



## **Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting March 26, 2013**

### **MEETING CONVENED**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for MaineHousing convened on March 26, 2013, at the offices of MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine.

Chair Peter Anastos called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with Commissioners Adam Bradstreet, Sheryl Gregory, Lincoln Merrill, Neria Douglass, Donna Talarico, Donald Capoldo, John Turner (via conference call) and Director John Gallagher in attendance. Commissioner Gean was absent. There was a quorum present.

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**

Staff present included: Margaret Bean, Deputy Director; Tom Cary, Treasurer; Linda Uhl, Chief Counsel; Peter Merrill, Deputy Director and Director of Communications and Planning; Dan Brennan, Director of Development; Denise Lord, Director of Housing Choice Vouchers; Craig Reynolds, Director of Homeownership; Cindy Namer, Director of Homeless Initiatives; Darren Brown, Director of Finance; Kirsten Figueroa, Director of Energy and Housing Services; Kathy Kinch, Manager of Program Operations; Linda Grotton, Manager of Audit & Compliance; Jodie Stevens, Counsel; John Bobrowiecki, Counsel; Deb Turcotte, Public Information Manager; and Jane Whitley, HR Manager and note taker.

Other guests included: Kyra Walker, CHOM; David Projansky, DHHS; Jill Brown, Safe Voices; Mel Clarrage, Homeward Bound; Margo Batsie, Disability Rights Center; Holly Stover, DHHS; Julia Wilcock, VOA; Bill Crandall, WMCA; Rick McCarthy, MCAA; Michael Stoddard, Efficiency Maine Trust; and Stephen Bell, Advanced Energy.

### **ADOPT AGENDA**

*Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Bradstreet to accept the agenda. The vote carried 6 – 0.*

### **WELCOME DONNA TALARICO**

Chair Anastos welcomed Commissioner Talarico to the Board.

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICTS**

Commissioner Douglass reported that she may have a conflict of interest. She disclosed that she has \$150,000 of inherited stock from US Bank. US Bank is the trustee for MaineHousing's bond resolution.

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 26, 2013**

*Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Douglass to accept the February 26 minutes as written. The vote carried 6 – 0.*

## **BOARD CHAIR UPDATES**

- There will be a Maine Affordable Housing Coalition meeting on April 2 at 9:00am at Drummond Woodsum. All are invited to attend.
- A QAP working group meeting is being held today at 2:00pm in the Board Room. All are invited to attend.
- There was a legislative hearing last week on a bill resulting from the Sullivan School development in Berwick. Deputy Director Peter Merrill provided testimony on behalf of MaineHousing, and Chair Anastos indicated that he personally testified during the hearing.

## **DIRECTOR UPDATES**

Director John Gallagher provided the following updates:

- The Affordable Housing Conference is planned for October of 2013.
- There is an HFA Director national conference being held in Montana. Chair Anastos supported John's attendance, and was appreciative of his transparency in business travel.
- A QAP working group meeting is being held today at 2:00pm in the Board Room. All Commissioners invited to attend.
- Director Gallagher and Deputy Director Peter Merrill recently traveled to Washington, DC to meet with the Maine delegation.
  - Senator Collins was pleased with progress made in the HCV program. Chair Anastos thanked the staff for all of their hard work and stated it is refreshing to see how pleased Senator Collins and HUD are with us.
  - Director Gallagher had a chance to ask Secretary Donovan for a definitive ruling by HUD on medical marijuana in the HCV program. MaineHousing hopes to make a final decision in September, pending a ruling from HUD or the Department of Justice.
- The final Compensation and Benefits survey is included in the Board packet. At the last Board meeting the Commissioners voted to extend the timeline to encourage more participation. However, the survey results had been compiled and were received later that afternoon. Had we extended the timeline, the cost would have increased by \$3900. Laurie Bouchard, the consultant, will present the final survey results at the April 23 Board meeting.

## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER AND PROJECT BASED VOUCHER PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING**

Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Department Denise Lord discussed the purpose of the plan and MaineHousing's administrative responsibilities.

Chief Counsel Linda Uhl introduced Commissioners, MaineHousing staff, and reviewed the public hearing process. The public hearing opened at 9:32am.

The following members of the public provided testimony: Holly Stover, DHHS; Mark Joyce, Disabilities Rights Center; David Projansky, DHHS; Jill Brown, Domestic Violence Agency; Margo Batsie, Maine Coalition to end Domestic Violence.

The public hearing closed at 10:20am.

## **ADOPTION OF HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER AND PROJECT BASED VOUCHER PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN**

Director of the Housing Choice Voucher Department Denise Lord commented that adoption of the revised administrative plan is a significant step toward satisfying the OIG Audit recommendations. MH worked with Nan McKay and Associates when developing it to assure compliance with HUD regulations and to incorporate best practices. This plan replaces the 2010 plan. We are proposing new preferences for residents in MaineHousing's jurisdiction: victims of domestic violence and veterans. The current preference for homeless applicants is continued in the proposed plan.

*Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Merrill to adopt the Housing Choice Voucher and Project Based Voucher Administrative Plan as proposed. All Commissioners voted to accept the motion. The motion passed unanimously 7 – 0.*

## **2013 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) STATE PLAN FOR WEATHERIZATION PUBLIC HEARING**

Chief Counsel Linda Uhl introduced Commissioners, MaineHousing staff, and reviewed the public hearing process.

Energy and Housing Services Director Kirsten Figueroa presented an overview of the DOE State Plan application process for the 2013 Weatherization Assistance Program. As part of the annual application process, MaineHousing must submit to the Department of Energy (DOE) a State Plan application detailing how we will utilize the funds and conduct our weatherization program in accordance with DOE guidance. The public comment period has been extended to April 8, 2013.

The public hearing opened at 11:42am.

Testimony was heard from Rick McCarthy representing the Maine Community Action Association.

The public hearing closed at 11:55am.

## **COMMENCEMENT OF RULE MAKING – HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP)**

Energy and Housing Services Director Kirsten Figueroa and Manager of Program Operations Kathy Kinch presented an overview of the proposed Rule, including changes from the prior rule. The HEAP Rule is for low income households and establishes standards for administering fuel assistance, emergency fuel assistance, weatherization, and heating system repair and replacement. MaineHousing used a collaborative approach to get feedback on the existing and proposed Rule. We had discussions with stakeholder groups including Community Action Agencies, vendors, and advocate groups. Additionally, we publicized and held a forum to engage the public.

Commissioner Gregory would like MaineHousing to post online the required documentation that is needed as part of the application process. This will allow the client to be fully prepared when attending their HEAP appointment. Hopefully, this will assist in expediting their benefit.

*Commissioner Gregory made a motion seconded by Commissioner Merrill to commence rulemaking once the Governor has agreed, for the repeal and replacement of the current Home Energy Assistance Program Rule, Chapter 24 of MaineHousing's rules as proposed, except that the DOR would be for all of the clients' fuel consumption, not limited to just LIHEAP fuel consumption, and the CHIP benefit for renters would be capped at \$300. The motion passed unanimously 7 – 0.*

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- Commissioner Merrill commented on the Homeownership Department report. He was encouraged by the increase in loan production.
- Linda Grotton gave an update on the IT audit process. Cohn Resnik staff were on-site last week. She has been impressed with their questions and level of understanding at this point in the process.

## **ADJOURN**

*Commissioner Douglass made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gregory to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 7 – 0. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Gean, Secretary