

**MELROSE HOUSING AUTHORITY
910 MAIN STREET
MELROSE, MASSACHUSETTS 02176
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2025
7:30 PM**

PUBLIC SESSION AGENDA

A regular meeting of the Melrose Authority was held on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, in the main office of the Melrose Housing Authority, C.J. McCarthy building at 910 Main Street, Melrose, Massachusetts 02176 at 7:30pm.

1. Roll Call

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

Martin Corona, Executive Director, was also present as well as Susan Tuminelli, CHAMP Coordinator, who served as clerk.

Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared a quorum present.

2. Minutes Pending Adoption:

- Minutes from February 25, 2025, MHA Regular Board Meeting

The Board of Commissioners reviewed and discussed the February 25, 2025, MHA Regular board meeting minutes. Chairperson Ellen Connolly pointed out that the dollar amounts for FSS Funding were missing zeros. The correct amounts were \$125,000 and \$100,000. Martin Corona brought to the board's attention that the accountant's last name was misspelled. His name is Michael Guyder. Upon a motion by Commissioner Doreen Breland, duly seconded by Commissioner Steven Douglas, and unanimously approved, the board voted to approve the February 25, 2025, MHA Regular board meeting minutes. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

3. Tenant Association and Public Comments:

Commissioner/Tenant Representative Doreen Breland handed out a list of concerns/requests for the McCarthy building. The residents would like chairs in the TV room because the couches that are there now are hard for some of the elderly residents to get out of, residents feel the lunchroom and TV room should be warmer, the running lights in the main hallway were off one night which caused some concern, residents are requesting a barrel be placed at the opposite end of the lunchroom, and the possibility of a landline for tenant use in the community room.

Martin Corona stated that both buildings are in need of more chairs and the housing authority is actively looking for chairs. A work order was created to check the heat in both the community room and TV room at the McCarthy building. The running lights were checked and were on. Commissioner Charlie Harak brought up Action Inc. in Gloucester. They provide free energy services and can recommend ways to get heat more evenly distributed or can determine if something should be replaced. A request was submitted to maintenance to provide another barrel for the community room.

4. MHA Program Management/Operations Report (Executive Director Report):

a. CHAMP Admission/Intake/Screening:

- Update on Applicant Processing

We currently have 3 wait-lists open and are processing 150 applicants.

b. State-Aided Elderly/Handicapped Programs (667-1)- Elderly/Family Housing (667/705):

- Rent Collection Report (February 2025)

Rent collection has improved. Anyone currently with an outstanding balance has been issued a 14-day notice or is in the legal process.

- Vacancy Report (February 2025)

Steele – 2 vacancies currently being worked on

McCarthy – no vacancies

Family – 2 units under construction

c. Maintenance Department:

- February 2025 Work Order Report

Emergency work orders are being completed within 24 hours. Routine work orders are also being completed in a timely manner. Drains by James will be flushing the drains at both buildings. This is scheduled for March.

- Capital Improvement Projects Update

The Capital Improvement Projects schedule included in the board packet lists the upcoming projects by fish numbers. We are beginning to do some work now that the winter is over. The board now has a list of projects, and this will be updated as projects are completed.

d. Rental Assistance (Section 8/MRVP/AHVP/DMH):

- February 2025 Report
- HCV Shortfall Update
- 2024 FMR & Payment Standards

Not much movement in the Section 8 program. Under the shortfall update, the House passed the Continuing Resolution Budget until September, and it will now be sent up to the Senate. Currently the House budget is favorable toward us because it is level-funded. We will have to wait to see what the Senate votes. In anticipation of what may come and trying to be very conservative, Martin created a draft-letter which could go out to HCV participants and landlords to implement some cost-saving remedies. This would be put on the website, an email blast and an informational meeting for landlords would be scheduled.

In November 2024 we adopted the 2024 FMR and payment standards based on the appeal by the BHA, Cambridge Housing Authority and EOHLIC. Since we have not heard anything about this appeal, Martin Corona is asking for a vote to adopt the 2024 FMR and payment standards. Commissioner Charlie Harak made a motion to approve the payment standards that have been presented in our board packet, seconded by Commissioner Steven Douglas. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

e. Financial Administrator's report:

- Approval of Disbursements- January 2025

Martin Corona explained the Bank of America charge of \$6,210.66 includes the cost of the defibrillators.

Commissioner Charlie Harak asked about the status of the credits from our electric supply. The city of Melrose is not interested in purchasing the credits. Now we can cross transfer from National Grid to Eversource. Martin will reach out to Jack Nagle at Arlington Housing who was interested in the credits.

Commissioner Charlie Harak moved to approve the total cash disbursements in the amount of \$851,892.27, seconded by Commissioner Doreen Breland. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

- Review of Disbursements- February 2025

Martin Corona pointed out the legal bill. He is not happy about the bill, but it is the cost of doing business.

Chairperson Ellen Connolly asked what the Dellamora Architecture bill of \$800.00 was for. This is for 487-489 Lebanon bathroom renovation.

f. All Other Matters that May Be Presented:

- Submission of STAR V Application

Martin Corona submitted a STAR V application through LISC, Local Initiatives Support Corporation. This is generally for solar panels.

- Environmental Justice for New England and Federal Funds Infrastructure Grants- (Exploratory)

Martin has been attending the Webinars for the Environmental Justice for New England and Federal Funds Infrastructure Grants. We are doing the asphalt parking area behind the Steele building and maybe we can expand the scope and get new walkways if we could get some matching funding.

- Staff Trainings - (Defensive Driving, Narcan Training)

The staff are trying to attend training every month. Maintenance completed Defensive Driving Training, and some staff participated in Narcan Training. Patrick did get his CMM-PH – Certified Maintenance Manager of Public Housing through NAHRO.

- MVES RSC at McCarthy

Mystic Valley hired a new Resident Service Coordinator, Carla Borjas. We have now scheduled our monthly meetings with Mystic Valley Elder Services.

5. **New Business**

- Fish #178130 – Transformer Resilience-Certificate of Substantial Completion (CSC)

McCarthy generator/transformer is substantially complete. Looking for a board vote. Commissioner Charlie Harak moved to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion for the transformer project, seconded by Commissioner Doreen Breland. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

- Fish #178145 - 919 Main Street Kitchen Renovation – Scope of Services/Contract

The designer and RCAT have already approved the contract, and it is now the board's turn to approve the contract. This project will be happening in the spring. Commissioner Dana LeWinter moved to approve this submission schedule and payment schedule, seconded by Commissioner Charlie Harak. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

- Trespassing Policy

We have a neighbor of the Steele building who has been difficult for years. Back in 2022 Jim Holt issued a no trespass on him. This neighbor has taken trash and put it in the back of our maintenance trucks. We have him on camera on Melrose Housing property putting glass on maintenance vehicles. Martin has tried to work with this neighbor. Maintenance has tried to keep the area extremely clean, but it is never enough. We have issued a no trespass order on this neighbor. This interaction brought up other issues in our own buildings. We have residents who have guests who are not supposed to be here.

We did not have a Trespassing Policy here at Melrose Housing. Our lawyers, KP Law, drafted the policy included in your board packet. This policy was shown to each Tenant Association for their comments. At the end of this month, we are hosting a community meeting, and we will share this policy at that meeting.

6. **Adjournment**

Chairperson Ellen Connolly wanted to share with the board that Lori Massa, Director and City Planner at Melrose City Hall, gave her a copy of the Water Mitigation Report for Greenwood Street. This report was required by the City of Melrose, and it was done by the developer. The last time this was discussed the board did not know if the Water Mitigation Report was done.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Charlie Harak and duly seconded by Commissioner Doreen Breland and unanimously approved, the Board voted to adjourn the MHA Regular Public Board Meeting at 8:30 pm. Chairperson Ellen Connolly declared the AYES have it.

**The next MHA Regular Public Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8, 2025, at 7:30 p.m. at 910 Main Street, Melrose, MA. 02176*