

MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners of the Dracut Housing Authority met in regular session on October 21, 2013 at 65 Phineas Street, Dracut, Massachusetts. 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
	Kenneth Cunha
	Debra DeWitt Ahern
	George Nangle
	F. Russell Taylor

A MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR FORMER COMMISSIONER JAMES M. GOOKIN

Chairman Russell Taylor started the meeting off with a moment of silence for Captain James Gookin, former Commissioner of the Dracut Housing Authority, a friend of residents and a friend of current Board Members.

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Commissioner Bond made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2013 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern and upon roll call voted passed unanimously.

MINUTES EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Cunha made a motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Session that was conducted on September 16, 2013. Commissioner Bond seconded the motion under discussion. Commissioner Bond asked the Executive Director what the finding was of the Executive Session. The Executive Director read aloud the letter that was sent to Commissioner Bond. The letter will become part of these Executive Session Minutes. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion made by Commissioner Cunha to approve the Warrant. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern. Commissioner Cunha inquired about the bill for BLW Engineers and the Executive Director responded that the bill was a partial payment for the Engineers who are working on the gas conversion. Commissioner Bond inquired about the bill for Dillon & Sullivan Lawn Care and the Director responded that it was for cutting the grass three or four times over the summer when we were short staffed. Commissioner Bond also inquired about the work done at 971 Mammoth Road that was performed by Joseph Bue. The Director responded that it was for work that was done in preparation for REAC Inspection. Commissioner Bond also asked about the locksmith that was hired to do work on doors at 113 Parker Avenue. Commissioner Bond asked about the payment for property tax. The Director informed him that the payment was for taxes on 1530 Bridge Street (Richardson Property). Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. **A vote to approve the 2014 Operating Budget for the Dracut Housing Authority.**

Motion made by Commissioner Nangle to approve the operating budget subject to changes to salary percentage and inclusion of security cameras for 971 Mammoth Road. Brian Bond seconded the motion. Upon discussion Commissioner Bond stated that he will not be voting in favor of the budget. He was concerned with the fact that he did not feel that the Board had enough input into the Budget. He also stated that he has a tough time giving more money to one employee and not the others. Upon roll call vote passed four to one with Commissioner Bond in opposition.

- b. **A vote to approve an Amendment to the Dracut Housing Authority's Administrative Plan allowing to utilize the Section 8 Centralized Waiting List.**

The Executive Director explained what the Section 8 Centralized Waiting List was. She explained how this process will allow us to create a Dracut preference and also how it will relieve some of the administrative burden. Commissioner Cunha made a motion to adopt the Section 8 Centralized Waiting List. Debra Dewitt Ahern seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

- c. **A vote to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion for work completed by Site Improvements at 901 Mammoth Road.**

Motion made by Commissioner Cunha and seconded by Commissioner Bond to approve the certificate. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

- d. **A vote to accept the 2014 Fair Market Rents.**

Motion by Commissioner Cunha to accept the 2014 Fair Market Rents and said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

- e. **A vote to accept the 2014 Utility Allowances.**

Motion made by Commissioner Cunha and seconded by Commissioner Nangle to accept the 2014 Utility Allowances. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

- f. **A vote to approve the 2014 Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (formula funding) for the Dracut Housing Authority.**

Motion made by Commissioner Nangle to approve the five year capital improvement plan. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Bond and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

- g. **A vote to approve the Dracut Housing Authority's Uniform Policy.**

Motion made by Commissioner Cunha to approve the Dracut Housing Authority's Uniform Policy. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Nangle. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

h. **Discussion on No Smoking Policy and Lease Addendum for future residents.**

The Executive Director informed the Board that she met with residents of the DHA who smoke. The meeting was held at Phineas Street and there was a good representation from all developments. The Director informed the Board that residents feel as though this is their home and it is unfair for the housing authority to tell residents that they can no longer smoke in their home. Residents want to be able to smoke in their units. Residents also said that a designated area does not make sense because in the winter time elderly residents will not go outside to smoke. One Phineas Street resident requested if we could insulate the club house and put in baseboard heat they would like to utilize that area to smoke in as well as their apartment. The Director informed residents that she would bring this to the Board of Commissioners. The Director also informed the Board that she put together an addendum to the lease that prohibits smoking for all new residents.

Commissioner Bond does not think that we should take away existing residents "right to smoke" and that we should winterize the club house at 65 Phineas Street.

Commissioner Cunha stated that he thinks that the club house should be winterized and as long as no one is excluded from entering the club house it will be fine.

Chairman Taylor stated that he agreed with Commissioner Cunha and Commissioner Bond. Commissioner Cunha made a motion to winterize the club house to allow residents who want to smoke there be free to do so. He also emphasized that the club house should be available to those who smoke and those who do not smoke. Commissioner Nangle seconded the motion and upon roll call passed unanimously.

Motion made by Commissioner Nangle to adopt the "No Smoking Policy" for future residents who sign their lease on or after November 1, 2013. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that she agrees that current residents should be allowed to smoke. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

i. **Work Order Report.**

A discussion took place on the work order report. There were a few work orders that were open. Maintenance Supervisor Brian Martin went over the list with the Board and gave them an update.

Commissioner Bond asked about work order #5308. A resident called Board Members on this issue. Maintenance fixed the issue. Commissioner Bond stated that he would like the work order report to reflect all the work that was done in the unit. He also stated that he would like to see on the same report when the work order was logged and when the work order was closed. Commissioner Bond stated that he would like to see additional information on the work orders.

j. **REAC Update.**

The Executive Director informed the Board that we do not know what our final score is but she knows from the Inspector that we did very well on the inspection. When the official report comes in the Board will be notified.

k. **Carpeting Bid.**

The Executive Director informed the Board that we will be going out to bid on a carpeting and vinyl flooring contract. A vote will be taken at the next meeting for the company that was low bid. Commissioner Bond stated that it makes sense to look at where we repeatedly spend money and possibly go out to bid on other items; landscaping, etc..

5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Housing Committee:

The Director reported that on September 16th there was a Housing Sub Committee Meeting with the Dracut Housing Authority and the Board of Selectmen. The Director included the minutes of these meeting in the packet and explained that at this particular meeting Common Ground of CTI Development came and spoke of developments that they had worked on. Commissioner Cunha stated that the housing authority has defined their mission and they would like to see senior housing on the Bridge Street Property.

A discussion followed on the funding possibilities for developing this program. The Director stated that she recently had a conversation with DHCD and explicitly inquired whether or not if this project gets funded if the Dracut Housing Authority will be able to maintain control after development. The Director stated that DHCD is very vague on their answer and never gives a direct yes or no. Chairman Taylor stated that he is not interested in developing this project and then turning it over to another entity. Chairman Taylor stated that if we are not able to do this at this time he would just as soon wait and see the economy change and then build the project. Commissioner Cunha asked if the Dracut Housing Authority would be able to get some money out of CPC. He also inquired whether or not it is allowed for the Dracut Housing Authority go out and get a bond and use that to build the project. Commissioner Bond asked if we could use the land and the building that we would build as collateral. Commissioner Cunha asked if we could pay a mortgage over 25 years from the funds we collect in rent. The Director stated that we would need a consultant to explore that option as well as others.

Commissioner Bond stated that he would like to look at purchasing modular homes for the site. He believes that we would be able to save a lot of money if we were to do that. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that we first need to find out if we can utilize the land and the future buildings for collateral. Commissioner Cunha stated that we need to make sure this is all legal. Commissioner Cunha asked that the Director look into creating a Non-Profit for the Dracut Housing Authority. Commissioner Bond stated that he spoke to Selectmen DiRocco and he would like to see this project move forward.

Update on scope of services being prepared by Aamodt Plumb Architects for the demolition of 1530 Bridge Street.

The Director reported to the Board that the demolition company that put together the initial quote did not include a lot of the work that we will need them to do. The initial quote was for \$12,350.00. This quote had the housing authority responsible for a lot of the work. The architects that put this scope of work together asked the demolition company to include the work that was excluded. The quote then went from \$12,350 to \$26,650 with an additional \$5,720 for asbestos removal. The Director reported that based on these new numbers we have to go out to bid. Commissioner Bond asked what was different about the two scopes. The Director stated they did not include security fencing. Commissioner Bond asked why we needed security fencing. The Director stated that when they take the house down there will be a gaping hole and the area would need to be secured for possibly a few days. Commissioner Bond asked why we would need erosion control, water source for dust control, cutting and capping of utilities. Commissioner Bond stated that he does not understand how the cost doubled. The Director informed the Board that this is a cost estimate and this has to be done prior to going out to bid. Commissioner Bond feels as though this estimate is very high and the fact that the estimate number must be put on the Central Register sends a message to contractors that they can bid high. Commissioner Bond feels as though the estimates are blown out of proportion. The Director stated that the estimated amount is what will have to be put on the Central Register.

Heating Committee:

The Director stated that she sent the Board the report from BLW Engineers. The report was broken down into three options. The Board was informed that DHCD was not happy with the report. The Director reported that the engineers at DHCD will be reviewing the report and that she will have an updated report. The square footage is not correct on the report which would inflate the price. Commissioner Bond inquired whether or not we need to use this firm because he is not happy with the report. He states that the numbers are out of whack. The Director stated that they won the bid and we hired them. The Director stated that this is a cost estimate. Commissioner Bond said that when we go out to bid the cost estimate is made public and he feels as though contractors will bid off of that number. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that when the appropriate square footage is used the cost will come down a bit. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern suggested that the Board as a whole should meet with BLW Engineers and pose their questions to them directly.

Safety Committee:

The Director reported that the cameras were up and running.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Director gave the Board a copy of the federal audit.

RESIDENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Cunha and seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern. Upon roll call vote passed unanimously.