

SUDBURY HOUSING AUTHORITY

55 HUDSON ROAD
SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01776
director@sudburyha.org

PHONE: 978-443-5112
FAX: 978-443-5113

SHEILA M. CUSOLITO
Executive Director

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

November 9, 2021

The SHA met by remote participation open session at 7:00 p.m. Those present were: Chair: S. Cline; Vice Chair: S. Swanger; Treasurer: T. Vitvitsky; Assistant Treasurer: J. Cowan; Member: A. Lepak; Executive Director: S. Cusolito

Minutes: none.

Financials Approvals: A motion was made by J. Cowan, seconded by T. Vitvitsky, and unanimously voted, to approve the checks written in October 2021.

A. Lepak asked about the cash receipt report and the absence of payments listed for some households. It was clarified that the absence of payment information does not represent non-payment. The report only lists the payments that are received as cash, which for some tenants is only an occasional mode of payment.

NEW BUSINESS

FYE22 Q2 Financial Report: A motion was made by S. Swanger, seconded by A. Lepak, and unanimously voted, to accept the FYE22 Q2 Financial Report.

FY22 Q1 Modernization Report: The FY22 Q1 Modernization Report was presented.

FYE21 Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP): The final report, which was submitted to the DHCD, was presented. The SHA had no findings on this annual audit that covers general accounting, tenant accounting, payroll, accounts payable, inventory, procurement, and eligibility compliance.

Fee Accountant Contract: A motion was made by J. Cowan, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to approve the terms of the contract for accounting services between the Sudbury Housing Authority and Milne, Shaw & Robillard, PC, and to authorize S. Cusolito to sign on behalf of the Housing Authority.

Monthly accounting fees have remained the same for the last three years. The terms of the new contract call for a 5% increase.

FISH 288069 Low-Bid Contract Award: A motion was made by T. Vitvitsky, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to accept the bid of Davison Company, Inc., the lowest qualified responsive and responsible bidder, in the amount of \$68,400, for FISH 288069, 705 Sustainability Whole House Heat Pump, and to authorize S. Cusolito to sign a contract on behalf of the Housing Authority.

The second advertisement resulted in five responses, with bid prices ranging from \$68,400 to \$104,288. RCAT has advised that, notwithstanding the possible redevelopment of the Great Lake Drive property, the project should proceed. The Norian/Siani project engineer has assured that the installation, which will actually be a ductless system, can be relocated albeit at some cost.

Rent Write-Off: A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, against a rent write-off for a current household with a current and chronic back-rent balance.

The SHA has tried a number of approaches to assist the household, including developing a Tenancy Preservation Plan last year that is currently overseen by RSC L. Abraham. A portion of the current debt was covered by SHERA funds. The thought was that a write-off would validate the effort to date, allowing

the tenant to move forward more effectively with a “clean slate”. Commissioners expressed willingness to entertain a write-off based on additional staff input on the Tenancy Preservation Plan.

Public Housing Administration Notices: S. Cusolito provided a link to those Notices published since the October 12, 2021 Regular Session. The subject of the only Notice provides the guidelines for developing and implementing a Language Access Plan, one of the final components to be invoked from Chapter 235.

Liaison Reports: **SHT:** To date, a rough-cut development submission has not been received from Beals & Thomas for the 67-73 Nobscot property. The subcommittee is scheduled to meet this Friday. Receipt of the final report is expected by the end of the year. A proposed bylaw is anticipated for the May 2022 Town Meeting warrant relating to formalizing the Trust’s Trust documents, specifically around property acquisitions to add a requirement to involve the Select Board. The Trust has routinely gone to the Select Board for property acquisition; however, doing so is not required by Massachusetts general law.

SHA Feasibility: S. Swanger is awaiting return calls from both New Duplex development project manager Rebecca Plaut Mautner and the Cambridge Housing Authority’s consulting division.

S. Cline mentioned webinars available through Mel King Institute, including a recent one that outlined the divisions of DHCD. A funding program for construction was referenced that might pertain to SHA’s development efforts.

CPC: The public hearing for the SHA’s CPA funding application is December 1. Commissioner Swanger will present.

OPEN FORUM

T. Vitvitsky commented on the importance of raising awareness within the community around who lives in public housing. She gave examples of professional endeavors of several Village residents and would like to expand on that. S. Cusolito noted that a few years ago similar information on SHA’s family residents was used to illustrate the sameness of public housing residents and those living in private properties. Commissioners discussed a community interest submission to the *Town Crier*. J. Cowan expressed interest in participating.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Net Meter Credit Contract: The SHA received notice that the Lodestar Energy’s Sandwich, MA solar farm was approved for financing.

Energy Services Procurement: A 36-month supply contract with IGS was signed, based on the Board’s September vote to authorize S. Cusolito to proceed.

Community Preservation Act Application: As discussed.

ED Contract Update: The current contract, which has not been signed or returned by DHCD, expires March 31, 2022. A new contract needs to be submitted to DHCD no later than January 31, 2022. S. Cusolito noted that the only significant change to the FYE22 contract over the prior-year, DHCD-approved contract, was the Board’s approval to carry over additional vacation time that accrued in 2020, but was not taken, due to the pandemic. A. Lepak and S. Swanger devise a format to present to the Board in December.

SHA Feasibility Study Update: SHA received some existing conditions surveys. Authorizations for excavations related to soil testing on each SHA-owned property were signed. The Town similarly signed for Frost Farm. Commissioners asked for a timeline for receipt of a final report.

67-73 Nobscot Feasibility Update: A discussed.

Capital Projects Update:

FISH 288064, 667 Utility Cable: The power outage scheduled for tomorrow was scrapped this afternoon because existing conditions near the Eversource pole require repair before the work can be executed. The first of the two outages was completed recently; however, it was preceded immediately by a fault that was not disclosed to SHA until the outage required an extension of time.

FISH 288066, 667 Kitchen Ventilation: Bidding was delayed in order to add asbestos testing to the pre-bid work.

FISH 288067, Fairbank Cir vacancy renovation: A plan for moisture mitigation was developed at an on-site meeting on October 13. A subcontractor was on site today to scope the work to quote. A formal Change Order would need to be voted in December and exemplifies, in part, often protracted project timelines.

FISH 288068, Attic Insulation: Under DHCD's review.

FISH 288069, 21 Great Lake whole-house heat pump: As discussed.

FISH 288071, Fire Alarm Upgrade: A FISH number was recently assigned. An interim repair, delayed since the Spring due to component availability, is scheduled for next Tuesday.

FISH 288072, Air-Source Heat Pump Investigation: DHCD is overseeing this project.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cash Receipts: Receipts for October were presented.

Administrative staff: One of two new administrative employees resigned the waitlist position.

Phone Service: SHA is researching options to upgrade its phone system.

Monthly Newsletter: SHA has revised its format for its newsletters to produce a more readable document. Drafting is now a collective effort overseen by RSC L. Abraham. November's letters were provided.

Regional Attorney Program: A motion was made by A. Lepak, seconded by S. Swanger and voted, to participate in the DHCD Regional Legal Services Program and abide by its conditions as outlined in the Participation Agreement; and to authorize Executive Director S. Cusolito and SHA Chairperson S. Cline to sign the Participation Agreement on behalf of the SHA. The vote was 4-0 in favor. T. Vitvitsky abstained.

DHCD announced its new program for legal services for the LHAs such as the SHA that no longer have a regional attorney program. There is a modest reimbursement if one of the approved firms is used. For SHA, the reimbursement is \$3,000/year. Costs beyond that will be paid from operating reserves. S. Cusolito noted that there will likely be a significant increase in costs because the regional attorneys were paid directly by DHCD, generally leaving only incidental costs to be covered by the operating budget.

Annual Plan: S. Cline reported on the good results from the most recent tenant satisfaction survey. The survey is part of the annual plan, with this particular result also reported in last year's Annual Plan. The link to the draft FYE23 Annual Plan was circulated in preparation for the public hearing, which will coincide with the Board's December 14, 2021 meeting.

Vacancies: No new vacancies.

Evictions: None pending.

Maintenance: 667 unit inspections will be completed Nov 16 and all occupied family units (14) on December 9. The pre-release work crews from Billerica House of Corrections just completed one of the two weeks of grounds-work. Crews are also scheduled for the week of November 15. A Workers' Comp claim was filed by a maintenance staff person. There was no missed work.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by J. Cowan, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to adjourn the November 9, 2021 Regular Session and move to discuss litigation, for to do so in open session might compromise the position of the Housing Authority, not to return to open session. The time was 8:51 p.m.

Yes: S. Cline

Yes: J. Cowan

Yes: A. Lepak

Yes: S. Swanger

Yes: T. Vitvitsky