**MINUTES**

The Board of Commissioners of the Dracut Housing Authority met at a regular scheduled meeting on August 21, 2017 at 971 Mammoth Road, Dracut, MA 01826. Chairman Russ Taylor opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and upon roll call vote those present were as follows:

PRESENT: Matthew Sheehan

Debra DeWitt Ahern

F. Russell Taylor

Jesse Forcier

George Nangle

ABSENT: None

IN ATTENDANCE: Kelley Szymanski

Mary T. Karabatsos

**Roll Call Vote to Enter Executive Session**

The Board decided not to enter Executive Session.

Chairman Taylor asked the Director to inform the Board about the status of the RFP process. The Director stated that we received four proposals. They were from Common Ground, Dakota Partners, Stratford Company, and Urban Planning. She also stated that the Selection Committee received a training from Sue Connelly from Mass Housing Partnership. The proposals have not been reviewed at this point because the Director wanted to get a vote from the Board stating that we were either going to move forward with the project or stop the process. The Director informed the Board that Sue Connelly was adamant about the fact that a 99-year land lease is not only standard practice but also best practice in these types of projects. This is something that the Department of Housing and Community Development adheres to. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern also stated that based on the information that we have received a 99-year lease is something that must be followed. Chairman Taylor stated that he cannot vote to move forward on this project because this is not what the original plan was. He said that maybe things will change down the road but he does not see this scenario as beneficial to the Dracut tax payers.

Commissioner Forcier stated that he was hoping that we would receive different information in regards to a 99-year lease. Commissioner Forcier stated that he agrees that this is not what we promised the Town. He also understands that this is our only option right now and that it could be many years before affordable housing could be built on this site. This site could sit vacant for a very long time. Commissioner Forcier stated that he believes that if we do not all have our heart in this project then we should vote to not move forward.

Commissioner Sheehan stated that he would like to thank everyone involved in this process and stated that it has been a long process to get where we are today. He also stated that as a Commissioner of the housing authority our priorities are to take care of the people who are on our waiting lists. He said that the money and the land will still be there. Commissioner Sheehan said that we should end this process and hope that something comes up soon and we can start this process again.

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern said that she is very disappointed that we will not be able to take people off our waiting list. She said that it is somewhat disheartening. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern said that she agreed with Commissioner Forcier that she hoped that there was some way to circumvent the 99-year lease but unfortunately there is not. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that she can understand that 99 years is a long time to not have any control over this project. Once a developer is chosen the housing authority would have to back off from this project. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that we have spent a lot of time on this project. A lot of time talking to different consultants, etc…but when push comes to shove this is not the type of project that we want.

Commissioner Nangle stated that he wants to thank the Board, the Housing Sub Committee, Kelley Szymanski and Mary Karabatsos for the time and effort that was put in to this project. We are still going to own that land and hopefully at some point money will become available. Commissioner Nangle said that he is not willing to enter a 99-year lease and that he does not believe that this project would serve our applicants on the waiting list.

Commissioner Forcier made a motion to not move forward on the RFP process to construct affordable housing on the Greenmont Avenue Site. Under discussion, Commissioner DeWitt Ahern said that she did hear that there could be some changes in relation to affordable housing in the future. Commissioner Sheehan seconded the motion and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Forcier made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2017 Board Meeting. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**BILLS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

Commissioner Sheehan made a motion to approve the July 2017 warrant. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to approve the August 2017 warrant. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Sheehan and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

Commissioner Forcier made a motion to put the May 2017 Financial Reports on file for Audit. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

Commissioner Nangle made a motion to put the June 2017 Financial Reports on file for audit. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

**A vote to approve the Dracut Housing Authority’s Capital Fund Five Year Plan (2016 - 2021) including the 2017 Annual Plan.**

The five-year plan and the annual plan were in each Commissioner’s packet. The director explained that we have been installing four to five walk in showers each year and that the plan reflects that work. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to approve the Capital Five Year Plan including the Annual Plan. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**A vote to change the current schedule for Board Meetings to conduct one Board Meeting every quarter to take place at 65 Phineas Street.**

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to change the schedule for Board Meetings to conduct one Board Meeting every quarter at 65 Phineas Street. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**Solar savings to date - $26,586.00.**

The Director reported the savings on the solar program. This reflects the savings for the first six months of the solar program.

**Vacancy Report.**

There is currently one family vacancy which will be filled by the end of the week.

**Work Order Report.**

There are some annual inspection work orders that are on this report. They will be completed by the end of the week.

**Pond fountain - on order.**

The Director informed the Board that the fountain for the pond is on order.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

RFP Update. Commissioner Forcier thanked the Director and Kelley Szymanski for the work that they did over the years for the construction of affordable housing on the Greenmont Avenue Site.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Executive Director’s Contract. The sub-committee which consists of Chairman Taylor and Commissioner DeWitt Ahern will meet to discuss the Director’s contract.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Resident Cook Out – September 8, 2017

**A vote to approve a change order for RAE Contracting, LLC, Methuen, MA in the amount of $1,680 for removing existing concrete and dispose of, regrade and compact new gravel, furnish and install 3” finish asphalt, and roll to finish.**

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to approve the change order. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Sheehan and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**RESIDENT & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Resident input from Nonie Kelley in regards to the asphalt work and tree work in front of 9D. She was told that the work would be completed within the week.

Resident input from Jackie Cullum commenting on the solar energy savings and how happy she was with them.

Resident input Jackie Chausse about National Grid follow up.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.