

**Regular BOARD MEETING  
December 7, 2017**

The undersigned being all members of the Holyoke Housing Authority under the Laws of Massachusetts, assent and agree the Regular Board Meeting of the Authority was held at Falcetti Towers, 475 Maple Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts on Thursday, December 7, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(LS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(LS)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(LS)

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

Notice was hereby given in accordance with SECTIONS 18-25 OF MGL CHAPTER 30A OF THE GENERAL LAWS THAT a Meeting of the members of the Holyoke Housing Authority was held at 6:00pm at 475 Maple Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts on December 7, 2017.

Holyoke Housing Authority

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew A. Mainville, Secretary

**CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING**

I, Matthew A. Mainville, the duly appointed and qualified and acting Secretary of the Holyoke Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on December 7, 2017 I hereunto set my hand this seventh day of December 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew A. Mainville, Secretary

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes

**Absent:**

**Staff Present:**

Brian Burbank	Janara Healy
Katherine Barz	Nicholas Ottomaniello
Anne Darcy	Matthew Mainville
Donna Wagner	Marc Ruell
Beverly Savage	Justine Sabbs
Misamaris Sempritt	

**VISITORS PRESENT:**

Stephanie Garcia  
Andres Villada

**Counsel Present:** Priscilla Chesky

Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by the Chair, Executive Director asked for a motion to approve November 9, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes.

**MINUTES of November 9, 2017**

**MOTION**

**17-072**

On a motion by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Sanabria, the Board approved the minutes of November 9, 2017 as written. The Board voted in favor of this motion:

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes

**Absent:**

**Budgets for 2018**

The Fee Accountants presented the Fiscal Year 2018 Budgets for the Federal and State Programs (to be provided separately).

The Executive Director introduced Fee Accountants and Teresa Ewald began explaining the budget. The 2018 budget guidelines have not been received from DHCD, nor PFS calculations from HUD. The team gave a best guess estimate which was conservative as to cost and anticipated subsidy. Included in this budget is a new position for Section 8. A 2% raise for the staff and the Executive Director training and NAHRO conferences. There was a cushion in the budget, as it does not include operations money. Commissioner Falcetti asked what is the percentage of anticipated subsidy. Teresa explained on the Federal side the subsidy amount that was earned from January – December 2017 is funded at 93%. We started the year at 84% and budgeted 87% for 2018. If there is a Continuing resolution we will come back to the Board with a budget revision.

We can take up to 20% of capital fund dollars and put into operations if needed. Reserves are in good shape. Federal Section 8 program has proration. This year we were funded at 77% which is the amount we budgeted. The Leased Housing Program has grown. On the State side, the budget guidelines are not out yet but DHCD has said there will be a 10% cap increase.

DHCD is trying to give enough permanent increases to get rid of exemptions. All Authorities are receiving \$10,000 for IT upgrades to ensure that authorities have a website and online work can be done as per new DHCD regulations.

HHA is doing very well with regards to spending and expenses. We just finished the tenth month in 2017 and show a bottom line of \$500,000 prior to non-routine expenditures. The Executive Director received four notifications for individuals that are retiring and he is taking the opportunity to review positions to strategize how we should move forward. Projection for revenue hopefully will turn out good, with more overall savings.

Commissioner Falcetti asked if there is an advantage to leasing vs purchasing vehicles and suggested ongoing discussion. Fee Accountant said it varies. Interest rates are low in regard to leasing. Chair Cooper-Gordon said there is a lot to take in consideration when you purchase it begins to depreciate. Commissioner Sanabria asked how many vehicles we have. There are 11 vehicles. Commissioner Sanabria recommends leasing. Executive Director stated that he is conservative fiscally, the only thing he likes about purchasing is you buy it and it is yours. Leasing if HUD comes back and says your only getting a 72% proration now you have to come out of pocket and can put the agency in a precarious position. But we will further explore.

The Executive Director and Fee Accountants explained these budgets are based off of in house projections and as such are subject to modification. Once we have official guidance from DHCD and HUD we may need to amend the budgets and revisit them with the Board.

Fee Accountant Rick stated HHA is in good financial shape. Normally there would be guidelines from the state and would have specifics and be able to construct budget accordingly. Fee Accountant used graphs to show the good financial state HHA is in. The graph shows what a maximum and a minimum reserve should be. Section 8 program has huge amounts of dollars - to be exact \$1,600,000.00. Executive Director stated we are limited in what we can use it for.

HAP money pays out to Landlords, while Section 8 Admin money is used to administer the program. We are making sure we maximize our people power and are able to save some money and create efficiencies. The rule of thumb is that the agency should be able to operate for six months with no income. Reserves have gone up. We will be using \$175,000.00 towards the HILAPP project which we have to contribute 25% of the total cost of the project and we are able to do that. The Executive Director said we have managed the agency well enough to make the agency fiscally sound, now we have an opportunity to improve properties.

Chair Cooper-Gordon to sign Federal Budget form. The budget will be revisited when Fee Accountants get new guidelines. Executive Director moves to approve 2018 Budget.

**Motion  
17-073**

On a motion by Commissioner Falcetti and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon, the Board voted to approve 2018 Federal and State budgets. The Board voted in favor of this motion.

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Absent:**

**Public Person Request:**

**Discussion** - Stephanie Garcia came to the meeting on behalf of her grandparents who live at Rosary Towers. She requested that her grandparents be moved to another unit. They have been tenants for over 20 years, they are over 90 years old and need a lot of care. Five years ago, they requested a handicap unit, which was subsequently withdrawn then reinstated in the summer of 2017. They were told they had to go on wait list and the application was put in for a transfer. A unit was turned down five years ago by grandparents. Grandmother's movement is limited at this time. The Executive Director will have meeting with Donna, Housing Opportunity Coordinator to do exploration into the situation. There is a limited amount of handicap units.

**State Modernization – Project 137071 HILAPP**

In an effort to modernize Siebel apartments the HHA applied for and received DHCD HILAPP funding. As you are aware this funding requires HHA to match a portion of all development costs. The HHA has now completed 100% design documents and has an approved relocation plan. A final cost estimate has been produced reflecting a higher total development cost. In order to bid the project, the HHA must increase its match amount to reflect the increased development cost.

Planning specifications was put together for the HILAPP, received final approval from DHCD. The relocation plan was approved. Final estimate construction cost went up. This is a matching

grant 23% from the agency and 77% comes from DHCD. This requires that we put in additional money. Our contribution is \$500,000.00 and we will be receiving back 1,770,000.00. This is for kitchens; we will be remodeling bathrooms; some handicap units; and handicap benches outside, amongst other things.

**Motion**

**17-074**

On a motion by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon, The Board voted to approve the HHA contribution increase of \$63,383.17. The Board voted in favor of this motion.

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Absent:**

**Annual 5-year Capital Improvement Planning Submission**

The HHA must develop an annual 5-year plan submission to DHCD. This process includes multiple steps to ensure a proper needs assessment has been completed. This process has been completed by staff and the attached 5-year plan has been created.

DHCD gives the agency a certain amount of money every year and it has to be decided what is going to be used for. Janara has met with maintenance and has gone out and met with vendors, Western Mass Elder Care and the Department of Mental Health, and has met with residents. There are some current plans. Beech Street, the Department of Mental Health runs that property for HHA, and the roof is being replaced. Commissioner Falcetti asked about the agencies used. The Executive Director said they are used to give input.

**Motion**

**17-075**

On a motion by Chair Cooper-Gordon and seconded by Commissioner Sanabria, The Board voted to approve the attached 5-year plan with associated work items and submit to DHCD for review. The Board vote in favor of this motion.

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Absent:**

**Utility Allowance**

The HHA each year engages a third- party vendor to undertake a utility allowance study. The study is now complete and shows slight increases.

The third-party vendor that is hired allows us to take a utility allowance survey, they modify based on current local conditions and give a utility allowance that has to be approved and used for all research. Most utilities have gone up. The 2017 and proposed 2018 was provided. Commissioner Falcetti asked was this based on consumption. Yes it is based on consumption. Nick explained four bills are given and this is how utilities are gauged. Commissioner Falcetti stated it is not to the best interest of the Landlord to reduce consumption if the agency is paying the bill. Nick stated in the MTW plan they are implementing a flat rate which will give Landlords more incentive to be more energy efficient. Chair Gordon-Cooper said it makes Landlords more compatible to the vision of the Housing Authority.

**Motion**

**17-076**

On a motion by Commissioner Falcetti and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon, the Board voted to approve utility allowance as outline in the attached chart for 2018. The Board voted in favor of this motion.

**Present and voting**

**Absent:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Geeleher Change Order #4**

During construction, it was determined the construction budget had been managed well enough to allow for HHA staff and Tighe & Bond to request additional work items. Change order #4 reflects owner requested work items.

The Geeleher contract is coming to a close To approve overall look which was driven by HHA staff and Tighe & Bond, such improvements requested included concrete private parking lanes, additional paving on Front Street and soil for under trees also had some rock removal that was done. Commissioner Sanabria asked what the original contract was. The amount was 2.3 million dollars.

**Motion**

**17-077**

On a motion by Chair Cooper-Gordon and seconded by Commissioner Sanabria. Commissioner Falcetti and Commissioner Purington agreed to approve the change order #4 in the amount of

\$170,664.10 to increase Gleeher Enterprise overall contract amount. Commissioner Wilson abstained.

**Present and voting**

**Absent:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Abstained
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W Purington	Yes

**Discussion:**

Commissioner Falcetti wanted an explanation of paragraph four of the Executive Summary. The Executive Director stated the city had a grant for urban development and wanted HHA to assist with the Carlos Vega Park. The soil was tested, utility survey was done and Priscilla Chesky did title exams.

The Executive Director talked with HUD regarding rent to own and a letter of interest for HHA to be the developer is due to the city. HHA is uniquely positioned for this role. January 15, 2018 is the deadline for the letter of interest. Executive Director says this would not be an official commitment, but would like to submit the letter. Feedback is needed from the Board. The Board agreed this is a great idea.

Commissioner Sanabria asked about the finance report as it relates to hiring of plumber. The previous plumber resigned. We have since hired a new plumber and he is doing very well, but there was a sixth month gap before hiring. The Executive Director wanted someone that had knowledge of Holyoke and our systems. The person also needed to be reliable and dependable.

Commissioner Falcetti also asked about Current Issues #2. Update on Beaudoin Village draining, is everyone satisfied with that. Seventy-two hours has to pass and it does look like it was draining. Janara stated the new material is working. Commissioner Falcetti asked if we have official letter from Tighe & Bond. Janara responded yes.

Commissioner Purington asked about parking assignments. Executive Director said there has been some pushback but also received a thank you letter and positive feedback regarding parking spaces. Towing company is on alert and tenants can call 413-539-2216 anonymously to report if someone is in their parking space. Tighe & Bond was hired to assign parking spaces. Having a third party makes for unbiased decision making.

Chair Cooper-Gordon hopes this plan will have tenants respect parking spaces. It is economically beneficial for everyone because towing costs and the newsletters will help remind tenants.

**Motion**

**17-078**

On a motion by Commissioner Falcetti and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon, the Board voted to adjourn at 7:16pm to go into Executive Session. The Board voted in favor of this motion.

**Present and voting:**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Absent:**

**Roll Call**

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria	Yes
Timothy W. Purington	Yes

**Absent:**