

# Town of Bellingham MA

10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham MA 02019

## MINUTES02.09.2016

Bellingham Housing Authority  
Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2016 held at Wrentham Manor

- Call to Order at 6:00 p.m.; Announcement: recording of meeting
- Roll Call: ~all present
- Public Input – no questions or discussion
- Minutes of December 8, 2015 meeting

Discussion requested by Mrs. Cartier. Mrs. Cartier made the following changes and/or suggestions to the minutes (actual minutes will not be updated; these notes will append):

- A change to Section V Minutes of November 17, 2015 meeting; minutes were seconded by Mr. Sposato not Mrs. Cartier
- Mrs. Cartier questioned “Mr. Conlon indicated in the negative.” Mrs. Bergeron explained that the budget revision did not include any items for an increase in salaries. Mr. Conlon replied that part of the revision was for a salary increase. Mrs. Bergeron will make a notation of those facts.
- Mrs. Cartier stated that some amount of latitude was taken. The recording indicates no reference to any previous conversations with anyone in regard to the increase to salary for maintenance.
- Mrs. Cartier disagrees with the statement that the payroll increase was due to an accounting error. Discussion ensued. Mr. Sposato suggested that the situation was an error due to lack of communication.
- Sentence/grammatical error: remove “would” to correct.
- Mrs. Cartier requested clarification to the facts in regard to positions and promotions. All agreed that the statement is correct.
- Mrs. Cartier would like a statement inserted that provides information to the facts that were present in regard to employee retirement. Benefits will continue to be paid until death. Notation that Mr. Conlon concurred that all retiree’s benefits will go on to spouses.
- Mrs. Cartier made note of a conversation regarding the supervision of maintenance staff. The conversation specifics were not known and the discussion could not continue.
- Mrs. Cartier wanted to point out the Executive Director’s contract states, “Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer and shall directly in charge of personnel.” Discussion ensued regarding the director’s responsibilities and the actual need for a maintenance supervisor. Mrs. Cartier stated that the Authority never had a maintenance supervisor and one is not needed at this time.
- Mrs. Cartier made note of Executive Session procedure and process that was discussed was not noted in the minutes. Mr. Hall commented that was discussed during executive session. Agreed that insertion of the fact that there were multiple forms being utilized by the Board.
- Discussion and questions were presented regarding minutes. The minutes are part of the board’s by-laws, there is a fear of losing the recorded minutes and minutes should not be vague. Mrs. Cartier stated that there seems to be an issue with the posted information at
- Town Hall. Mrs. Bergeron will discuss with Karen.
- Mrs. Bergeron queried the board on their satisfaction in regard to placing the recordings on Drop Box. Mrs. Cartier stated that it would be helpful if the minutes could be placed there in advance of a meeting for comparison. Mrs. Bergeron will attempt to get them to the board as soon as possible.
- Motion to accept minutes tabled pending corrections.

- Minutes of January 12, 2016 meeting

- Discussion regarding breach of internal control. Breach of internal control is a failure to follow procedure. Mrs. Bergeron and Mr. Conlon explained that a check in the same dollar amount was issued to two different vendors (two capital improvement projects were running at the same time). Mrs. Cartier noted that the checks were written to two different vendors. The incorrect vendor was contacted and the monies were returned to the authority. Mrs. Bergeron will modify to enhance the facts for the February minutes.

- Motion to approve the minutes made by Mr. Sposato, seconded by Mrs. Lavallee, all in favor as written, motion carried.
- Minutes of Executive Session January 12, 2016 meeting
  - Motion made to approve the minutes made by Mr. Sposato, seconded by Mrs. Sacco, all in favor, motion carried.
- Executive Session Procedure & Forms
  - Mrs. Bergeron quoted the Authority's By-laws in regard to executive session. The by-laws essentially cite the Attorney Generals' guidelines. Mrs. Bergeron presented three forms; one of them directly from the AG's website. The board may choose their procedure & forms; any that have been presented would be suitable. Discussion. Board decided to utilize the current form from the AG. Mrs. Bergeron will formally present at next meeting.
- New Business
  - Executive Director's salary – moved to end of meeting
  - Authorization of annual Civil Rights certification (Federal); motion made by Mrs. Sacco, seconded by Mr. Sposato, all in favor, motion carried.
  - Mrs. Bergeron presented the Authorization of annual Lead-based Paint Certification (State); Mr. Sposato made a motion to authorize the certification, seconded by Mrs. Sacco, all in favor, motion carried.
  - Resolution 2015-20 FISH# 025038 667-1 Roof shingle replacement Substantial Completion
    - Mrs. Bergeron presented the resolution to approve the roof replacement substantial completion; Motion to approve made by Mrs. Sacco, seconded by Mrs. Lavallee, all in favor, motion carried.
  - Resolution 2015-21 FISH# 025038 667-1 Roof shingle replacement Final Completion
    - Mrs. Bergeron presented the resolution to approve the roof replacement final completion; Motion to approve made by Mrs. Sacco, seconded by Mrs. Lavallee, discussion, all in favor, motion carried.
- Treasurer's Report
  - Questions regarding payroll and overtime; Mrs. Bergeron answered questions regarding overtime. On-call staff receives a minimum of one hour of overtime plus the cell phone carry of \$50. Every call in will receive that minimum. Overtime is paid at time and one half regardless of total hours worked for on-call.
- Accountant's Report
  - Questions and discussion directed to Mr. Conlon. Mr. Conlon noted that the Authority is currently in surplus. However, winter utilities have not been paid as of December 31<sup>st</sup>. Section is breaking even and MRVP is making a small amount of money.
- Executive Director's Report
  - Status quo in regard to administrative duties.
  - Met with Mr. Conlon to prepare FY2017 budget.
  - No current vacancies.
- Any other business that may legally come before the board - none
- Next meeting will be March 8, 2016.
- Executive Director Salary discussion
  - Mr. Conlon presented three salary scenarios due to the new DHCD Executive Director Salary Schedule (see attachments A, B & C). Mr. Conlon noted that DHCD is not increasing subsidy this year to offset salary increases. Mr. Conlon suggested that the Section 8 program could be terminated/given away; please see attachment C-2 for specifics of that option. The options are zero, a 3% increase, the DHCD schedule, or no Section 8 with the new DHCD salary schedule. Mrs. Bergeron noted that the Authority would receive a

one-time exemption for utilizing the new salary schedule. Mr. Conlon added that no more funds would be allotted; only the maximum of 3% that is allowed by DHCD.

- Discussion and information presented in regard to the Section 8 program. The program has continuously lost money, the program regulations are excessive and the amount of time needed to administer the program is disproportionate. Mrs. Bergeron expanded to state that the agency that took on the program would be obligated to provide residency preference to those vouchers. The program is currently funded at 70%. The con to giving up program would be that the receiving authority would not continue to give the local preference to Bellingham residents; can be difficult to monitor. The Authority currently administers seven vouchers in-town. Many large agencies are absorbing the smaller agency's vouchers. The current voucher holders will not have to move if an agency absorbs the Authority's program.
- Mrs. Bergeron presented the history behind the new salary schedule. The new schedule was presented at the MassNAHRO Spring Conference but was not final at the time. The salary schedule encompasses DHCD increases that were not given from 2007-2015. Should the Board have to hire a new director, the new schedule would have to be used.
- The Board can offer a range of salaries from zero percent to the high of the new schedule. The Authority is restricted only to the new salary calculation or 3% maximum.
- Mrs. Cartier inquired as to how many hours per week are spent on the Section 8 Program. Mrs. Bergeron estimates that two hours per day are spent on the program. Mrs. Cartier asked if the assistant position could be terminated if the program were eliminated. Mrs. Bergeron stated that a reduction or termination of the position would be possible. The Board requested that Mrs. Bergeron track her time to determine how much time is spent between programs.
- Miscellaneous discussion regarding state compliance with salary increases and budget impacts. Mr. Conlon stated that, due to no state increase, reductions in other line items would have to be conducted (such as maintenance supplies or contract costs. Mrs. Bergeron explained that there are other options to explore other than just maintenance. Mrs. Cartier inquired if there was a possibility of demoting the supervisor position. Mrs. Bergeron explained that that position is under union contract.
- Mrs. Lavallee made a comment that all members should have a copy of the executive director's contract. She would like to make reference to Article 5: "The Executive Director shall perform the following duties and exercise the following powers, rights and authority of Executive Director: (a) The Executive Director shall have the general supervision over the administration of the Authority's business and affairs, subject to the direction of the Board Members of the Authority, and the Authority agrees that the Executive Director shall be the Authority's chief administrative officer and shall be directly in charge of personnel and shall be responsible subject to the review and approval of the Board for the hiring and discharging of all personnel;..." Mrs. Lavallee commented that this verbiage does not distinguish between office personnel and maintenance. Mrs. Lavallee feels that the Board should be consulted when hiring and firing personnel.
- Mrs. Bergeron inquired what the Board what like her to do about terminating a current employee. Mrs. Lavallee stated that the Board would have to go into Executive Session for personnel issues.
- Mr. Conlon will provide additional salary information for the next meeting.
- A Workshop will be held on Wednesday, February 24, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Bergeron will remind the Board one week prior and post as required by law. Mr. Hall requested a copy of the tenant surveys to use as comparison. Mr. Hall asked if Mrs. Bergeron's request for a copies was given. Mrs. Cartier and Mrs. Lavallee indicated that a copy of the actual surveys was not given due to confidentiality. Mrs. Bergeron requested a copy of the survey summary.
- Motion tabled until March 8, 2016. Mr. Conlon will provide additional information regarding salary scales.
- Motion to adjourn made by Mrs. Cartier, seconded by Mrs. Lavallee, all in favor, motion carried.