



Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting May 16, 2017

MEETING CONVENED

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for MaineHousing convened on May 16, 2017 at the offices of MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine.

Chairman Peter Anastos called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The first order of business was to welcome the incoming Commissioners. Deputy Director Peter Merrill performed a swearing in ceremony. The meeting convened with Commissioners Peter Anastos, Kevin P. Joseph, Donna Talarico, State Treasurer Terry Hayes, Lincoln Merrill, Jim Whitten, Tom Davis, Larry Gross, and Director John Gallagher in attendance. Commissioner Gregory was absent. There was a quorum present.

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

Guests and staff present for all or part of the meeting include: Bill Crandall, WMCAA; Amanda Peters, Housing Energy Council; Chris Bicknell, New Beginnings; Peter Merrill, Deputy Director; Dan Brennan, Senior Director of Programs; Tom Cary, Treasurer; Linda Uhl, Chief Counsel; Linda Grotton, Internal Audit Manager; Craig Reynolds, Director of Homeownership; Darren Brown, Director of Finance; Daniel Drost, Director of Energy and Housing Services; Jane Whitley, Director of Human Resources & Facilities; Denise Lord, Senior Director of Communications and Planning; Troy Fullmer, Manager of Housing and Compliance; Kathy Kinch, Manager of LIHEAP and Financial Reporting; Deb Turcotte, Public Information Manager; Kyme Ferenc, LIHEAP Program Officer – Compliance and Fraud; Stacey Genest, LIHEAP Program Officer – Billing and Payments; Michael Baran, Special Projects Coordinator; Don McGilvery, Construction Services Manager; and Jody Rollins, Office Administrator and note taker.

ADOPT AGENDA

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

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 18, 2017 MEETING

Commissioner Joseph made a motion seconded by Commissioner Hayes to accept the April 18, 2017 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICTS

There were no communications and conflicts to report.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD UPDATES

Chairman Anastos thanked Director Gallagher for the heads-up on the Frontline Story about the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, which enabled him to contact developers and have a post conversation.

Director Gallagher talked about the strong Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program in Maine and the checks and balances that are in place to prevent fraud. He also reviewed the cost per unit in development, which has seen a decrease. Development fees in Maine are typically 9.24% with a net of 6.64%, compared to the national average of 15%.

DIRECTOR UPDATES

- Development is very busy with 10 projects currently under construction.
- Welcomed the New England Resident Service Coordinators to Maine at the Samoset. The conference was well attended with over 450 people around New England.
- Kudos to Debbie King-Johnson, Consumer Education and Outreach Officer, who runs the education programs in Homeownership. She was awarded the Outstanding Community Partner Award by the Community Financial Literacy group in Portland.
- Met with leadership at the State House about transfer tax funding and the importance of the direct pass-thru funding.
- Met with Maine Affordable Housing Coalition. Chellie Pingree attended and gave updates from D.C. People are pleased that we have a continuing resolution through the end of the fiscal year.
- Attended and spoke at the Homeless Youth Forum at the Armory in Augusta. The forum was a joint presentation from MaineHousing and the Office of Child and Family Services. HUD attended from Boston and Washington. John stated that much of the focus was on data collection and he's ready for implementation.
- An Economic Impact Study has been done and it will be distributed.
- Reported on a Homeless funding issue, and how low barrier shelters got hurt with the current funding formula. We are looking at the Rule to see if we can make changes and working with the Shelters.
- MEREDA Spring Conference on YIMBY'ism forthcoming.
- Attending the Cabin in the Woods groundbreaking, housing for Veterans at Togus.
- All Staff Day on May 23 that Commissioners are invited to attend and participate in.
- Will be speaking at a ribbon cutting for Pierce Place in Lewiston.
- Reviewed three goals he has embarked upon:
 1. Housing bond – the Governor has not released the \$15 million. Advocates have put in another \$50 million bond. Legislation in place to remove the Governor from the direct line of general obligation bond signatory. Even if the bonds go through, projects have to go through a TEFRA (sign off process by Governor) so they still may not be successful.
 2. HQS inspections – looking to reduce the numbers of failures. The HCV department is now allowing 30 days for minor issues to be resolved for new tenants, and providing more outreach with landlords regarding inspection protocols. HUD will be making changes in inspection protocols.
 3. Succession planning – currently going through a process of leadership training to backfill positions, and changing the hiring practice from skill based to competency based.
- Dan Brennan has received his MBA from Thomas College and has also been accepted into the Leadership Maine Program on a scholarship.
- Laurie Glidden, the FSS coordinator received a very nice note from a client to acknowledge the help she gave her. John read the communication.

CHRIS BICKNELL, NEW BEGINNINGS

Director Gallagher introduced Chris Bicknell, the Executive Director of New Beginnings, a youth homeless shelter in Lewiston. The shelter provides services to youth aged 12 – 21 with the primary focus of providing safety, connections with caring adults, and opportunities for growth so they can move onto young adulthood in a stable condition. They provide a continuum of care that includes all of their services, use a positive youth development model, trauma informed care, and a harm

reduction policy. Mr. Bicknell reviewed the array of services that they provide and the youth that they serve. If there is an unmet need, they will refer for services needed. They have received a grant that will enable them to expand their services to 9 counties beginning in January of 2018. There is no single profile of a homeless youth; they are all different. Most come with significant childhood trauma, significant family discord, with most living in poverty their entire lives. Recent trends include an increase in 18 year olds with developmental disabilities, and youth with a parent dying of an opioid overdose, both of which provide a new challenge. He concluded his presentation by sharing what success looks like for the youth served.

COMMENCE RULEMAKING – LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Senior Director Dan Brennan introduced the staffs who perform the LIHEAP work – Kathy Kinch, who oversees the work; and Stacey Genest and Kyme Ferenc (both MBA graduates of Thomas College) who work with LIHEAP on a daily basis. He stated he was before the Board to ask for permission to begin the rulemaking process. He provided an overview of the LIHEAP program, the State Plan, the rulemaking process, and timeline to the incoming Commissioners. Due to the situation of being undersubscribed, Dan also noted that we would be asking for a Waiver to move 10% of unused funds to the Weatherization program. A discussion ensued regarding marketing the LIHEAP program, partnering, and getting the most from money spent while reducing consumption. He reviewed the primary policy issues and the proposed LIHEAP changes. Public hearings will be held at the June 20 meeting of the MaineHousing Board of Commissioners on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Rule, the draft FFY 2018 State Plan, and the Waiver. *Commissioner Hayes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gross to commence the rulemaking process to repeal and replace Chapter 24 of MaineHousing's rules as described in the memorandum from Energy & Housing Services Director Dan Drost to the Commissioners dated May 11, 2017, and the memorandum from Senior Director of Programs Daniel Brennan dated May 11, 2017. The motion carried unanimously.*

NEW BUILDING UPDATE (EXECUTIVE SESSION)

Commissioner Hayes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Joseph to go into Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 of the Maine Revised Statutes, Section 405.6 C & E to discuss possible purchase of real estate and consult with counsel. The motion carried unanimously.

The Executive Session adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Commissioner Hayes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Merrill to authorize John Gallagher and Peter Anastos to negotiate and enter into a purchase and sale agreement for properties for MaineHousing offices within 180 days subject to final approval of the Board of Commissioners. The motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

The Commissioners reviewed the Department Reports.

Commissioner Hayes commended the following individuals and departments on their achievements:

- Kathy Abbondanzio found a way to do her job more efficiently and save money in the process.
- Rinck advertising for securing the marketing contract.
- Finance department recognized notable delinquency reductions
- Colby in the Homeless report is amazing.
- Homeownership program is doing great.
- Lauren Bustard graduated from Leadership Maine.

Commissioner Hayes requested a roster of the new Commissioners.

The Commissioners introduced themselves and provided background information to the group.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Joseph made a motion seconded by Commissioner Hayes to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Talarico, Secretary