

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

August 23, 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 shall be held at Falcetti Towers, 475 Maple Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts on Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 5:00 pm.

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NOTICE OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Notice is 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 will be held at 6:00pm at 475 Maple Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts on August 23, 2017.

Holyoke Housing Authority

BY: _____
Matthew A. Mainville, Secretary

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

I, Matthew A. Mainville, the duly appointed and qualified and acting Secretary of the Holyoke Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on August 18, 2017 I hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of August, 2017.

Matthew A. Mainville, Secretary

Present and voting:

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

Absent:

Timothy Purington

Staff Present:

Anne Darcy

VISITORS PRESENT:

Honorable Mayor Alex Morse
Marcos Marrero, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Counsel Present: Priscilla Chesky

Purchase of Center City Plaza Parcel

Meeting was called to order at 5:05pm by Chair Cooper-Gordon. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance then asked the Assistant Executive Director of the Housing Authority, Anne Darcy, to begin the meeting. Anne Darcy began by thanking everyone for their flexibility and patience regarding the scheduling and attendance of this special Board Meeting. She also acknowledged that we are pleased to hear that Theresa Cooper-Gordon's mother is on the road to recovery with regards to her fall and injury.

Anne Darcy then explained the reason for this special Board Meeting. The City of Holyoke and the Holyoke Housing Authority have maintained a strong partnership throughout the course of the redevelopment of Lyman Terrace. The City has asked the Holyoke Housing Authority to purchase a parcel of property on Dwight Street which is one of three parcels referred to as the Center City Plaza parcels. If the Board so desires, the City requests that HHA purchase the property (which would be reimbursed through CDBG funding), provide a license agreement with the City for construction of a park and pedestrian walkway, maintain long-term ownership and maintenance of this specific parcel, with the outcome eventually involving a reverter clause bringing the parcel under City ownership for a nominal price (perhaps \$1). The City of Holyoke has a time-sensitive issue with regards to allocating Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money.

This park has been part of both the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) applications as well as the MassWorks applications from the inception of this development project. The park is similar to the park we have at the Churchill development. The HHA would be responsible for liability insurance which would cost approximately \$50 annually. The HHA would also be responsible for maintenance.

Anne Darcy then gave the floor to Marcos Marrero for further specifics. He explained that the City has been a strong proponent and partner with the Housing Authority with regards to the rehabilitation of Lyman Terrace going back to 2012 and has committed a monetary match along with HOME funds in support of this effort. The park would be used by the community for events such as a farmers market, a pedestrian walkway, outdoor movies, an amphitheater and other appropriate community activities. This is an integral part of the transformative process of the Lyman Terrace development as it would provide a connection to the Dwight Street corridor.

The City has submitted a CDBG application on this project which includes three different parcels, two of which are owned by the City and one which is privately held. The Mayor has complete control over CDBG funds. The City tried to acquire this parcel through their own means but in order to do so had to present it to City Council and was unable to garner the votes.

Marcos Marrero went on to explain the potential ramifications with funding sources should we not be able to see this to fruition since it has been part of the funding applications from the start.

MOTION

17-029

After presentation, a motion was made by Commissioner Falcetti and seconded by Commissioner Cooper Gordon to accept the proposal from the City of Holyoke and work with them to purchase land at 515-519 Dwight St., Holyoke.

Discussion:

Commissioner Wilson asked why the City didn't just purchase the parcel. Marcos Marrero explained that it was brought before the City Council and did not receive the required votes. It was not the City's initial plan to go through the Housing Authority to purchase this parcel. Mayor Morse added that this has been included in both the MassWorks applications and the LIHTC applications and he is concerned about the consequences with the funding sources should we have to remove it from the plan. Commissioner Falcetti asked if we had the blessing of our funding sources for the plans for the park? Mayor Morse responded affirmatively. Commissioner Wilson asked for clarification on location of the property. Marcos and Priscilla showed him the parcel on the maps the Board was provided with. He then asked who the property owner was. Priscilla responded that the owner is Maria Manzios (?). Commissioner Sanabria questioned how the cost of the parcel of \$30,000 was determined? Attorney Chesky explained that this was determined by the appraisal. The City did significant negotiations with the owner to get the price to that point. Commissioner Wilson asked if the Housing Authority would maintain the property? Attorney Chesky stated that once the construction is complete, the Authority would have liability and maintenance responsibilities. The cost of the annual premium for the liability insurance is approximately \$50.

Commissioner Cooper-Gordon stated that this is part of our mission. It perfectly complements what we're trying to achieve with regards to Lyman Terrace. She hoped that the Commissioners would support this endeavor as it would provide an open space, green space, and a location for outdoor movies and other community activities. The community in an effort Commissioner Falcetti agreed and stated that this is a quality of life issue for our tenants. Commissioner Wilson asked who would pay for the pre-case concrete benches at the park. Mayor Morse stated there was a separate construction budget in the amount of \$300,000 - \$400,000 managed by the city which would fund the costs of the park including the benches and landscaping. Commissioner Wilson asked again why the City didn't just purchase this parcel. Mayor Morse stated that this was the plan but the City Council did not support it – they were not able to garner the votes. Marcos said different councilors had different reasons for not supporting the vote. Some were not in agreement with CDBG funds going towards this project. Some felt there was already too much money going into the Lyman Terrace redevelopment. Marcos did not poll each individual councilor but gleaned this information from informal conversations and comments made subsequent to the vote.

The Board voted in favor of this motion:

Present and voting:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:

Timothy W. Purington

MOTION

17-030

To authorize Matthew Mainville, Executive Director to negotiate and execute the purchase and sales agreement for the property at 515-519 Dwight Street, Holyoke.

On a motion by Chair Cooper-Gordon and seconded by Vice-Chair Falcetti, the Board moved to authorize Matthew Mainville, Executive Director to negotiate and execute the purchase and sales agreement for the property at 515-519 Dwight Street, Holyoke.

Discussion:

Commissioner Wilson commented that this decision would have been much easier to make if he had materials or a packet beforehand giving him background information on this issue. He stated this wasn't a criticism of the City but in fact a criticism of the Housing Authority. If he had this information beforehand he could have researched the issue himself. He commented that he understood it wasn't a significant amount of money but he felt due diligence and communication by the Housing Authority to the Board was not sufficient. Attorney Chesky responded that she wasn't sure what materials could have been provided beforehand other

than the maps that were before them now. Commissioner Wilson said he would have liked to have seen a narrative clearly outlining the issue. Chair Cooper-Gordon commented that we didn't have a regular meeting scheduled for August and the Board may want to re-consider whether we choose to not have a regular meeting in the future. Anne Darcy stated that Commissioner Wilson's point was well taken and offered no defense. Commissioner Sanabria stated that an explanation could have been attached to the email.

The Board voted in favor of this motion:

Present and voting:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:

Timothy W. Purington

MOTION

17-031

To authorize Matthew Mainville, Executive Director, to negotiate and execute a License Agreement with the City of Holyoke to allow the City and or its contractors to enter upon the premises (once owned by HHA) to construct the Plaza as described at the meeting and as funded by CDBG funds.

On a motion made by Vice-Chair Falcetti and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon the Board moved to authorize Matthew Mainville to negotiate and execute a License Agreement with the City of Holyoke to allow the City and or its contractors to enter upon the premises (once owned by HHA) to construct the Plaza as described at the meeting and as funded by CDBG funds .

Discussion:

Commissioner Sanabria asked who would pay for the construction. Mayor Morse stated that the funds would come from CDBG money. The Department of Public Works would manage this project. The City and Contractor indemnifies the Authority from any liability claims during the construction phase

The Board voted in favor of this motion:

Present and voting:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:
Timothy W. Purington

MOTION

17-032

To authorize Matthew Mainville, Executive Director, to execute the contract for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and for the Housing Authority to be a partner in the grant of those dollars for the Center City Plaza in connection with the Lyman Terrace Development.

On a motion made by Commissioner Sanabria and seconded by Chair Cooper-Gordon the Board moved to authorize Matthew Mainville to execute the contract for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and for the Housing Authority to be a partner in the grant of those dollars for the Center City Plaza in connection with the Lyman Terrace Development.

Discussion:

Commissioner Sanabria asked when this project would begin. Marcos Marrero stated it would begin either this fall or this spring. Attorney Chesky stated Mr. Mainville returns he will sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement and move towards the closing as well as sign other documents with the City.

The Board voted in favor of this motion:

Present and voting:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:
Timothy W. Purington

MOTION

17-033

On a motion by Chair Cooper-Gordon and seconded by Commissioner Wilson, the Board voted to adjourn at 5:55 pm.

The Board voted in favor of this motion:

Present and voting:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:
Timothy W. Purington

ROLL CALL:

Present:

Theresa Cooper-Gordon	Yes
Michael Falcetti:	Yes
Marilyn Sanabria:	Yes
Aaron W. Wilson	No

Absent:

Timothy W. Purington