kathleen Haynes stated that she had not taken the training.

-Certificates:

Robert Mascali said that he had taken the training but certificates were not being issued at that time. He was advised to log on again to receive a certificate because certificates are now being issued.

Designated person(s) for media contacts:

Bobbi Richards asked the Board to designate someone for media contact. Bobbi noted that this task usually falls to the Chair, but the Chair can delegate. Commissioners agreed that Patricia Favulli would be a good choice. Patricia Favulli agreed to be the media contact for the Board of Commissioners. There were no other recommendations or volunteers to serve as the media contact.

-Project-based contract extension request for 587 Gifford St for 5-year contract term – 13 units – VOTE

Bobbi Richards reviewed that the contract was believed to have expired and so was not eligible for renewal. HUD determined that the initial 5 years of the contract did not count towards the 20- year contract based on HOTMAS changes in 2017. These changes allowed for the initial contract period to be excluded from the 20- year contract count; meaning that the countable years showed the contract as still eligible for another five year term. Bobbi Richards asked the board to agree to a 5 year extension, the maximum number of years allowed for an extension. HUD provides specific language for preparation for the expiration of the contract and whether or not it may be renewed after a 20 year term. Care will have to be taken by FHA and FHC to track expiring contracts.

Resolution 2022-056

Steve Patton moved to approve the project -based contract extension request for 587 Gifford St for 5-year contract term. Robert Mascali seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye
Michael Galasso-aye
Kathleen Haynes-aye

Robert Mascali-aye
Steve Patton-aye

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

-Hiring of a Maintenance Superintendent:

Money saved from not hiring a maintenance superintendent has allowed for funds to be used for unit rehabilitations and extraordinary maintenance, purchase of new equipment. Nevertheless, Bobbi Richards recommended hiring a maintenance superintendent during the next budget term. Bobbi has conducted a salary study amongst other housing authority's; with focus on the size of the portfolio and staff to be supervised. The salary resulted in a wide range from approximately \$60k to \$90k as the annual salary.

- Property onsite management personnel:

Michael Galasso recommended that the housing authority consider implementing an onsite management model, allowing for a manager to be housed in an unit at each site. Bobbi Richards asked if commissioners were interested in moving towards this model, citing that it is a common model in private and non-profit housing agencies, but Bobbi had not seen it implemented within housing authority models. Bobbi shared concerns that the process may not be considered fair in terms of fair housing laws as a waiting list is required as part of the housing process. Bobbi inquired as to whether or not FHA would pay the manager; if so there may be employment law issues. Patricia Favulli shared that FHA is a union team and the position and terms would be subject to bargaining. This model would mean that FHA would need to remove a unit at each site. Bobbi agreed to research what other housing authorities have implemented this type of model and how it was accomplished.

Approval of Minutes

-General Session Minutes of 11/23/21

Resolution 2022-057

Steve Patton moved to approve as written. Michael Galasso 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

-General Session Minutes of 12/14/21

Resolution 2022-058

Steve Patton moved to approve as written. Michael Galasso 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

-Special Session Minutes of 01/04/22

Resolution 2022-059

Steve Patton moved to approve as written. Michael Galasso seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes - aye

Steve Patton-aye

Next meeting agenda items – due by Tuesday, February 8, 2022

Note: Per Chair request, please submit all agenda items to the Chair (boc1@falmouthhousing.org) to allow for proper planning for future meetings.

New Business

Michael Galasso announced that he would not vote to go into executive session. He said he was willing to discuss matters in open session. Bobbi Richards said she would not discuss the matter in open session and believed the issue qualified under the rules for Executive Session. She requested that the meeting move to executive session.

Patricia Favulli read regulations for executive session at 6:46:

Executive Session, pursuant to M.G.L. 30A, Sect. 21(a)(1) To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties. A public body shall hold an open session if the individual involved requests that the session be open. If an executive session is held, such individual shall have the following rights: i. to be present at such executive session during deliberations which involve that individual, ii. to have counsel or a representative of his own choosing present and attending for the purpose of advising the individual and not for the purpose of active participation in the executive session iii. to speak on his own behalf, and iv. to cause an independent record to be created of said executive session by audio-recording or transcription, at the individual's expense. The rights of an individual set forth in this paragraph are in addition to the rights that he may have from any other source, including, but not limited to, rights under any laws or collective bargaining agreements and the exercise or non-exercise of the individual rights under this section shall not be construed as a waiver of any rights of the individual.

Resolution 2022-060

Patricia Favulli took a roll call vote to go to executive session:

Michael Galasso-nay

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Motion carried.

Resolution 2022-062

Kathleen Haynes moved to adjourn at 7:02 p.m.. Steve Patton seconded.

Patricia Favulli took a roll call vote.

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Steve Patton-aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Motion carried.

Relevant Documents

Contract & Procurement for Two (2) unit turns at Rose Morin Ln

Policy for Automated Clearing Housing (ACH) Arrangements and Electronic Transaction of Funds

Contract/Documentation for 587 Gifford St, 13 units, 2001-2006; 2006-2011; 2011-2016; 2016-2021; HAP
Contract Extension Request
Boiler & HW Heater Replacement Draft Bid, DHCD Project No. 096078
Falmouth Emergency Waste Pipe Repairs, DHCD Project No. 096083
Falmouth Certificate of Final Completion – MaxiClean, DHCD Project No. 096082
Falmouth Certificate of Substantial and Certificate of Final Completion – 42 Jamie Ln, DHCD, Project No.
096075
Draft Minutes of General Session of 11/23/21
Draft Minutes of General Session of 12/14/21
Draft Minutes of Special Session of 01/04/22
HAP Payment Register for December 2021
Landlord Payment History for December 2021
PHN 2022-01 COVID-19 Omicron Variant and State-Aided Public Housing
FHA Public Housing Aging December 2021
Letter to the Editor, Quality Service the Goal, January 2021
DHCD CIP for FHA 2022 and Unfunded Projects
Job Descriptions for Service Coordinator and Maintenance Administrative Assistant
DHCD MOD Guidelines