

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
- OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON FEBRUARY 18th, 2025

The members of the Springfield Housing Authority met in Open Session at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts at 4:00 PM on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

A copy of the Notice of Meeting, pursuant to Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Certificate as to Service of the Notice, was ordered spread upon the minutes of the meeting and filed for records.

NOTICE OF MEETING

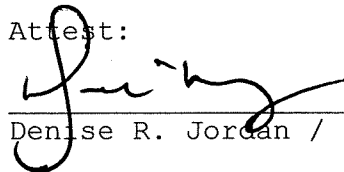
Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:00 PM on Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
/s/Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, Denise R. Jordan, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, I filed in the manner provided by Section 23B, Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Clerk of the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, a Notice of Meeting of which the foregoing is a true and correct copy.

Attest:



Denise R. Jordan / Executive Director/Secretary to the Board

Chairman Labonte called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte  
Jessica Quinones (attended on Zoom)  
Angela Robles

ABSENT

Willie Thomas (arrived at 4:22 pm;  
only attended the Executive Session)  
Raymond Warren

ALSO PRESENT

Prsicilla Chesky  
Fidan Gousseynoff  
Austin Harris  
Denise Jordan

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The Board reviewed the Minutes of January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025. With no questions or comments and upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a board roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025. With no questions or comments and upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a board roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

HR Director Fidan Gousseynoff presented the 1<sup>st</sup> item in the New Business. She explained that the provision about providing paid sick leave to part-time employee was added years ago in order to comply with the Massachusetts Paid Sick Leave before it was discovered that PHA employees are excluded from that law. She explained that the current Bargaining agreement that covers most part-time positions, including Assistant Clerks at District Offices and Public Safety Clerk, does not stipulate providing paid sick leave or any other benefits to employees working less than 19 hours per week. Unlike full-time employees who have to work for 40 hours, part-time employees have more flexibility and can schedule appointments for the time they don't have to be in the office or, if they have to miss work because they are sick, they have the opportunity to make-up hours the following week. Mrs. Gousseynoff indicated that there have not been any requests for paid sick leave from part-time employees as all part-time employees are aware that they are not eligible for any benefits. In response to Commissioner Robles's question, Mrs. Gousseynoff explained how the staff will be notified about the change.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9825 to approve amending Section H, of Chapter VI of the Springfield Housing Authority's Employee Handbook by deleting the language about providing up to 24 hours of paid sick leave per year for part-time employees".

Finance Director Austin Harris presented the next item on the agenda. He explained that after MassHousing took over State Section 8 programs, the Board now only needs to vote on 3 state programs. In response to Commissioner Robles's question, Mr. Harris and Deputy Executive Director Healy clarified that units that are now under MassHousing's control are scattered sites 705, 50 units at Reed Village and Gentile Apartments.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: adopt Resolution #9826 to approve the submission to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities of the state budget certification for fiscal year ending 3/31/2025 for the following programs: MRVP, 400-1, and 689-C.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to accept the Certificate of Substantial Completion for the site improvements projects at Johnny Appleseed and Patrick Harrigan Apartments presented by Deputy Healy. He explained that most of the work has been completed, the site is fully usable, and only a few items left such as seeding, applying lime, planting grass - all that will be done in spring. It is expected that the project will be fully completed by the end of April. Mr. Healy stated that it was not an easy job to work on the property due to the size and configuration. He praised the residents for their cooperation.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the Certificate of Substantial Completion from Peter Amorello Construction for the Site Improvements at Johnny Appleseed and Patrick Harrigan Apartments, here by accepting the project as substantially complete as of January 4, 2025 and release final payment once the punch list items are completed.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to adopt the SHA Language Access Plan. HR Director and Executive Department Manager Fidan Gousseynoff explained that the plan is based on the LAP in the ACOP and incorporates some additional language from the DHCD template. The Plan (as well as some other policies that will be provided to the Board in March) needs to be adopted in order to comply with the State's requirements to use CHAMP.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9827 to adopt SHA's Language Access Plan

Executive Director Denise Jordan started her report by providing information and giving out handouts about some reports submitted to HUD and EOHLIC in response to the Corrective Action Plan. She continued her report by informing about attending the Advisory Group meeting for the Tech Foundry, the agency that administers the internship program under which SHA provides training opportunities to students studying IT. Ms. Jordan informed about a presentation at the CHESS Program which is run in cooperation with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department. She praised the great work done by SHA staff members Matthew Rogers and Heather Higgs who were representing SHA at the meeting. Director Jordan reported about the meeting attended by her and the HR Director with regards to the SHA's Affirmative Action Plan that was finalized a week before the White House issued its statement on DEI. She added that it is unknown at this time if the SHA and other agencies will be required to file EEO-4 report this year and SHA will continue its usual AAP practices until further instructions come out.

Denise Jordan reported about attending a meeting with Senator Markey in the Town Hall to discuss the federal government's funding freeze that could have affected funding for the Section 8 programs. The freeze subsequently was lifted.

Other items on the ED report included: entering into collective bargaining; presenting recommendations relative to LHAs capital needs at the Chamber of Commerce's Housing Subcommittee meeting; holding SHA's corrective Action Plan meeting to prepare for final submission to HUD; ordering I-pads for the Board members. Ms. Jordan completed her report by speaking about changing Board agenda as per the recommendation of Commissioner Warren. She stated that she is welcome to any suggestions from the Board and has submitted an example of reports from the Alexandria Housing Authority website to the Department heads so that they would have a better idea about what type of reports have to be presented to the Board on a regular basis starting from April.

The Board accepted the Accounts payable report for the month of January.

Chairman Labonte requested a motion to enter into an Executive Session. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to enter into an Executive Session to conduct strategy in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and not to return into the Open Session.

There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority Board, upon a motion made by Commissioner Quinonez, seconded by Commissioner Robles, and following a board roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 4:22 PM.

ATTEST:

  
Thomas Labonte, Chairman

  
Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director