

MELROSE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2024
PUBLIC SESSION

A regular meeting of the Melrose Housing Authority was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, in the main office of the Melrose Housing Authority, C.J. McCarthy building at 910 Main Street, Melrose, Massachusetts 02176 at 7:30 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Ellen Connolly	Present
Dana LeWinter	Present
Charlie Harak	Present
Steven Douglas	Present
Doreen Breland	Present

Martin Corona, Executive Director, was also present as well as Lisa Young, Executive Assistant, who served as Clerk.

Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared a quorum present.

2. Minutes Pending Adoption

- (i) Minutes from September 10, 2024, MHA regular Board meeting

The Board of Commissioners reviewed and discussed the September 10, 2024, MHA Regular board meeting minutes. Upon a motion by Charlie Harak, duly seconded by Dana LeWinter, and unanimously approved, the board voted to approve the September 10, 2024, MHA Regular board meeting minutes. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

3. Tenant Association Representative Participation

McCarthy tenant representative Doreen Breland stated that there was an incident at the McCarthy building last night. There were some Melrose police officers who were dressed undercover searching the McCarthy building for an individual who is wanted by Melrose police. There were some residents who approached the undercover officers because the officers did not identify themselves to the residents when asked who they were. The residents were concerned but later found out the individuals were really Melrose police. Executive Director, Martin Corona stated that this was resolved and all residents were informed why the police were in the building undercover and that this incident is an active investigation. . Executive Director Martin Corona thanked the residents for being proactive and showing concern for the security of the building.

At this time, Chairperson Ellen Connolly asked for a motion to open the board meeting to allow for public participation. Commissioner Doreen Breland made the motion and Commissioner Dana LeWinter seconded. Chairperson Ellen Connolly stated that the AYES have it.

McCarthy resident, Irene Doyle stated that the McCarthy building held its election for the newly formed tenant association. Irene stated that the tenant board submitted their final by-laws to the Mass Union of public housing tenants' association. The Steele house is holding their election for tenant association on October 25th. Steele house resident Leo Pagliaro introduced himself and said he is running for President and introduced another Steele House resident Elena Black, Elena stated she is running for Vice President. Elena said that Sara from the Mass Union Tenant Association is coming to the Steele House on October 25th to run the election results for Steele House.

McCarthy resident Irene Doyle asked Executive Director Martin Corona if the Melrose police department would be getting a master key to the McCarthy building like the Melrose Fire department has. Executive Director Martin Corona stated that he is working with Alan Alpert who is the Director of the Melrose Emergency Management department to get the Police a key and work with Melrose housing and Martin on getting an emergency management plan in place. Commissioner Charlie Harak stated that he received an email from Sara of Mass Public Housing Tenants Union who stated how glad she was to be working with Martin in this process. Commissioner Harak commended Executive Director Martin Corona on his progress thus far at the Melrose housing authority.

Chairperson Ellen Connolly asked for a motion to close public participation. Charlie Harak made the motion and Doreen Breland seconded.

- (i) Update on McCarthy & Steele Tenant Association Elections

*See discussion in Tenant Association Representative Participation

4. Communications

Nothing to Report

5. Report of the Executive Director

- a. State-Aided Elderly /Handicapped Programs 667-1 & 2
Elderly/Family Housing 667/705/AHVP

- (i.) September 2024 Vacancy Report

Executive Director Martin Corona let the board know that there is a resident of the McCarthy building who owes \$5,951.00 in rent. Martin has served the tenant with a 14-day notice to quit for non-payment of rent and is scheduled to have a court hearing with the resident.

Currently there are seven vacant units. There are some units that have been offline for a while due to maintenance issues. One unit at the Steele house has been offline for years due to a plumbing issue that cannot be resolved. There are two other units at the McCarthy building that are offline due to issues with the roof.

Special Needs Housing Program (689)

Nothing to Report

- b. Rental Assistance (Section 8/MRVP/DMH/PBV)

- (i.) October 1, 2024, Report

As of October 1, 2024, there are 231 of 237 HCV (Housing Choice Voucher) vouchers leased up for the Section 8 program. MHA is not issuing any vouchers currently due to the funding shortfall.

There are 57 out of 57 PBV (Project Based Voucher) vouchers leased up between the Levi Gould and the Fuller House. Reports were received and placed on file.

- (ii.) Section 8 Plan-Manette Donovan's Reply

At the last board meeting, there were some language changes in the MHA Section 8 Admin plan. The board had some concerns with some of the wording so MHA Attorney Mannette Donovan is working with Martin to update the language before the final updated plan is approved by the board.

- c. Financial Administrator's Report

- (i) Approval of Disbursements- August 2024

The board reviewed and discussed the disbursements for August 2024. Upon a motion by Charlie Harak, duly seconded by Dana LeWinter, and unanimously approved, the board voted to approve the August 2024 disbursements in the amount of \$634,599.50. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

- (ii) Review of Disbursements- September 2024

The board reviewed and discussed the September 2024 disbursements. The September 2024 disbursements will be approved at next month's board meeting. Report was received and placed on file.

- d. Personnel

- (i) Northeast Vocational Coop Program

Executive Director Martin Corona reached out to the Northeast Vocational Technical school in Wakefield to inquire about students who may be interested in working at the MHA as student interns to help with maintenance. The school expressed interest in working with the MHA on a part-time basis. The work would consist of maintenance related duties such as cleaning, painting, admin duties, etc. The board thinks this is a good idea and worth trying to relieve maintenance of some duties.

- e. All other matters that may be presented

- (i) Meet with City of Melrose Director of Emergency Management/Tabletop Exercise Training on 10/8/2024

Executive Director Martin Corona has met with Allen Alpert of Melrose Emergency Management to create an emergency management plan in the event of an emergency evacuation.

(ii) Board Member Training on 10/15/2024

(iii) MHAs' Participation at Mayor' Senior Resource Fair on 10/28/2024

Executive Director Martin Corona stated that the MHA office will be present at the Mayor's Senior resource fair. MHA will have a table at the fair with information on housing and how to apply.

(iv) IT Security Health Check (IT Disaster Recovery Plan)

Martin Corona is working with MHA's IT dept. to create an IT Security disaster recovery plan.

6. Report of the Maintenance Department

(i) September 2024 Report

The Board reviewed the Maintenance report for September 2024. Martin Corona reported that all work orders are up to date. Report was received and placed on file.

7. Report of Committees

Nothing to Report

8. Unfinished Business

(i.) Approval of Annual Plan (Inclusion of Tenant Comments)

The board preliminarily approved the MHA's Annual Plan at the last board meeting when it was presented in September. Executive Director Martin Corona added in the tenant comments about the plan. The Board reviewed the additional comments.

(i) Approval of LPI Bulletin Contract with Requested Changes

Martin Corona has signed a 3-year contract with LPI Publishing who will publish a monthly newsletter for MHA residents. Upon a motion by Charlie Harak, duly seconded by Doreen Breland and unanimously approved, the board voted to approve Executive Director Martin Corona to sign a contract for 3-years with LPI Publishing. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

(i) Solar Credits Update

Martin Corona spoke with the Arlington Housing Authority who agreed to purchase some of MHA's solar credits. The issue is Arlington does not have National Grid. Martin is waiting for the National Grid representative to come back into the office to discuss the solar credits further.

(ii) Approval of Energy Rate Contract

Martin Corona stated he will have some proposals for a new energy contract at the November board meeting.

9. New Business

(i) PHN 2024-13 Notice Executive Director Salary Guideline

Martin Corona brought to the board's attention PHN notice 2024-13 which presents new salary guidelines for Executive Directors. EOHLC is allowing up to a 4% increase in salary for Executive Director's. The new salary for Martin Corona would be \$134,811.00 effective January 1, 2025. Upon a motion by Dana LeWinter, duly seconded by Charlie Harak, and unanimously approved, the board voted to approve the new salary calculation for Executive Director Martin Corona. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

(ii) Request to Approve Budget Revisions and Submit to EOHLC

The Board of Commissioners reviewed the budget revisions that were submitted by MHA fee Accountant, Rich Conlon, for discussion and approval.

Upon a motion by Charlie Harak, duly seconded by Dana LeWinter and unanimously approved by a roll call vote total of 4-0, The Board voted to approve the FY24 budget for programs: MRVP/400-1/689 and further that the Executive Director's annual salary for fiscal year ending 12/31/2024 be submitted to the Dept. of Housing & Community Development for its review and approval. Chairman Connolly declared the AYES have it.

10. Litigation or Possible Litigation

Nothing to Report

11. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Charlie Harak, duly seconded by Dana LeWinter, and unanimously approved, the Board voted to adjourn the MHA Regular Public Board Meeting at 8:40 p.m. Chairperson Ellen

Connolly declared the AYES have it. The next MHA Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Martin Corona, Executive Director, J.D., P.H.M.