

VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 25, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

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 meeting 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, Jo Ann Troiano, and Annik Paul. Absent: Aaron Jones.

Staff present: Kathleen Berk, Executive Director/Secretary; Kelly Pembroke, Chief Financial Officer; Elizabeth Bacon, Managing Director of Housing Program Assistance; Susan Kuegel, Managing Director of Portfolio Operations; Ellen Danahy Liptak, Director of Human Resources & Administration; and Robert Abbott, Office Manager.

Guests and Members of the Public present: Dan Coppock, VSHASF/VSEA Representative; Robin Barnett, KBS Representative (arrived at 11:15am and left at 11:27am); Rob Mangano, Retirement Plan Advisors (arrived at 11:57am and left at 12:20 am).

2. MEETING AGENDA

There were a few changes to the meeting agenda. Farrell noted a typo on the agenda stating the minutes to be approved should be from January 28, 2026, not from November 19, 2025, as written. Berk requested to provide additional updates to the Secretary's Report and discuss Board appointments under Agenda item 6 – Other business. Houghton requested to remove the Minutes from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Houghton requested clarification to the draft minutes relating to the Authority's shortfall status, changes to the Administrative Plan, and building projects.

- Houghton moved to approve the minutes as amended. Richardson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
  
- Richardson then moved to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda without discussion. Houghton seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

#### 5a. FINANCE

Pembroke noted that her guest Robin Barnett from KBS has not arrived at the meeting yet to report on the audit opinion and asked to come back to her later.

#### 5b. HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Bacon stated that she had not yet received the voucher allocation for this calendar year. She reviewed estimates for the 2-Year Tool. HUD is required to provide that funding within 60 days of when the President signed the funding bill. She highlighted the Emergency Housing Vouchers which are due to sunset this year. Initially worried about the funding, she now believes these will be covered. The Housing Choice Vouchers, however, are expected to not leave any reserves and may have a shortfall of about \$13,000. Mainstream Vouchers are expected to leave approximately \$1,000 in reserves. She explained that Mainstream Vouchers are now included with the HCV allocation. This is a benefit for tracking but provides a smaller administrative fee. She is expecting roughly \$38,000 less in Admin fees this year.

Berk and Bacon have been working in the legislature for contingency funding to cover voucher-holders if there was a gap in federal funding. Bacon is calculating the funding needs and expecting to bring a resolution to the Board in May for what is actually needed. Berk further explained the process for the Housing Assistance Fund and the Rental Arrears Assistance fund.

Bacon went into detail on the recent news story covering the Burlington Housing Authority and the HUD directive to provide immigration information. Currently, federal law requires Public Housing Authorities to check immigration status at the time of eligibility determination, and VSHA has complied. The new directive asks the Authority to reverify those immigration statuses and enter new details as well. The recent report from HUD had a list of about 70 names, many of which could be explained by typos and misspellings. For now, VSHA continues to follow the law and regulations, will follow legal advice and industry standards regarding verification of eligible immigration status. .

Houghton went on record fully supporting the action of Berk and the decision that she was making to follow the law as it exists. Farrell also voiced his support.

#### 5a. FINANCE

Pembroke introduced Barnett, a representative of KBS. Barnett briefed that KBS completed the VSHA audit for the year 2025 and released an unmodified, or clean, opinion. That means that based on their audit procedures, they did not identify any material incidents. KBS performed the audit in accordance with both generally accepted standards as well as government auditing standards. Vermont State Housing Authority qualifies as a low-risk auditee. This allows the Authority to be more competitive when seeking grants as well as lower the threshold for testing federal expenditure. KBS did not identify any significant risks.

Pembroke added that this audit covers VSHA, HFI, Partnerships, and more. She recognized how large the audit has become.

➤ Troiano motioned to accept the audit. Plant seconded the motion. The Board accepted the audit unanimously.

Barnett left the meeting at 11:27am.

Pembroke updated the Board on the Financials. She reported that Section 8 Admin fees were projected to be 82% but were actually coming in at 88%. She then discussed the remaining debt to AOT for the MHIP program. She expects to be short by about \$500,000 with the full repayment due in May. She praised the work done by the MHIP team and recognized the challenges selling the remaining homes. Berk mentioned some marketing efforts and discussions needed with park owners. She also noted there are some other strategies that could be implemented to move the remaining inventory.

Pembroke's last update to the Board was related to I.T. The new payroll and leave system is up and running.

➤ Richardson motioned to approve the Financials, seconded by Plant. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 5c. HUMAN RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

Liptak had no updates but was open to questions. The Accrued Leave Policy will be covered in Executive Session. The Work Safety Policy was approved in the Consent Agenda.

#### 6d. PORTFOLIO OPERATIONS

Kuegel also did not have any updates but was open to questions. There were none.

#### 7. OTHER BUSINESS

Berk spoke about the Move-In Vermont program, which grew out of the successful Mobile Home Infill Program. Senator Sanders has learned about the initiative and is excited about it. He has asked that Vermont State Housing Authority submit an application for Congressionally Directed Spending. In the near future, VSHA will be sending out Requests for Information (RFIs) to municipalities and nonprofits asking for land donations to the program. Berk asked the Board if they support the funding options, to which they stated that they did.

Berk then informed the Board that the owner of Lague's Mobile Home Park in Berlin has provided Notice of Intent to sell. Under the law, the park's mobile home owners have 45 days to decide whether they intend to consider buying the park. Because VSHA owns five MHIP

homes in the park, the Authority is allowed to sign the petition expressing its intent to purchase. Given that HFI is an interested non-profit buyer, Berk is recommending that VSHA not sign the petition, to avoid any appearance of impropriety.

Berk discussed Board appointments. Jones's term expired in February 2026. He stated that he would remain on the board until his position is filled, but is not interested in seeking reelection, causing a vacancy. Troiano's term will expire next February, and she currently does not wish to serve another term. Berk asked the Board members to assist with future member recruiting efforts.

#### 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Farrell invited a motion to enter into executive session to discuss contractual matters, as permitted under Vermont Statute Title 1, Section 313(a)(1A), in that premature public knowledge of the content of such discussions would clearly put VSHA at a substantial disadvantage; and that we reconvene in open session upon completion of this discussion.

- Houghton motioned to enter Executive Session. Seconded by Plant. All voted in favor. The Board went into Executive Session at 12:00pm.
- The Board came out of Executive Session at 12:25pm on a motion by Troiano, seconded by Plant, and unanimously voted. No action was taken.
- Plant motioned to accept the Accrued Leave Policy. Seconded by Richardson. The Board approved the policy unanimously.

#### 9. ADJOURNMENT

- The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:28 pm. Upon a motion by Houghton, seconded by Plant, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathleen Berk  
Executive Director/Secretary

/RTA

