

FALMOUTH HOUSING AUTHORITY  
COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 20, 2024  
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The Falmouth Housing Authority conducted a General Session Commissioners Board Meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2024. The special session began at 4:30 p.m. The Board did its best to adhere to posted time frames, but times may have varied. The meeting was held via a virtual meeting pursuant to Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law dated March 12, 2020; extended to 2025. The public were invited to join in the general session meeting by going to:

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85637708691>  
Audio Access: 1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 856 3770 8691  
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MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephen Patton, Chair  
Patricia Favulli  
Michael Galasso  
Kathleen Haynes  
Jack Richardson

STAFF PRESENT: Bobbi Richards, Executive Director  
Leslie Pearce, Assistant Director  
Benjamin Anako, Fiscal Officer  
Emma Montville, Maintenance Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Laura Bancroft, Maureen McIver-Recording Secretary; Nick Mirrione – Representative for Northstar Place (123 Brick Kiln, East Falmouth, MA)

OPEN SESSION

At 4:30 p.m. Stephen Patton called the meeting to order and read regulations regarding remote meetings.

**Public Comments**

Bobbi Richards requested that items be taken out of order to accommodate the presenter. There were no other comments.

Resolution 2025-044

Michael Galasso moved to take items out of order. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson)      0-Nays      MOTION CARRIED

**Items requiring discussion and vote:**

-Project-based contract for 123 Brick Kiln – 5 units – vote

Bobbi Richards explained that Nick Mirrione was present and representing the ownership at Northstar Place, 123 Brick Kiln Road, a 20-unit affordable housing project. FHA serves as the current monitor, to ensure that

the units are affordable, since they were built. An annual report of compliance is provided as part of this service. The units currently provide housing to many families that also received subsidy assistance from other local agencies, such as Barnstable Housing Authority and Housing Assistance Corporation. It is FHA's opinion that this development is eligible for project-based voucher status. Bobbi Richards requested that the Board approve this request.

Nick Mirrione reported that all 20 units are affordable. The project was built with the help of a grant from the Falmouth Affordable Housing Fund. There are sixteen 2-bedroom units and four 3-bedroom units. The YMCA is just a mile from the development with sidewalks available to get there. Michael Galasso asked if inspections or physical needs assessments are required.

Bobbi Richards explained that project-based subsidy falls under Section 8 of HUD so there would be an initial inspection and then annual inspections thereafter as required by the program. Bobbi Richards also shared that FHA requires the owner to participate in annual inspections as part of the monitored program.

Michael Galasso asked when the inspection takes place. Bobbi Richards said that an initial inspection is done after approval by the Board, then annually thereafter. Michael Galasso asked what kind of inspection this would be. A neatness inspection? Nick Mirrione said that they check everything: hot water, basement, attic.

Michael Galasso asked Nick Mirrione whether there was a play area. Nick Mirrione confirmed that there were play areas and the Cul de Sac is used for recreation.

Michael Galasso asked about the rents and energy efficiency measures when Patricia Favulli interrupted with concerns about a point of order: Other contracts with other voucher programs and not questioned like this; the new build met code just a few years ago. Other applicants have not gone through this kind of process when they have submitted an RFP.

Michael Galasso thought that these were legitimate questions to ask before awarding something to someone. Michael Galasso asked how many vouchers were used at the property.

Bobbi Richards noted that if the proposal is approved, the project-based designation would be for the units, for a designated time, not the tenants. The project could be extended if the partnership were successful.

Michael Galasso asked if commissioners are required to visit the property.

Bobbi Richards said no; that has not been done during her tenure. Many project-based programs have been approved for Falmouth Housing Corporation and this has never come up before for any of their properties. The FHA has never required that Board members visit any of the project-based properties. A third-party inspector is hired for all housing choice voucher programs. The third-party inspectors review the units objectively to ensure that all project-based units meet the housing quality standards under the Housing Choice Voucher program. Bobbi Richards also shared that projects such as 123 Brick Kiln help to meet the housing authority's goal of diversifying the ownership of affordable rentals in the community.

#### Resolution 2025-045

Kathleen Haynes moved to approve the request for 5 project-based vouchers at 123 Brick Kiln as presented by Nick Mirrione for Northstar Place, for an initial term of five (5) years. Patricia Favulli seconded.

A role call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-nay

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

4 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Haynes, Richardson)

1-Nay (Galasso)

MOTION CARRIED

*Bobbi Richards noted a point for the record: Michael Galasso may receive funding from the same source as North Star Place and therefore may not be eligible to vote on this matter.*

*Michael Galasso withdrew his no vote and abstained.*

4 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Haynes, Richardson)      0-Nays      1-Abstain (Galasso)  
MOTION CARRIED

-Approval of General Session Minutes of 10.16.24 – vote

Resolution 2025-046

Stephen Patton moved to approve the General Session Minutes of 10.16.24. Patricia Favulli seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso - abstained

Kathleen Haynes - abstained

Jack Richardson-aye

3 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Richardson)    0-Nays 2-Abstentions (Galasso, Haynes)

MOTION CARRIED

-Report of the Fiscal Department – review of fiscal reports

1. Payment of HAP and bills – vote

Resolution 2025-047

Kathleen Haynes moved to approve HAP and bill payments. Stephen Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-abstained

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

4 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Hayes, Richardson)

0-Nays

1-Abstention (Galasso)

MOTION CARRIED

-Topneck – Admin Wall Substantial and Final Completion – 2 votes

Bobbi Richards explained that the wall separating reception and back area from the lobby area was destroyed in a flood over a year ago and the area has been without a wall since. Doors between areas as well as the exterior door will be fobbed. The new wall is up and the FHA is very happy with the work. A vote for both substantial and final completion was requested.

Resolution 2025-048

Patricia Favulli moved to approve payment for Substantial Completion for the Administration wall by Topneck.

Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson)

0-Nays

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution 2025-049

Patricia Favulli moved to approve payment for Final Completion for the Administration wall by Topneck.

Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye  
Kathleen Haynes-aye  
Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

Michael Galasso asked if a permit had been pulled. Bobbi Richards recalled that this issue was investigated and a permit was deemed not necessary due to the temporary nature of the wall. Follow up with the contractor will be performed prior to release of payment.

-Topneck – Admin Bathroom renovation Substantial and Final Completion– 2 votes

Bobbi Richards reported that this project was initiated during Covid. To the greatest extent possible ADA upgrades have been incorporated. The project involved the removal and replacement of sinks, toilets, soap dispensers and the installation of additional grab bars in the two administrative office bathrooms. Sinks and toilets are automatic to be touch-free. A vote for both substantial and final completion was requested.

Michael Galasso asked if the Commissioners had seen and approved of this budget previously. He thought that \$14,500 was a lot for a bathroom remodeling. The project was presented to the Board earlier in the year and went through the procurement process. Topneck was the low bidder for this project.

Resolution 2025-050

Kathleen Haynes moved to approve payment for Substantial Completion for the Administration Bathroom renovation by Topneck. Stephen Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye  
Patricia Favulli-aye  
Michael Galasso-aye  
Kathleen Haynes-aye  
Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

Resolution 2025-051

Kathleen Haynes moved to approve payment for Final Completion for the Administration bathroom renovation by Topneck.

Steve Patton seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye  
Patricia Favulli-aye  
Michael Galasso-aye  
Kathleen Haynes-aye  
Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson) 0-Nays MOTION CARRIED

-Fee amendment for 096097-EOHLC Salt Sea ARPA & Formula funding – to include electrification and stove/fan replacements -vote

Bobbi Richards explained that this matter was back before the board because the scope of the project had changed. Using Rose Morin as an example, conversations have taken place with the state about what FHA's goals are for electrification and other types of modernization and improvements. At Rose Morin replacement of the Federal Pacific panels have allowed for replacement of lighting and increased efficiency. New appliances were installed in all units.

The FHA would like to do this for the other properties. This original request did not include electrification. The state now agrees that this electrification is needed to do the modernizations and this has increased the costs.

The state has agreed to provide more money and Bobbi Richards asked that the Board accept the funds.

Resolution 2025-052

Patricia Favulli moved to accept the updated proposal including the fee amendment for the Salt Sea ARPA.

Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson)      0-Nays      MOTION CARRIED

-Annual Staff Holiday Luncheon – vote

Bobbi Richards said that the location of the holiday luncheon has not yet been determined but she requested support for the staff of up to \$50.00 per person for the event. The Board is traditionally invited to attend as well.

Resolution 2025-053

Patricia Favulli moved to support the staff holiday luncheon for up to \$50.00 per person. Kathleen Haynes seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson)      0-Nays      MOTION CARRIED

-Report of the Executive Director (payment standards review, small contracts approved, EOHLC CIP approval for FY25/FY24 PMR, administrative and portfolio updates, update on grants, website, staff trainings, commissioner trainings, RFPs)

Bobbi Richards called attention to a power point presentation included in the report by Johnathan Driscoll regarding open meeting law.

The CIP was also included. The Board has approved this but revisions are already needed and a revision will be presented to the Board within a few months as adjustments to projects, based on unit needs, are being sought.

Annual PMR was held with EOHLC. The Performance Management Review (PMR) is an annual evaluation held by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) to assess the condition and management of housing units. During the recent PMR, FHA received criticism for the condition of three (3) units inspected. EOHLC acknowledged issues in the maintenance department, particularly related to the failure to schedule FY24 inspections as required, and noted recent changes in the department (superintendent, employee). FHA has also been operating with one fewer full-time staff member due to a union dispute over an employee's termination. FHA may be required to submit a corrective action plan outlining improvements to maintenance activities for FY25. Funding was also a key topic of discussion, with FHA reiterating that it does not receive sufficient funding to maintain its state-funded units to its desired standard.

Bobbi Richards noted that she is in court almost every other Wednesday in Plymouth negotiating past due rents and tenancies. The balances are coming down with the help of emergency rental assistance funding from the Falmouth Service Center, Housing Assistance Corporation and other local entities.

Board was invited to view the walkway work at Tatakot Apartments; the job and quality of work is very good. Tenants have submitted comments applauding the professionalism of the contractors.

-Report of the Assistant Executive Director – Leased housing updates

Leslie Pearce is working with HUD to increase lease-ups in federally subsidized programs. FHA has set a strong goal to issue up to 40 additional vouchers within the next 30 days. To support this, FHA is offering higher payments to landlords to spend down housing funds in alignment with the Board-approved payment standards.

Additionally, with the rental market shifting, FHA is seeing more landlords reaching out to lease units, a trend that had slowed during the peak of rental price increases. FHA expects more landlords to recognize the value of partnering with FHA as the pool of tenants able to afford market-rate rents shrinks.

-Report of the Maintenance Department -Review of portfolio and current projects  
See Executive Director's report and the public housing occupancy report. The Maintenance Superintendent is set to return to FHA from medical leave in about two weeks.

-Agenda items for next meeting  
Solar project update, development subcommittee

-Adjournment

Resolution 2025-054

At 5:18 p.m. Kathleen Haynes moved to adjourn. Patricia Favulli seconded.

A roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Patton -aye

Patricia Favulli-aye

Michael Galasso-aye

Kathleen Haynes-aye

Jack Richardson-aye

5 Ayes (Patton, Favulli, Galasso, Haynes, Richardson)      0-Nays      MOTION CARRIED

Relevant Documents

Executive Director's Correspondence & Activities Report

EOHLC CIP Approval for Budget FY25

Open Meeting Law Materials – Presentation by J Driscoll October 2024

PHN 2022-10 Revised PMR Maintenance Metrics

Request for Annual Staff Party Expenditure

Financial Reports Public Housing Aging, Check Register, HAP Reports - October 2024

Draft General Session Minutes of October 16, 2024

Project-Based Proposal – 5 Units – 5 year Contract – 123 Brick Kiln

EOHLC Change Order 096097-Bathroom Fans & Exterior Vents – Additional Services Electric Panel Replacement

Substantial and Final Completion – Topneck Design – Admin Office Bathroom Upgrades

Substantial and Final Completion – Topneck Design – Temp Admin Wall

Leased Housing Summary Report – November 2024

Public Housing Occupancy Report – November 2024