

VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 21, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER & QUORUM

The Regular Meeting of the Vermont State Housing Authority was held at One Prospect Street, Montpelier, Vermont, allowing both in-person and remote attendance via Microsoft Teams. The hearing was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Alex Farrell, Chairperson; and upon roll call, the following Commissioners answered present: Cory Richardson, Vice-Chairperson; Mary Houghton; Bryan Plant II, and Aaron Jones. Absent: Linda Joy Sullivan and Jo Ann Troiano.

Staff present: Kathleen Berk, Executive Director/Secretary; Kelly Pembroke, Chief Financial Officer; Liz Bacon, Managing Director of Housing Program Administration; Susan Kuegel, Managing Director of Property & Asset Management; Ellen Danahy Liptak, Director of Human Resources & Administration; and Robert Abbott, Office Services Coordinator.

Guests and Members of the Public present: Dan Coppock, VSHASF/VSEA Representative; Mike Smith, Gallagher Flynn (arrived 11:13am).

2. MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was modified to ensure a quorum was present for any items requiring Board action. Agenda item 9b was removed since it was not approved by the HFI Board of Directors. Human Resources agenda items were delayed until the next Board meeting.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation was opened at 11:02pm. Coppock did not elect to comment. Farrell closed public participation at 11:03pm.

4. MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on March 26, 2025.

➤ Houghton motioned to approve the meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Richardson. The motion passed.

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Berk shared the agency's concern over the upcoming budget and said that she and her staff are watching it very closely. Specifically affected could be the Section 8 voucher program for

FY2025 and beyond. She is continuing to work closely with specific housing advocacy groups to look for the best outcome possible moving forward.

➤ Houghton moved to accept the Secretary's Report. The motion was seconded by Plant. The motion passed unanimously.

Berk outlined the Hollow Drive Transfer to the Board. HFI is the General Partner. The two Limited Partners in the partnership are Mascoma Bank and M&T Savings Bank. Both have expressed their desire to leave the partnership. Berk is asking that Vermont State Housing Authority step in to form that partnership with HFI. HFI approved the formation earlier this morning.

Resolutions for the Hollow Drive Housing Limited Partnership Limited Partner Interest be transferred to VSHA

"WHEREAS Mascoma Bank is one of two limited partners for the Hollow Drive Housing Limited Partnership which operates an affordable housing development consisting of six buildings with 18 dwelling units at Hollow Drive in the Town of Hartford, Vermont;

AND WHEREAS The Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) is a housing authority of Montpelier, Vermont, that is a qualified nonprofit organization as defined in Section 42(h)(5)(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

AND WHEREAS Mascoma Bank desires to transfer its limited partner interest in the Partnership to the Vermont State Housing Authority, and the Vermont State Housing Authority has agreed to accept the assignment thereof;

AND WHEREAS The Housing Foundation Inc., in its capacity as one of the Partnership's general partners, warrants to Mascoma Bank that it intends to and will cause the Partnership to continue to operate all of the Development as qualified low-income buildings for the remainder of the Compliance Period (as defined in Section 42(j)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986);

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE VSHA Board authorizes the Executive Director to execute any and all documents and all acts that may be necessary to ensure this transfer."

and

WHEREAS M & T Bank is one of two limited partners for the Hollow Drive Housing Limited Partnership which operates an affordable housing development consisting of six buildings with 18 dwelling units at Hollow Drive in the Town of Hartford, Vermont;

AND WHEREAS The Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA) is a housing authority of Montpelier, Vermont, that is a qualified nonprofit organization as defined in Section

42(h)(5)(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

AND WHEREAS M & T Bank desires to transfer its limited partner interest in the Partnership to the Vermont State Housing Authority, and the Vermont State Housing Authority has agreed to accept the assignment thereof;

AND WHEREAS The Housing Foundation Inc, in its capacity as one of the Partnership's general partners, warrants to M & T Bank that it intends to and will cause the Partnership to continue to operate all of the Development as qualified low-income buildings for the remainder of the Compliance Period (as defined in Section 42(j)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986);

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE VSHA Board authorizes the Executive Director to execute any and all documents and all acts that may be necessary to ensure this transfer."

➤ Houghton motioned to approve the resolutions, which was seconded by Richardson. The resolutions were unanimously approved.

7. FINANCES

Pembroke welcomed questions from the Board on the financial statements she provided. She also provided an update on the architectural improvements to the main office. The plan changed to a smaller version of the original, with the primary changes being for the front lobby and entranceway. She also purchased 10 new laptops. Looking at possible tariffs affecting prices, she decided now would be a better time to make the purchase.

➤ Richardson motioned to accept the financials. The motion was seconded by Houghton. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Richardson read the following resolution aloud:

"WHEREAS, the Board needs to discuss contractual relationships and legal matters;

and WHEREAS, premature general public knowledge would clearly put the Authority at a substantial disadvantage;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board shall discuss the contractual relationships and legal matters at issue in executive session."

➤ Houghton made a motion to go into Executive Session. Seconded by Plant. All voted in favor. The Board went into Executive Session at 11:15am.

- The Board came out of Executive Session at 11:45am on a motion by Houghton, seconded by Plant, unanimously voted. No action was taken while in executive session.

Farrell invited a motion from the Board to approve the Controller position and make the changes discussed for the Property & Asset Management department provided funding allows for such changes.

- Houghton motioned to allow Berk and staff to move forward with the changes as described. Plant seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the planned changes.

Farrell then left the meeting at 11:48am and Richardson took over the position of Chair.

8. HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Bacon briefed the Board on the Cost Savings Action Plan. The plan lays out actions HPA has to take in response to lowered funding availability. Bacon will meet with the Shortfall Prevention Team in mid-June; however these actions are in-line with earlier recommendations. Immediate actions include stopping the issuance of new vouchers, shifting existing vouchers, restricting portability, and stopping the "Move with Assistance" program. Her department will continue to fill vacancies in the Project-Based Voucher program. Vouchers that have been issued but not leased will be pulled back. Voucher payment standards will be lowered from 103% to 100% of the area fair market rent. The changes do not affect the current Administrative Plan.

- Houghton moved to approve the plan. Seconded by Plant. The Board voted in favor of the Cost Savings Action Plan.

7B. FINANCES

Pembroke explained the need for an updated Procurement Policy. The new policy will combine the current policy with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) requirements all in one place. Berk added that she and Pembroke would be the only ones authorizing purchases under the policy until further notice.

- Houghton made a motion to approve the Procurement Policy. Plant seconded. The policy was unanimously approved.

11. OTHER

Jones read the following resolution aloud:

“WHEREAS Maureen Sargent has served as a staff member of the Vermont State Housing Authority since April 1, 1982; and

WHEREAS Maureen Sargent retired from the Vermont State Housing Authority on May 30, 2025; and

WHEREAS Maureen Sargent has been an invaluable mentor to other Field Representatives and Vermont State Housing Authority employees; and

WHEREAS over a tenure of 43 years, Maureen Sargent distinguished herself with deep knowledge and abilities related to housing; and

WHEREAS the members of the Board of Commissioners wish to thank Maureen Sargent for her many contributions to the Vermont State Housing Authority; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners hereby express its gratitude to Maureen Sargent for her service and all she has contributed to the Vermont State Housing Authority; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners wishes Maureen Sargent continued success in all her endeavors and express our hope for her continued health, happiness, and prosperity.”

➤ Houghton made a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded by Plant. All voted in favor. The Board adopted the resolution.

Jones left the meeting at 12:12pm. This left the Board without a quorum.

8. HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Bacon reported that her department is entering the annual planning period. Each year she submits an annual plan to HUD that speaks of the area’s needs and how VSHA is helping the community with those needs. Her goal for this year is to stay within funding and be flexible to other changes in policy or funding. She will meet with the Resident Advisory Board, and later the plan will be posted for public comment before asking for the Board’s approval.

9. PROPERTY & ASSET MANAGEMENT

Kuegel briefed the Board on vacancies and delinquencies. Vacancies have been filled in most cases, and Kuegel praised her maintenance team for fast turnarounds after a tenant clears out.

12. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12.17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathleen Berk
Executive Director/Secretary

/RTA

