

WINOOSKI HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING

4:15 P.M.  
September 25, 2024

Zoom  
For link please call (802) 655 2360 by  
noon of the scheduled meeting.

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Commissioner Owen; Commissioner Raymond; Commissioner Mace;  
Commissioner Al Zubaidy; Commissioner Abdullahi

Officers Present ED Decarreau

Meeting called to order by Chair Owen at 4:19

The Board welcomed our new member, Commissioner Yussuf Abdullahi

1. Public Comment

No public in attendance

2. Approve Agenda – No Changes Proposed by Staff

ED Decarreau recommended tabling Items 8 – Policy on Exterior Spaces and 9 Weekly  
Hour Change for Staff

Board Members Agreed

3. Approve Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2024 meeting made by Commissioner  
Mace. Seconded by Commissioner Raymond. Motion carried 3 – 0 with two abstentions

4. Financial Report

ED Decarreau noted that the financial s were in good shape, noting that properties  
spend more in the winter and that insurance payments were not reflected. ED  
Decarreau also noted that the bottom of the document showed what the budget had  
projected for a surplus, noting that no surplus is projected for the HCV, MOD Rehab  
and Main Street property.

5. Approve Resolution for Diane Potvin

The Board agreed with the Resolution and suggested that Commissioner Raymond and ED Decarreau send a gift of appreciation.

Motion to approve the Resolution made by Commissioner Mace. Seconded by Commissioner Al Zubaidy. Motion carried 5 - 0

6. Approve By Law Changes

The Board went through the redline of the bylaws, repeating the original proposals made on July 17.

The Board discussed the role of the Treasurer. Commissioner Mace stated that polices on the Treasurer role need to be developed for a clear understanding of the duties. ED Decarreau agreed to develop policies.

Motion to approve the changes to the ByLaws as presented and amended made by Commissioner Mace, Seconded by Commissioner Raymond.

Motion carried 5 - 0

7. Approve Project and Easement for Green Mountain Power at 87 Elm Street

This item came up late in the afternoon on Monday. ED Decarreau explained that the project is required to replace the transformers on the property. The current equipment is original to the construction (mid 70s), and is leaking.

ED Decarreau noted that Green Mountain Power (GMP) is changing how the property is fed service, moving from the current entry point at the end of the driveway on Elm Street to a City parcel on West Street. This will require that GMO be given access to new areas of the property in addition to their original agreement.

ED Decarreau explained that the easement does not relay ownership of the land to GMP, just gives them the right to work on the system if needed.

ED Decarreau also noted that the Project is likely to cost over \$200,000 and will require the Board to approve going with a single vendor since only GMP can do the work.

Commissioner Mace asked about why GMP was not paying for the system. ED Decarreau explained that WHA actually owns the equipment being replaced and confirmed that it is replacing an underground distribution system that is currently in place.

Commissioner Mace inquired about the ability to expand on the property. ED Decarreau explained that the system is being designed for expansion and to make sure that it is possible for WHA to move the charges for electricity to tenants rather than include fees in the rent.

Motion to approve the Easement and give ED Decarreau authorization to sign the document made by Commissioner Mace. Seconded by Commissioner Raymond. Motion carried 5 – 0.

8. Approve Policy on Use of Exterior Spaces

Item tabled at the request of ED Decarreau

9. Approve Weekly Hour Change for Staff – Policy Pending

Item tabled at the request of ED Decarreau

10. Approve Use of Non-Restricted Admin Fees for Housing Retention Grants

ED Decarreau noted that there is a need to provide families with some funding to address financial setbacks that result in possible eviction. The program needs to assist families while avoiding duplication of efforts with Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO).

Because this is new for WHA and it is a challenge to understand the need, WHA staff would like to run a small pilot program to see how this funding can be helpful.

The resolution explains the terms of the pilot.

Commissioner AlZubaidy explained that the school lost the services of their housing support specialist. ED Decarreau noted that the school should call to see if WHA could provide some of the needed funding as that position is critical to keeping families housed. ED Decarreau will reach out to school staff to offer assistance.

Commissioner Mace would like to see the Resolution altered to indicate that this is a pilot and that a policy will be developed once the need is better understood. ED Decarreau agreed to adjust the Resolution prior to sending it to the chair for a signature.

Motion to approve Resolution with amendment made by Commissioner Raymond. Seconded by Commissioner Abdullahi.

Motion carries 5 - 0

11. Wage Competitiveness Issue – Possible Executive Session

ED Decareau explained that hiring a new Property Management Lead will cost more than expected and will require current staff who have similar duties receive raises to ensure internal equity.

The Board had no objection.

12. Other Business

ED Decareau gave an update on the recent hip replacement, noting that work efforts are following the advice of the physical therapist which includes going home when needed.

ED Decarreau noted that due to COVID and other medical issues staffing is very tight at the moment. This will pass soon, but is a struggle among the current staff. People are stepping up, working from home, and making the staffing shortfall invisible to most customers.

ED Decarreau noted the need for formal Board Training, including a handbook, which will become priority over the next few months. Having the by-laws updated was an important step. The struggle with our current training vendors to adapt to on line programming and the requirements for certification (not using the book, using a calculator to determine rents when systems do that automatically, possibly not testing questions for reliability and validity, and having a camera on while taking tests) is leading us to look for a new vendor. We will look over the next few months.

Commissioner Mace reminded us that we belong to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) who provides open meeting law training.

### 13. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Mace to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Al Zubaidy

Motion carried 5 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm