

ACTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MINUTES

December 14, 2021, at 3:00pm
VIRTUAL MEETING

Present: Bernice Baran, Peter Berry, Nancy Kolb, Robert Whittlesey, and Melissa Wingfield
Also Present: Kelley Cronin
Attending: David Martin, James Griffin, Lisa Franklin, Paulette Farmer, Charlie Kadlec, and Fred Kinch

Mr. Whittlesey called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM via a virtual meeting platform with no Board members in physical attendance and broadcasted via Zoom virtual meeting platform.

- I. Ms. Kolb read the rules of the remote meeting and Mr. Whittlesey conducted a roll call for attendance with all Board members being present. The Board reviewed the minutes of the November 30, 2021, meeting. Mr. Berry made a motion, which was seconded by Ms. Wingfield to;

Approve the minutes as amended of the regular meeting for November 30, 2021.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

II. Executive Director Update

Ms. Cronin introduced James Griffin, fee accountant for the Acton Housing Authority, (AHA). Ms. Cronin reviewed the budget guidelines issued by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Ms. Cronin explained that the Budget guidelines don't provide a lot of leeway. The guidelines allow for a 4% increase in our non-utility allowances. Ms. Cronin explained that there is a 4% cost of living adjustment being proposed to the administrative staff, not including the executive director, whose salary schedule is controlled by DHCD, or the maintenance staff whose salary is set by the Department of Labor and they issue new rates in March. Mr. Griffin reviewed the budget and budget guidelines for 2022.

Ms. Kolb asked Mr. Griffin if there was anything in the budget that caused him concern. Mr. Griffin said no, that the programs all had more income than expenses other than the state public housing program. The only program showing negative expenses over income is the state public housing program because of an increase in the number of bathroom upgrades that needed to be done. The Board asked Mr. Griffin questions about reserves and line items. Ms. Baran made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Berry to;

Approve the proposed operating budget, and certifications, for State-Aided Housing of the Acton Housing Authority Program 400-1 for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 showing total revenue of \$609,910 and total expenses of \$1,086,752 thereby requesting a subsidy of \$440,119 and further that the Executive Director's total annual salary of \$98,038 for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

Ms. Baran made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Berry to;

Approve the proposed operating budget, and certifications, for State-Aided Housing of the Acton Housing Authority Program 689 for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 showing total revenue of \$38,864 and total expenses of \$37,111 thereby requesting a subsidy of \$0 and further that the Executive Director’s total annual salary of \$98,038 for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

Ms. Baran made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Berry to;

Approve the proposed operating budget, and certifications, for State-Aided Housing of the Acton Housing Authority Program AHVP for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 showing total revenue of \$9,600 and total expenses of \$179,188 thereby requesting a subsidy of \$173,400 and further that the Executive Director’s total annual salary of \$98,038 for fiscal year ending 12/31/2022 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

III. New Business

Ms. Baran let the Board know she had to leave for another meeting and asked if the voucher could be taken out of order. Ms. Baran made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Whittlesey to;

Approve the November voucher as presented.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye

Melissa Wingfield: Aye
The motion was approved.

Ms. Cronin let the Board know that she was getting complaints about smoking in the condominium units. The Board decided to have a hearing where residents of condominium units could come and discuss with the Board their feelings about any new smoking restrictions. Ms. Cronin let the Board know she would discuss it with the Resident Advisory Committee first.

The Board discussed community outreach and education. Mr. Berry let the Board know that he had spoken with Vivian Birchall to arrange for a show on Acton TV about the AHA. Mr. Berry expressed concern about misinformation regarding the AHA and wanting to explain to the community how the AHA operates and is regulated.

Ms. Cronin reviewed the new utility allowance and payment standard schedules for the Section 8 Housing Voucher program. The Board reviewed and asked questions. Mr. Berry made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Whittlesey to;

Approve the new utility allowance and payment standards for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs for Acton, Boxborough, Littleton and Maynard effective February 1, 2022.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

Ms. Kolb discussed the zoning approval for the Main Street project. Ms. Kolb thanked Ms. Cronin and the design team for their presentations to the community and zoning board. Ms. Cronin said that the AHA was fortunate to have the support of the community and let the Board know that the Main Street project was invited to submit a funding application to the State. Ms. Cronin asked if the Board wanted to review the application before it was submitted and the Board told Ms. Cronin she could submit it without review. Ms. Cronin let the Board know all the deadlines set out in the Option to Purchase Agreement with the Town had been met by the AHA, but the AHA needed to officially request an extension of the option to purchase Main Street. Ms. Baran left the meeting at this time. Ms. Wingfield made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Berry to;

Approve extending the option to purchase agreement with the Town of Acton for 362-364 Main Street.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Peter Berry: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was approved.

Ms. Kolb asked Ms. Cronin about the Home Rule petition. Ms. Cronin said she wanted to see if their housing consultant, Maura Comasse-Tsongas, could come to the next meeting to explain. Ms. Cronin gave an update on capital projects.

IV. Old Business

Ms. Kolb said the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) had received several housing applications and all of the housing proposals would be presented at a meeting on January 11, 2022. Ms. Kolb also let the Board know that there were \$1,000,000 more requests for funds than were available.

Mr. Berry gave an update on the Green Advisory Board (GAB) and let the Board know that a list of goals had been created for the Climate Action plan which will be presented at the next Select Board meeting. Mr. Berry also stated that the GAB was considering using money from the Energy Efficiency Fund, which is money generated from the lease of the solar array at the transfer station, to replace some appliances at the AHA. Mr. Berry let the Board know it would be on a GAB agenda in January

The Board discussed the next meeting date and decided to continue to meet remotely and to start at 3:00pm.

- V. Ms. Kolb asked if there were any community members who wanted to comment and Ms. Cronin stated that David Martin and Charlie Kadlec both had their hands up. Ms. Kolb recognized David Martin who thanked the AHA for their work on affordable housing and the responsiveness of the staff. Mr. Martin also identified areas where he thought the AHA could improve. Ms. Cronin clarified some areas of policy that Mr. Martin raised. Ms. Kolb thanked Mr. Martin for his input and assured him of the AHA Boards commitment to residents and diversity.

Ms. Kolb recognized Charlie Kadlec. Mr. Kadlec raised concerns about people being attacked in social media and let the Board know he was working on an article in the Forum about the AHA. Board members thanked Mr. Kadlec for his comments.

Ms. Kolb recognized Ann Corcoran. Ms. Corcoran spoke about Acton being a welcoming community and her concerns about how people are communicating at public meetings. Ms. Kolb thanked her for her comments and asked if anyone else wanted to speak. Ms. Kolb wished everyone Happy Holidays and made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Ms. Wingfield and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Adjourn the meeting at 5:32 pm.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Peter Berry: Aye
Nancy Kolb: Aye
Robert Whittlesey: Aye
Melissa Wingfield: Aye

The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelley A. Cronin
Executive Director

Documents and Exhibits Used During the **December 14th** meeting:
Minutes of the November 30, 2021, meeting, DHCD Budget Guidelines, 2022 Budget and HAFIS Certifications, Staff Person Disclosure, Utility Allowance and Payment Standards for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, Main Street Option Extension and Option Agreement, Brookline Home Rule Petition, November voucher