

VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2020

1. ROLL CALL

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Vermont State Housing Authority was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Chair Caprice Hover, via teleconference call. Upon roll call, the following Commissioners were present via teleconference call: Mary Miller, Vice Chair; Cory Richardson, Jo Ann Troiano, Caryn Feinberg and Alex Farrell.

Staff personnel present: Richard Williams, Secretary/Executive Director, via teleconference call; Kathleen Berk, Director of Housing Program Administration; Kelly Pembroke, Director of Finance and Information Systems; Arlene Shorten-Goodrich, Director of Human Resources and Administration; Susan Kuegel, Director of Property and Asset Management; and Tyson Leno, Director of Maintenance.

2. MEETING AGENDA

The agenda is changed to begin with a discussion on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Agenda items 6 and 11 are postponed.

Williams confirmed with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development that VSHA is considered an Essential Services Entity under Governor Scott's Executive Order, Addendum 6 under 6. services or functions deemed critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security as outlined under l, m, and q; and that essential state and local government functions remain open, including offices that provide essential government services. Currently employees do not need to carry documents showing they are essential workers.

VSHA has set up guidelines and developed protocols for all employees. VSHA's offices are closed to the public. Employees are practicing social distancing; others are teleworking from home.

Any employees who have traveled out of the area are asked to stay out of the office for 4 days. Now the guidelines are to isolate for 14 days if indirect contact with anyone who has COVID-19.

Guidelines on Teleworking have been developed as well as COVID-19 Paid Leave provisions to be in place from March 24th to April 16, 2020.

Troiano motioned to approve the guidelines on Teleworking and COVID-19 Paid Leave as outlined with the Executive Director having the ability to modify as needed. The motion was seconded by Feinberg. Upon call for a voted all voted in favor.

Williams called upon his staff to provide brief updates.

Shorten-Goodrich stated she reviewed what the state of Vermont is doing for employees and modified their provisions to reflect how VSHA would operate with teleworking and leave. VSHA is also looking at workspaces and moving employees to better handle social distancing.

Pembroke met with her accounting staff to discuss what work is critical (payroll, etc.). A few accounting staff have been relocated for social distancing. In addition, equipment is set up and ready to be deployed in the event folks cannot come into the office.

Williams added that landlord checks are going out. Utility reimbursement checks are going out. Not processing evictions for not being able to pay rent currently. HUD is sending money for April this week.

Berk stated any staff member that can work from home has been sent home, also reducing density of staff working in close spaces. Making sure we maintain our core functions. Letters were sent out to landlords/owners who don't use direct deposit to encourage them to do so in the event we have to work remotely. We are still issuing vouchers and performing inspections on new units by following new protocols. Occupied units are not being inspected currently.

Kuegel did a staff assessment to see who was at risk or had any childcare issues. Also assessed who could telework from home. Reviewed what tasks that staff would need to leave the office for. Assessed what critical task need to be done and what staff member could do those and the equipment they would need. Closed off community rooms and provided cleaning wipes in the laundry rooms for machines. Noticed all tenants on the changes and numbers they could call if they have any questions or needs. Rural Development (RD) certs and interns are priority as there is no flexibility from RD on those. Water/Waste operations-identified who our primary operators are and the backup.

Leno described that all non-emergency maintenance requests are on hold. If there is an emergency, staff are trained to ask a series of COVID-19 questions before they can enter the unit. Keeping the common areas clean, hallways and guardrails. Senior units are to be done twice a day.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public participants.

4. MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING - JANUARY 22, 2020

Troiano moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 22, 2020 and Miller seconded. There was no discussion or changes and Hover called for vote. All voted in favor.

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT - FEBRUARY 2020 / MARCH 2020

Hover asked for a motion to approve the Secretary's Report. The motion was made by Troiano and seconded by Miller. Upon call for a vote, all voted in favor.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT THROUGH FEBRUARY 29, 2020

Troiano motioned to approve the Financial Report as presented; seconded by Miller. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

8. FY 2019 AUDIT UPDATE- REAC UPDATE

At January meeting Richardson requested Pembroke change the REAC reports which Pembroke stated the information change is done. No action needed.

9. UPPER VALLEY HOUSING ASSOCIATES TRANSFER OF LIMITED PARTNERS

Peoples Bank and Northfield Savings Bank are the Limited Partners and they have decided that they would like to exit the partnership and VSHA would then become the Limited Partner. Williams stated that we are waiting for authorization from Peoples and Northfield Savings to be able to sign the transfer.

Farrell motioned authorization for Williams to sign for VSHA as Limited Partner and other documents as necessary. Troiano seconded the motion. Upon call for a vote, Miller, Troiano, Feinberg, Farrell voted in favor, Richardson abstained.

10. HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER
- FAMILY UNIFICATION VOUCHER PROGRAM
-DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, ST. ALBANS

Williams stated that 20 projects have applied for Project Based Vouchers and we are reviewing those applications.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

Hover called for a motion to adjourn, which was made by Troiano and seconded by Feinberg. Upon call for a vote, all voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard M. Williams
Executive Director/Secretary