



Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting January 17, 2017

MEETING CONVENED

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for MaineHousing convened on January 17, 2017 at the offices of MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine.

Chairman Peter Anastos called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with Commissioners Sheryl Gregory, Kevin P. Joseph, Donna Talarico, John Marsh, Lincoln Merrill, State Treasurer Terry Hayes, and Director John Gallagher in attendance. Commissioner Adam Bradstreet was absent. There was a quorum present.

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

Guests and staff present for all or part of the meeting include: Peter Merrill, Deputy Director; Dan Brennan, Senior Director of Programs; Denise Lord, Senior Director of Communications & Planning; Tom Cary, Treasurer; Linda Uhl, Chief Counsel; Linda Grotton, Manager of Audit and Compliance; Craig Reynolds, Director of Homeownership; Daniel Drost, Director of Energy & Housing; Cindy Namer, Director of Homeless Initiatives; Deb Turcotte, Public Information Manager; Jane Whitley, Human Resources Manager; and Gerrylynn Ricker, Paralegal and note taker.

ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Joseph to adopt the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 20, 2016 MEETING

Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Joseph to accept the minutes with one amendment. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICTS

- Chair Anastos reported on the building committee.

DIRECTOR UPDATES

- Visited New Hampshire Housing Authority. Talked about succession plans, senior managers approaching age of retirement. Discussed leadership program that they have. Denise Lord and Margaret Bean are working to ensure MaineHousing has a good succession plan.
- Spoke to the Portland Rotary Club. Discussed the senior housing bonds, aging in place, and services for the elderly. Director Gallagher said he would plan a meeting either at a board meeting or after an upcoming board meeting to meet with senior advocates to discuss ideas.
- Met with the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition.
- Reported that for the first time in ten years we will be fully funded from the Transfer Tax fund. Chair Anastos thanked John Gallagher and Peter Merrill for their efforts regarding this matter.
- Director Gallagher reported that the multi-family portfolio reported zero delinquencies this month.
- There is a site selection meeting of the building committee on Friday (Jan. 20). Mr. Gallagher will have a full report for the Board in February.

TESTIMONIAL

Cindy Namer, Director of Homeless Initiatives introduced Deidrah Stanchfield who is the Director of the Augusta Warming Center. Ms. Stanchfield told the Board members that seven years ago she made poor choices and basically had to start her life over. She lost her nursing position, she was homeless. She stayed at Bread of Life homeless shelter and got a job at Burger King. She received a housing choice voucher but because she had a bad landlord she wound up back at the shelter where she was introduced to our Stability through Engagement Program (STEP). She liked this program because it was goal oriented and made her accountable. While working two jobs, she went back to school and got her certified nurse's aide certificate. She explained how having stable housing enables you to work and dig yourself out. She now works for the State at Maine Conservation and as Director of the Augusta Warming Center. She told the Board members that she would not be where she is today without the assistance she received through the STEP program.

2017 MAINE DOE WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STATE PLAN

Daniel Drost, Director of Energy & Housing Services explained there were no substantive changes to the State Plan from last years. The items Mr. Drost wanted to bring to the Board's attention were as follows:

- Page 8, Section V.5.2 Energy Audit Procedures the audit procedures and dates for manufactured housing is blank. We are still waiting for the approval of the new software on manufactured housing.
- Page 22, Allocation of Funding to Subgrantees, Daniel explained that only 60% of the funding will be available on April 4, 2017. Hopefully the other 40% will be available. We have no carryover this year. The CAPs are trying to spend everything they have by March 31st.
- Page 25, the Grantee/Subgrantee training again is only at 60% funding.

Commissioner Marsh asked Daniel what the next to the last sentence in paragraph one on page three that read "...assets drawn down from financial institutions when used for expenditures..." meant. Daniel indicated this required additional investigation and he will report back to the Board regarding the provisions of the rule and procedures.

Commissioner Hayes asked for some clarification:

- Page 3, Section regarding Qualified Aliens. Daniel Drost will research this issue. Since the reference is to a specific law, any changes to the law or its enforcement will be incorporated into the cited reference and will address any changes.
- Page 5, Paragraph numbered 2 references a table below and there isn't one. Daniel will look into that.

Commissioner Hayes wanted to know what an "SRI" was as referenced on Page 9 and Daniel explained that it stands for "Saving to Investment Ratio." On Page 27 Paragraph numbered 5 talks about if an energy audit determines that no weatherization work is necessary then the unit is counted as a completed weatherized unit. Commission Hayes asked if there has ever been an audit done that didn't require any work. Daniel reported that from time to time it is determined that weatherization measures are not deemed necessary, but it is rare.

ENERGY & HOUSING OVERVIEW

Daniel Drost, Director of Energy & Housing Services prepared a handout containing an overview of his department.

- Low-Income Home and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Director Drost explained how we partner with the nine Community Action Agencies and fuel vendors to get the funds to recipients. He explained this program is not intended to pay for all heating costs of a home, but to assist in paying the heating bills.
- The Low-Income Assistance Program (LIAP) helps low-income homeowners and renters with their electric utility bills.
- Central Heating Improvement Program (CHIP) provides grants to repair or replace central heating systems that serve low-income households. The allocation for this program comes from the LIHEAP allocation.
- Emergency Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) provides assistance to low-income homeowners to prevent a health and safety crisis. The allocation for this program also comes out of the LIHEAP allocation.
- Lead Hazard Reduction Demonstration Grant (LHRD) was developed to provide grants and deferred/forgivable loans to assist homeowners and landlords to make their homes and apartments lead safe.
- DOE Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a program designed to increase the efficiency of dwellings owned or occupied by low-income persons. Commissioner Hayes asked why the assistance paid out and the average benefit almost doubled in 2016 from 2015. Daniel indicated that this required research and he will report back to the Board.
- Home Repair Program provides grants to income eligible homeowners for professional home rehabilitation and repair services.
- Drought Relief. Director Gallagher explained that with State HOME funds (transfer tax) flexibility allows us to put money wherever it is needed at any given time such as the drought matter this year. We were able to provide emergency grant assistance to income eligible homeowners with lack of potable water due to recent drought related conditions.
- Home Retro Program provides grants to low income single family households with an occupant with physical disabilities and Housing Choice Voucher participants receiving community based services under DHHS Medicaid waiver programs.
- Arsenic Remediation is a new program that provides financing in the form of grants for the remediation of arsenic contaminated private wells for income eligible homeowners.
- Home Modification Tax Credit Program is also a new program that provides an income tax credit to individuals who earn \$55,000 or less for expenses paid for modifications to their residence that makes their residence accessible for a person with a physical disability or a physical hardship who lives or will live at that residence. We are working with the Maine Revenue Services

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

The Commissioners reviewed the Department Reports. Commissioner Hayes asked about the uptick in foreclosure expenses even though the actual number of foreclosures is decreasing. Commissioner Hayes also wanted to pass on to the Homeownership Department her congratulations on such a successful year.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Joseph to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Talarico, Secretary