

**ACTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MINUTES
April 29, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING**

Present: Bernice Baran, Peter Berry, Nancy Kolb, Sahana Purohit
Also Present: Kelley Cronin, Melissa Bible, Fran Arsenault, John Winslow, Eva Lejosne, Maiya Samuel
Absent: Melissa Wingfield

Ms. Kolb called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. with no Board members in physical attendance and broadcast via Zoom virtual meeting platform.

I.

Ms. Kolb read the rules of the remote meeting and conducted a roll call for attendance.

II. McManus Manor

John Winslow and Eva Lejosne from Winslow Architects spoke to the Board and shared their thoughts and concerns about the color selection of the building. John Winslow strongly feels that some color in the building exterior is needed. They provided some additional color options. The Board agreed that they would like to see the color options in person, which Winslow agreed to provide. In total, the Board was leaning toward adding some green and red colors, and against yellow. Winslow agreed to provide the samples, at the same price point as bid, to the Housing Authority office for the Board to review in person. The Board would also be provided with color renderings of the options provided in the virtual design.

Ms. Kolb, Ms. Purohit, and Ms. Cronin have been meeting to plan the groundbreaking. They have ordered a tent and chairs. There will be shovels for the groundbreaking as well. Invitations went out to the Town offices, the legislative delegation, neighbors, the family of Ms. McManus, previous board members, and Ed Augustus of EOHLC has confirmed his attendance.

Ms. Cronin provided an update on work that was happening at McManus Manor. Significantly more ledge had been discovered than previously estimated. Ms. Cronin was providing the Board with a work order in the amount of \$79,808.87 that needed Board approval due to the amount. Mr. Berry made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Baran to:

Approve the work order in the amount of \$79,808.87 for ledge removal.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

The motion was approved.

III. Performance Management Review

Ms. Bible shared that the agency had just completed the Performance Management Review by EOHLC. Ms. Bible acknowledged that she was late in submitting the end of year documents by 3 days due to her lack of familiarity. That delay showed the last quarter as not being submitted. In discussion with EOHLC, they were understanding of the delay and acknowledged that we were now aware of the completion process. When inspectors came out, they cited that repairs were needed in the kitchens at Briarbrook Village. The kitchen replacement at Briarbrook Village was part of the Capital Improvement Plan that the state had denied. There was discussion, including

with Ms. Cronin, that the state was not keeping up with the cost of renovations and needed repairs, which were impacting Housing Authority reserves.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The Board reviewed minutes from the February Board meeting. Ms. Baran made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Berry to:

Approve the February 2025 Board meeting minutes.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

The motion was approved.

V. Legislative Day

Ms. Kolb shared that she, Ms. Purohit, and Ms. Bible attended Legislative Day at the State House.

Ms. Bible shared with the board the agenda and advocacy items provided by MA NAHRO for the day. Ms. Kolb shared that the three met with Rep. Sena, Sen. Eldridge, and was able to chat with Rep. Cataldo. Highlights of the Advocacy discussion was hoping for legislative amendments to CPA work, amending the pay structure for Executive Director contracts, increased funding for Service Coordinators, and expansion of insurance benefits.

VI. CFA Amendment

Ms. Bible provided to the Board a CFA amendment from EOHLC. The CFA would include additional capital money for Aging in Place unit turnovers, and funding for Capital repairs at McCarthy Village. Mr. Berry made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Purohit to:

Approve the CFA amendment from EOHLC in the amount of \$192,934.35.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

The motion was approved.

VII. Staffing Update

Ms. Bible shared that the Housing Authority had been planning a small celebration for Doreen LeBlanc, who had been working for the Housing Authority for 33 years. Board members had been invited, however, Ms. LeBlanc, after an ongoing illness, has made a decision to not return to employment. She did not want a gathering, so Ms. Bible would be gathering the cards and items provided and present them to her.

Separately, historically the AHA has received approximately \$5,000 per year from the United Way that had been used to supplement the hours and staffing of Amanda Eldridge, our service coordinator. Ms. Bible shared she recently had met with staff of the United Way who informed her that there was going to be a change in operations beginning July 1, and they would no longer be offering the additional funding to many agencies, including ours. This would directly impact services provided to many of our tenants from Ms. Eldridge. The Housing Authority has met with the town to discuss coordination of existing services to best be able to provide assistance. Discussions are ongoing.

VIII. Executive Director Update

Ms. Bible shared an update with Board about staffing changes at HUD. Many long-term staff have taken retirement or have had their positions eliminated. Additionally, the Housing Authority was notified that week that due to the rapidly increasing rental costs, HUD has informed the Housing

Authority that there is a budget shortfall. HUD was no longer allowing for the issuance of new vouchers, and a meeting was scheduled for the end of the month to plan. Ms. Bible shared that she planned to bring to the Board items that may help save federal dollars with the least impact possible to clients. Additionally, the Housing Authority had sent out a letter to landlords informing them of the shortfall and requesting that we work together to limit rent increases so that it does further impact vouchers issued.

Separately the laundry machines had been installed at McCarthy and Windsor, the food pantry has started at McCarthy weekly, the Automatic doors have been installed at Windsor, and there have been several tenant meetings.

IX. Board Update

Ms. Purohit shared that she had reached out to Acton TV in regard to the groundbreaking. From that discussion came the topic of donations and staffing that the non-profit is experiencing. (Acton TV). Ms. Purohit would like the Board to discuss joining the membership, as the two agencies could work hand and hand. Ms. Purohit made a motion that was seconded by Ms. Baran to:

Enroll in the Acton TV membership for a cost not to exceed \$175.00.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

The motion was approved.

There was discussion about upcoming topics at the Town meeting including CPA funding, and the DPW building.

X. New Business

Ms. Purohit shared the Immigration Forum that is scheduled for May 21, 2025. Presenters include Rep. Sena and a local immigration attorney. She has reached out to the Acton Police Department. Ms. Purohit was going to provide a flier to Ms. Bible for her to share with tenants.

XI. Old Business

There was no Old Business

XII. Ms. Baran made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Berry to:

Approve the voucher in the amount of \$943,751.603 for the month of March 2025.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Bernice Baran: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

Melissa Wingfield: Aye

A. Public Comment.

There was no public comment.

At 4:50 pm Ms. Purohit made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Berry to adjourn.

and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

Bernice Baran: Aye

Peter Berry: Aye

Nancy Kolb: Aye

Sahana Purohit: Aye

The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Bible

Executive Director

Documents and Exhibits Used During the meeting include CFA amendment, PMR documentation, MA NAHRO legislative Day documentation, McManus Manor Change Order #16, minutes of February 2025 meeting.