

MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners of the Dracut Housing Authority met at a regular meeting on January 26, 2015 at 65 Phineas Street, Dracut, MA 01826. Chairman Russell Taylor opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and upon roll-call vote those present were as follows:

Present: Brian J. Bond
 Debra DeWitt Ahern
 Russell Taylor
 George M. Nangle
 Jesse Forcier

MINUTES:

Commissioner Forcier made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2014 Board Meeting. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Forcier inquired about the bill for Sanibel Electric in the amount of \$10,473.80. He wanted to know what the heat cables for 901 Mammoth Road were. The Director informed Commissioner Forcier that they were installed on the roof to eliminate ice buildup. Commissioner Forcier made a motion to approve the warrant. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Nangle and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Recommendation to hire for the position of Maintenance Laborer.

The Director recommended that the Board of Commissioners hire Jim Murphy for the position of Maintenance Laborer. The Director acknowledged that Jim Murphy was in attendance at the meeting. The Director informed that she advertised the position in the Lowell Sun on two occasions and also posted it on the MassNahro website. The Director stated that she received 32 resumes and interviewed 9 individuals for this position. She felt as though Jim Murphy was very qualified for the position, that he will help out with installation of doors, windows, drywall, etc.... this is the type of work he has done in the past. He is very young, energetic, and she felt as though he would be a good fit in the Maintenance Department. Commissioner Taylor asked if the Board had to vote on this position and the Director stated yes. Commissioner Forcier asked if this is something that the Board always votes on. The Director stated that the Executive Director reviews and interviews the applicants and then recommends to the Board and the Board votes to approve or not.

Commissioner Forcier stated that he was making the motion based on the Executive

Director's recommendation to hire Jim Murphy for this position. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern seconded the motion. Under discussion, Commissioner Bond stated that he is a little concerned because this hire has the appearance of political shenanigans. He stated that he is concerned because Jimmy Murphy's father (Paul Murphy) is a big supporter of the majority of the Commissioners on the Board. Commissioner Bond stated that he would like the Board Members to disclose financial or campaign support by his father. Commissioner Bond stated that we are here to serve the citizens and taxpayers of Dracut and with this appearance it just doesn't look right. The Director stated that not one Board Member approached her on behalf of Mr. Murphy. She stated that they did not approach her about anyone. The Director stated that based on her integrity he is going to have to go with that. Commissioner Bond stated that that was not the question he asked. The Director stated that she takes offense to his question. Commissioner Bond stated that he has the right to ask the question. Commissioner Bond stated that he will file a Freedom of Information Act to dig into this a little deeper. To get phone conversations back and forth, it has the appearance of shenanigans and he doesn't think it is right.

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that without any factual basis that statement is totally uncalled for. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that she looked at the other applicants and probably half of them are well known names in town many of who have probably know people in this room and have contributed to politicians. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that she personally does not know Jim Murphy's father. Commissioner Bond asked about the other members. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that the Director has done her due diligence. She informed the Board on the interview process and she totally supports the Director's recommendation. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that when the Director tells you that no one has approached her on this hiring, she takes her at her word. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that most of the people who applied for this position have political connections in Town.

Chairman Taylor stated that this is just typical muckraking from Mr. Bond. Commissioner Bond asked Chairman Taylor if he has ever received financial support from Mr. Murphy. Chairman Taylor stated that even though he does not answer to Commissioner Bond, he said that he has never received support from Mr. Murphy. Commissioner Nangle stated that the Director did the interviews and it is her decision. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that this is just a formality. Commissioner Forcier stated that he has faith in the Director, she did the interviews, she made the recommendation, she is the Director and that is why I made that motion. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote four yeas with Commissioner Bond opposed.

b. **Update on Virtual Solar Program.**

The Director informed the Board that she had a conversation with the Attorney from DHCD and has decided to sign a contract with Lodestar. The Board has already voted on this and the Director stated that she will be moving forward on this contract.

c. **Vacancy Report:**

The Board received a copy of the vacancy report.

d. **Work Order Report:**

The Board received a copy of the work order report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Housing Sub-Committee:

Commissioner Forcier stated that there was a Joint Sub-Committee Meeting between the Housing Authority Board and the Board of Selectmen. KBA Architects were at the meeting to give an introduction to both Boards. There will be more meetings in the future to keep both Boards up to date on the progress.

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that the CPC meeting that was originally scheduled for January 27th is rescheduled to February 17th. A spokesperson on Affordable Housing will be speaking at the meeting.

Heating Sub-Committee:

No current reports but a meeting will be scheduled soon.

OLD BUSINESS:

Middlesex Sherriff's Department.

The Director informed the Board that the Sheriff's Office will be onsite for the next three weeks painting the common hallways at the elderly sites.

Signing of Minutes:

The Director informed the Board that she sent an email out to other housing authorities to see whether or not their Boards sign the minutes. She informed the Board that some do and some don't. It's the Board's preference.

Commissioner Nangle asked if there were new lights put in at the front of the development. The Board was informed that all new lights were installed. Maintenance Supervisor Brian Martin informed the Board on where the new lights were installed.

Commissioner Nangle also asked if the Director is going to send letters to the other applicants that were interviewed. The Director stated that yes she would be following up with letters.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

RESIDENT & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Don Jean from 971 Mammoth Road stated that the Maintenance Department did a great job on snow removal.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Forcier to adjourn. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Nangle and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 6:15 p.m.