

**VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 25, 2022**

1. Roll Call

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Vermont State Housing Authority, held via Microsoft Teams, was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by Chair Alex Farrell; and upon roll call, the following Commissioners answered present: Caryn Feinberg, Aaron Jones (arrived at 12:00), Cory Richardson, Vice Chair; Mary Miller, Jo Ann Troiano, and Christopher Trombly.

Staff present: Kathleen Berk, Executive Director/Secretary; Kelly Pembroke, Director of Finance & Information Systems; Susan Kuegel, Director of Property & Asset Management; Ellen Liptak, Director of HR & Administration; Kelli Robinson, Director of Housing Program Administration; Daniel Blankenship, Tyler Maas.

Absent: Staff: Ann Blanchard, Iris Gilbert, Samantha Green, Bethany Lunn, Tyson Leno, Elizabeth Whitmore.

Guests: Morgan Ledo, VSEA Representative; Zach Karas, Retirement Plan Advisors (arrived at 12:00)

2. Meeting Agenda - No changes to the agenda were presented.

3. Public Participation - None.

4. Minutes of Regular Meeting – March 23, 2022

On a motion by Troiano, seconded by Miller, the minutes of the March 23, 2022, meeting were unanimously approved with no discussion.

5. Secretary's Report

Berk reported no additions to the Secretary's Report. She indicated that she is trying to arrange the building dedication for Richard Williams, long-time Executive Director who retired last year. The VSHA building will be known as the Williams Building. She anticipates the building will be painted during the summer. Liptak reviewed the HR Assessment report provided by NFP

6. Finance & Information Systems

Pembroke updated the Board on the April 30, 2022, financial Statements. Some of the entries have been shifted to better reflect the actual income and expenditures to those line items.

Regarding the PayData conversion, it was decided to push the start back a month so the quarterly financials can be completed and closed out. This will allow PayData to move ahead into the third quarter. The electronic payroll will commence on July 14.

VERAP was briefly discussed with \$52,455, 578 being paid out to date for FY22 . Berk indicated VSHA has paid out more than \$90M in VERAP benefits in total, and this is being distributed at approximately \$10M per month. Troiano expressed concern about what will happen when the VERAP dollars are gone.

Pembroke presented a proposal by Resilient Networks for a “managed technology partnership.” She explained VSHA’s needs and how they will be better met with Resilient Networks on board. This partnership provides security and day-to-day support. As she serves as VSHA’s IT backup, it is not ideal. This proposal includes back up services, reviewing security concerns, and onboarding new employees with a provided laptop and training. The cost is about \$75,000 per year; Berk commented that we would not be able to hire anyone with this type of skillset for \$75K and would likely have to hire more than one person.

Discussion followed with a concern raised that this is a small firm and with any staff attrition, may lose some coverage. We may want to think about the depth of coverage. A question was asked about where we want to be in 5-10 years and will this contract get us there. Pembroke talked about VSHA software that is connected to servers and she anticipates all that moving to the cloud. She has looked at other companies, but they do not provide the day-to-day support that we need. Berk mentioned this is part of VSHA’s attempt to modernize.

On a motion by Troiano, second by Feinberg, the Board unanimously accepted the financial report and approved contracting with Resilient Networks.

7. Housing Program Update

Robinson shared some highlights – they are working on the budget for the next months; updating the voucher schedule; and starting the annual planning process. She reported on the secure portals that will be used by participants, partners, and landlords.

8. Property & Asset Management

Kuegel reported the PHA installation and training continues. A brief discussion on the Brightwood budget was held. There are virtually no changes from this past year.

Miller moved, seconded by Farrell, to amend the Board meeting agenda to include the Brightwood budget discussion. Motion passed. On a motion by Miller, seconded by Feinberg, the Board unanimously approved the Brightwood budget as presented.

9. Other Business

Berk presented an updated Professional Code of Conduct policy, which replaces the “Rules of Conduct” policy. This policy gives a good outline of expected employee behavior. Berk commented that it has been vetted by an attorney

On a motion by Trombly, second by Troiano, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Professional Code of Conduct policy as presented.

The updated Strategic Plan was presented. Berk commented that it included meeting the benchmarks outlined for 2021 and we would now look at the vision and goals for 2023. Richardson commented that it is nice to look back to see the accomplishments made and tied into the 2020 document. Berk asked what is the Board’s intent for involvement for 2023? Farrell indicated he likes the direction this has gone and suggested that there will be further discussion in July and the board should think about where they want to go with the strategic plan.

10. VSHA Product Changes Summary - Retirement

Karas spoke about the VSHA retirement plan and the changes that have happened over the past several years. We are in the final stages of getting the plan where we want it to be. He indicated the changes will take place around July 7 and employees would be notified.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m. upon a motion by Troiano, seconded by Miller, and voted unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Berk
Executive Director/Secretary

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