



Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting March 21, 2017

MEETING CONVENED

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for MaineHousing convened on March 21, 2017 at the offices of MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine.

Chairman Peter Anastos called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with Commissioners Sheryl Gregory, Kevin P. Joseph, Donna Talarico, Lincoln Merrill, State Treasurer Terry Hayes, and Director John Gallagher in attendance. Commissioners John Marsh and Adam Bradstreet were 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, Internal Audit Manager; Bob Conroy, Director of Management; Kathy Kinch, Manager of LIHEAP and Federal Reporting; Troy Fullmer, Manager of Housing and Compliance; Deb Turcotte, Public Information Manager; Jane Whitley, Director of Human Resources & Facilities; and Jody Rollins, Office Administrator and note taker.

ADOPT AGENDA

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

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2017 MEETING

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

COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICTS

- Commissioner Talarico inquired about Board appointments. It was reported that the Office of Commissions and Administration was currently putting names forward for consideration.
- Commissioner Gregory reported conversations she has been having regarding the lead based paint reduction grant and inquired about the status of the contracts and forms.
- Commissioner Hayes provided positive comments regarding MaineHousing's efforts to work with quasi-state partners.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD UPDATES

- Chair Anastos told the committee about his recent trip to Washington, D.C. to attend the NCSHA Legislative Conference. He reported that the meetings with the Congressional delegation and their representatives went very well.
- He has attended several building committee meetings and they are narrowing the field of options. A meeting follows the board meeting when they will discuss and evaluate the options.

DIRECTOR UPDATES

- Attended a ribbon cutting event at Park Danforth.
- The Leadership Team has embarked on a scenario planning process whereby we evaluate the best and worst situations and define work plans. We are staying abreast of the current political environment and paying close attention to budget and program considerations under the current administration.
- We are determining the minimum wage increase impact on our customers. Commissioner Hayes suggested we be proactive with both customers and the State of Maine to minimize loss. MaineHousing will continue to clearly define the numbers to determine the effects of this change, and work on messaging.
- The numbers reported in the Homeless department report are very encouraging showing a significant decrease in adult long-term stayers.
- The results of a recent survey regarding the Board packet indicate that the Commissioners are very satisfied with the information provided and feel they are well-informed.
- Met with Carl Chatto of Baker Newman and Noyes regarding the annual audit of MaineHousing financials. It was a good meeting, and John received compliments about the work of the finance department.
- Meeting planned with John Moore of Bangor Savings bank to connect with his two replacements as he prepares for retirement.
- Attended a meeting with York County Shelters (YCS) and their Board to discuss YCS financials and plans for the future.

2017 MAINE DOE WEATHERIZATION STATE PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

Senior Director Dan Brennan came before the Board to request approval of the 2017 Department of Energy Weatherization State Plan. There were no public comments received. The Energy and Housing Services Department is ready to move ahead with the plan.

Commissioner Hayes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gregory to adopt MaineHousing's proposed Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program 2017 State Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

LOW INCOME HOUSING PROGRAM (LIHEAP) UPDATE

Senior Director Dan Brennan discussed the LIHEAP program. Meetings with partners to garner input about the upcoming fall program have begun. Recent partner feedback includes looking at a streamlined application process for those on fixed incomes, counting draws from savings accounts as income, serving people off the grid, and implementation of the CHIP asset test. The plan is to introduce policy changes at the April Board meeting, commence rulemaking in May, conduct a public hearing in June, and request Board approval in August. Dan reported usage numbers are tracking close to last year with about 40,000 program participants. Numbers reflect that we are undersubscribed and exceeding the allowable 10% rollover (same as last year) thus we'll need to consider another shift of program funds to weatherization. He also reported that our oil vendor relationships are strong with good participation. Dan also touched upon the challenges we face in finding a system to replace MERAC. We need a new computer system in order to incorporate a post-delivery payment method for oil deliveries.

ACCESSIBLE HOME TAX CREDIT PROGRAM ROLLOUT

Senior Director Denise Lord gave an overview of the new Accessible Home Tax Credit Program, which is available to individuals who earn \$55,000 or less annually who are making their residence accessible for a person with a physical disability or hardship who lives in the house. MaineHousing has worked closely with ALPHA One, AARP and the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society to develop and market the program. Marketing efforts include a rack card, distribution of posters, community

television, inclusion in the company newsletter, direct mail with help from partners, and legislator communications. We've held one event with the MS Society and have a press conference scheduled for April 11, which will coincide with the aging caucus. Next steps will be to work with the Maine Revenue Service to promote the program in 2018.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES FROM D.C. AND MAINE

Federal

Deputy Director Peter Merrill echoed Chair Anastos' high regard for the Congressional meetings in D.C. He was optimistic regarding housing tax credits. Speaker Charlie Cook was impressive.

State

Peter discussed the status of a number of proposed bills. He announced that the HOME Fund was fully funded in the proposed budget. The re-write of MaineHousing's statute is almost complete. This effort is to make things clearer, address jurisdiction, and eliminate the requirement of unnecessary reporting. Bills on the horizon include arsenic, lead, the housing bond, and Housing First - a bill that proposes service funding go through MaineHousing.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

The Commissioners reviewed the Department Reports. Questions were answered regarding some of the statistical information provided in the reports.

Commissioner Hayes expressed her appreciation to Tom Cary for a recent Swap review, which proved helpful.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Hayes made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gregory to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Talarico, Secretary