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MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
PITTSFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY (PHA)

June 30, 2025

Participation was done entirely in person
65 Columbus Avenue, Pittsfield, MA Community Room First Floor

I Call to Order

Chairman McCarthy called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. PHA Board of Commissioners in attendance: Justine Dodds, Brian Morrison, Edward Carmel, David Pill and Chairman Mike McCarthy

PHA staff in attendance: Executive Director (ED) Tina Danzy, Assistant to the Executive Director Madonna Meagher, Director of Finance and Administration Susan Martino, State Property Manager Gwen Cariddi, Director of Maintenance Pete Marino, Federal and State Housing Manager Chelsea Gancarz, State Assistant Manager Yandelin Peralta, Section 8 staff: Polly Racicot, Tracy Pero

Public: Francis D., Joe N., Joe W, Judy P. Beverly Y, Karen K., Margaret S.

II Approval of minutes from: 5/19/25

Board member Carmel made a motion to approve the 5/19/25 draft minutes, seconded by Morrison. Vote: Morrison, aye; Dodds, aye; Carmel aye, Pill, aye; McCarthy, aye. Motion passes 5-0

III Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Danzy provided an update since the last board meeting which included:

The Union Agreement for the maintenance staff is in progress.

The 689 leases have been completed as of 7/1/25

Executive Director Danzy recently visited the 495 South St property, and suggested PHA needs to dispose of that property and the Stratford St. as well.

Executive Director Danzy also reported she is currently on the Leased Housing and also the Housing Committee at MassNAHRO. She will get the latest updates on CHAMP and other housing information that affects PHA.

In a recent Public Housing Notice (PHN) vacancy initiatives are being discussed. EOHLC's CHAMP system is revising the suggested selection of 50 applicants per pull list to "up to 20".

There is a signed agreement with RCAT (Regional Capital Assistance Team). PHA is waiting for the person who will be assigned to us. RCAT builds projects over \$50,000. While RCAT has been effective with small LHA's, Pittsfield Housing will be the first "large" agency to use their services.

The stair contract at Wilson Park is now signed. More details will be forthcoming.

The roof repair/replacement at Elizabeth Freeman has been completed as well as chimney repair at Mohegan St @ Wilson Park.

Executive Director Danzy is in contact with contractor Dicky Matos to confirm the Essex start date.

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Berkshire Regional Planning will hold an information session for tenants today at Columbia Arms from 4-6 pm to discuss the Francis Ave. project including storm drains and accessibility with stairs from the Francis Ave heights to the lower grounds of shopping.

a) Financial Update:

Director of Finance and Administration Susan Martino outlined the breakdown of the PHA financials by fee accountant Paul Pavia. The first paragraph showed a \$24,000 net surplus. PHA is operating at a break even. Ms. Martino mentioned the year end FY 25 financials would not be ready by the July 15th Board meeting, so Mr. Pavia was invited to the August board of commissioners meeting. Executive Director Danzy stated that she and Ms. Martino would be meeting with Mr. Pavia to outline the budget for FY26.

Ms. Martino suggested the board look over the repayment spreadsheet that had been prepared by PHA rent payment clerk Patti Stottle, which showed rents owed by tenants in arrears 30, 60, 90 days. Ms. Martino suggested the board might just want the last page of the Tenant Accounts Receivable (TAR) delinquency report instead of the entire multi-page report. Ms. Dodds agreed. A Brief discussion ensued with Board member Carmel asking about the solvency state of PHA. Executive Director Danzy stated that PHA is solvent but we're watching the expenses closely due to the uncertainty of Federal Government budget cuts.

Reviewing other financial documents regarding tenant payments with mediation or court orders that Ms. Stottle had produced for the board, Chairman McCarthy was pleased with collaboration with Upside 413 to help with mediations to get tenants to pay past due rent money. Discussion ensued as to the efficacy of partnership with Upside 413, and Ms. Gancarz reported mediation services with that organization are failing. Court ordered repayment agreements for tenants are more successful than through the Upside 413 organization. Chairman McCarthy stated that we must hold tenants accountable to pay their rent.

Executive Director Danzy reported that she continues to communicate with the EOHLC Finance Director regarding our emergency money and force accounts. PHA was awarded \$7,000.00 in emergency funding for the April 2025 mini-split replacement at the Annex.

b) Maintenance Update:

Executive Director Danzy reported to the board that Director of Facilities and Management Patrick Pettit resigned his position on the day he was to return to work, 5/30/25 with no advanced notice. Executive Director Danzy reminded the board that the former Assistant to the Director of Facilities and Management Mykayla Deinlein gave her resignation notice on May 19, 2025.

Executive Director Danzy reorganized the staffing of the maintenance department. Pete Marino is now the Director of Maintenance with 10 years' experience and supervisory experience. What was the "Director of Facilities and Management" position, has now been split for efficiency and effectiveness. The Modernization part of maintenance will now have Dick Ward as its part-time coordinator. State Property Manager Gwen Cariddi will add safety officer to her title, Sean Eckert is now the working foreman.

Three major PHA sites will now have one dedicated maintenance staff for better customer service to our tenants. Providence Court will have Jake Risley, Rose Manor will be staffed by Justin Coniglio, and

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Columbia Arms will be staffed by Tony Bona. Checklists outlining daily duties to address tenant work orders, and cleanliness of buildings outside and inside are being implemented.

With the other smaller PHA sites, Executive Director Danzy assigned Peter Trapnell from maintenance to oversee all the other sites.(McGill, Christopher Arms, Wahconah Heights, Francis Plaza, and Jubilee Terrace) He will be addressing clean-up of the grounds, the trash, cleaning the community rooms, and work such as minor repairs, painting, and power washing as necessary.

Chairman McCarthy asked Maintenance Director Marino about how the new staffing arrangement was working out. Mr. Marino stated his goal is to work with and instruct the staff on all aspects of maintenance. Some goals are to get units turned-over as quickly as possible, and to get staff to commit to working together as a team. Along with the PHA administration, Mr. Marino reported there is positive momentum with the crew. Maintenance staff will now utilize checklists for day to day maintenance but also a checklist for special projects. Mr. Marino thanked the Executive Director Tina Danzy for her faith in him as a leader and her vision in leadership at PHA. Ms. Gancarz stated morale is up throughout PHA. Executive Director Danzy explained to the board that the reorganization of positions would create a significant cost savings of over \$40,000 to PHA

Executive Director Danzy stated that there are two open positions, one in maintenance and one for a new Maintenance Operations Clerk, who will be needed to organize the maintenance workflow. The position will require processing work orders and follow up to the tenants as well as working with vendor scheduling.

c) Waitlist/Vacancy Update:

Yandelin Peralta gave an overview of her active pull lists, unit offers to tenants, and those applicants that rejected the unit offer. Board discussion ensued regarding the CHAMP priority system and the CHAMP preference systems. Currently any applicant can choose "all" LHA's, even though they have no intention to move to most of the LHA sites. Board member Pill suggested that a limited number of selections (perhaps 10) would give local applicants a better chance to be housed. Chairman McCarthy suggested a letter regarding "local preference" as an important option be sent to Secretary Augustus.

Executive Director Danzy stated that she and her assistant Madonna Meagher would be dedicating time to work with Ms. Peralta on faster screening of applicant paperwork to make them eligible quickly so we can house them.

Ms. Gancarz reported 13 vacancies with 6 ready for occupancy. She mentioned the difficulty in filling 2- and 3-bedroom apartments.

d) HUD/Section 8

Tracy Pero reported that the PHA Section 8 vouchers are in great shape. Currently there are 79 vouchers on the street. PHA has ample reserves. Tracy met with HUD Rep Caitlin and the Pittsfield Housing Authority is one of only a few Section 8 authorities that is NOT filing for shortfall funding.

e) Other: None

IV NEW BUSINESS: Board Vote

Schedule of Tenant Charges: Board members Pill and Carmel met as a subcommittee and brought to the board a final version for a vote by the board. A brief discussion ensued about the notes from the previous board meeting on the topic of not charging for some items, and the final version conformed with those notes. **Carmel made a motion to approve the presented Schedule of Tenant Charges seconded by Pill. Vote: Morrison, aye; Pill, aye Carmel, aye; Dodds, aye; McCarthy, aye; Motion passes 5-0**

Federal 5-year Plan for FY beginning 7/1/25: Board Vote

Executive Director Danzy requested the board approve the PHA Federal 5-Year Plan for FY beginning 7/1/2025

2025-2029 Five-Year Plan Addendums:

1. Mission
2. Goals and Objectives
3. Progress Report
4. Violence Against Women (VAWA) Goals

The public had 45 days' notice to make comments/input on the five-year plan and a public hearing on June 30, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. in the community room of the PHA Columbia Arms site 65 Columbus Avenue Pittsfield, MA to receive comments. There was one member of the public at the public hearing, Karen Kalinowsky. Ms. Kalinowsky had no comments about the PHA Federal 5-year plan, but asked questions regarding the State housing CHAMP system. No other comments by any communication from the public were received by the PHA.

Reviewing GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, Executive Director Danzy stated that the Pittsfield Housing Authority would be moving to "PHA Web" but it is needed to be scheduled. Board member Pill had questions on the use of tablets for electronic applications available in the main lobby. Discussion ensued regarding the goal of 96% occupancy and a tenant handbook that would be a lease addendum. Board member Pill suggested that unit turnovers could be done in 30 days, faster than 60-day goal suggested in the GOALS AND OBJECTIVES section Public Housing # 3. Turnover Rate.

A motion was made by Pill seconded by Morrison to amend the goal of turnover time from 60 days to 30 days. Discussion ensued with Assistant to the Executive Director Meagher (and note taker for the meeting) stating that the public had 45 days to make comments on the goal, and that the public meeting had no comments(regarding the federal goals had ended. She questioned Chairman McCarthy if the board could amend this document. Board member Dodds stated that City Hall amends documents. Chairman McCarthy suggested a motion to approve the amendment contingent upon confirmation about a procedure regarding the Federal 5-year Plan as presented for public comment.

Vote to amend the turnover days from 60 to 30 contingent upon confirmation from HUD. **Vote: Morrison, aye; Pill, aye Carmel, aye; Dodds, aye; McCarthy, aye; Motion passes 5-0**

Carmel made a motion to approve the motion as amended seconded by Morrison. Vote: Morrison, aye; Pill, aye Carmel, aye; Dodds, aye; McCarthy, aye; Motion passes 5-0

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NOTA BENE:

***HUD confirmed that the motion to change the turnover time from 60 to 30 days by board member Pill could not be done after the 45-day public hearing time for comments had passed. Chairman McCarthy indicated that the board was in favor of approving a turnover time as presented in the documents and the board will ratify the motion at the next board meeting on July 15, 2025.**

V OTHER BUSINESS: (may require a board vote)

Chairman McCarthy suggested a subcommittee of two board members to discuss the Executive Director's contract renewal. He asked if Dave Pill and Brian Morrison would be on that subcommittee. They both agreed. **Dodds made a motion to have a subcommittee of Morrison and Pill to review the Executive Director's contract, seconded by Morrison. Vote: Morrison, aye; Pill, aye Carmel, aye; Dodds, aye; McCarthy, aye; Motion passes 5-0**

VI BOARD/PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Board Member Carmel had comments on maintenance upkeep concerns and asked for information on the towing company PHA will now use for cars in violation of parking.

Public attendee Margaret reported a concern with a light in her bathroom.

Public attendee Francis D. praised the new leadership and to the Executive Director she was doing a good job.

Public attendee Joe N. mentioned concerns about Columbia Arms windows.

NEXT MEETING: July 15, 2025 @ Noon: Rose Manor

VII ADJOURNMENT

Board member Carmel made a motion to adjourn seconded by Morrison: Vote: Morrison, aye; Pill, aye Carmel, aye; Dodds, aye; McCarthy, aye; Motion passes 5-0 1:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Madonna Meagher
Assistant to the Executive Director
Pittsfield Housing Authority

Documents reviewed:

Agenda 6/30-25 Draft minutes of 5/19/25, May financials, Upside 413 mediation agreements, Federal/State vacancy/tenancy updates federal and state, Lease addendum -schedule of charges, Federal 5-year plan public hearing notice, MCPPO certificate, Real Property transaction certificate, vacancy reports, TAR aged delinquency Report detail, Maintenance weekly report