



February 15, 2022 IHA Board of Directors (Board) Meeting Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held remotely pursuant to Open Meeting Law waiver/guidance contained in Governor Baker's 3/12/20 Executive Order.

Roll Call

On a roll call, Board members Charles Allen, Chair; Richard Kallman, Vice-Chair; Jacqueline Hayward, Treasurer; Richard Bromby; and Glenn Gibbs all voted present. Also present: Kate McGuire, IHA Executive Director (ED); IHA Assistant Director/ Director of Finance Jessica Sadoway; and Alex Russell, Maintenance Director (MD).

Chair Allen brought the February 15, 2022 Board meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Query Time/Laundry Rooms

Judith Butterly, 9B Agawam Village, spoke in strong support of IHA taking over the management of laundry rooms. She encouraged IHA to add more machines because they are often all being used in the mini-rec hall. ED stated the laundry room configuration will be changed during the rehab project so it may be possible to add machines then. Allen asked ED and MD if all of the laundry rooms have the same amount of foot traffic. ED said that usage is highest at Caroline Avenue, followed by Agawam Village mini-rec hall. The laundry room next to the Agawam Village office has the least amount of foot traffic.

MD stated that the current recommendation is one washer/dryer per 20 residents, which is why an additional machine is proposed for Caroline Avenue. Allen opined that while the proposal does not present a significant financial gain for the IHA, it's a good idea to reduce tenant inconvenience with another service contract. Kallman agreed.

ED noted that she and MD have had many conversations with the Saugus Housing Authority (SHA) on their experience purchasing the machines and they have reported a positive experience. MD stated the SHA reported there is very little maintenance required for the machines. Allen asked if ED had requested that CSC, the current vendor, replace all of the machines. ED said it was only offered on condition of signing a new five-year agreement. ED added that CSC's customer service has been very frustrating to deal with and there is high turnover with the account representatives. Allen asked the Board for a motion to approve purchasing new washers/dryers for all of the IHA laundry rooms.

Motion by Hayward, seconded by Kallman. Vote was 5 to 0 in favor.

Payment of Bills

Gibbs made a motion to approve payment of bills, seconded by Hayward. Vote was 5 to 0 in favor.

Regular Minutes of January 18, 2022 Board Meeting

Gibbs moved to approve the 1/18/22 meeting minutes. Hayward seconded. Vote was 5 to 0 in favor.

Executive Director Report

Office Hours

ED asked Board to consider reducing the hours the IHA office is open to the public to allow for uninterrupted twice weekly morning staff meetings. ED proposed opening the office to the public on Monday - Thursday at 9:00 am rather than 7:15 am, which is currently the case. The hours on Fridays would remain the same. Gibbs asked if the office could change its hours on just Tuesdays and Thursdays. ED said she recommends Monday to Thursday to allow for flexibility in scheduling staff meetings. Bromby expressed support for keeping the hours as regular as possible for Monday through Thursday. Kallman asked what the foot traffic was like during 7:15 am - 9:00 am; ED said people rarely come in during that time period. Kallman also asked if there were other options to submit paperwork or rent checks after hours. ED said there is a drop box at Agawam Village and Caroline Ave that tenants can submit checks or other paperwork at any time. She added that the IHA also offers a direct debit option for rent payment.

Motion by Kallman to approve changing IHA office hours as proposed. Second by Hayward. Vote was 5 to 0 in favor.

Pet Policy

ED asked the Board to approve an updated Pet Policy, as the existing one is old and contains outdated information. Bromby asked if the policy restricted dangerous breeds and the ED said no, but it does restrict the height and weight of animals and does not allow any pets with an aggressive personality. Allen stated that the ED may want to consult with the insurance provider about breed restrictions. ED stated that the Commonwealth's insurance policy does not restrict breeds, but since Agawam Village will soon be getting its own insurance policy, it could include breed restrictions.

Kallman asked if the policy restricts tenants from pet-sitting; ED said it does not. Bromby encouraged ED to ensure any insurance provider restriction on pet breed is included in the policy to prevent any legal liability. He added that IHA may need to purchase a rider that covers dangerous breeds. Allen requested that the ED reach out to Harborlight Community Partners to see what their policy on dangerous breeds is. The Board agreed to defer action on the policy until after ED reaches out to Harborlight Community Partners.

Kallman suggested Board consider increasing the current Pet Deposit fee of \$160, which Sadoway and ED said comes from Commonwealth regulations, which state that the deposit should be one month's rent or \$160.

Maintenance Director Report

MD reported that maintenance team has been dealing with significant snow storms, noting that the new snow removal machine proved to be hugely beneficial. MD said he's still troubleshooting the underground electrical issue which has been complicated by the snow. Allen stated that the vacancy report seems longer than usual and MD stated that's because there have been more vacancies than usual. Allen asked if IHA was still using outside contractors on the vacancies and the MD said yes, mostly for painting and flooring. ED added that for the most part the team has been getting the units turned over and occupied in 60 days from their being vacated.

Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Board, Hayward made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bromby. Vote to adjourn passed unanimously.

Documents/Exhibits Used at Meeting

- ***IHA Vendor Accounting Check Register for Checks Dated 2/14/22***
- ***Specifications for Whirlpool and Maytag Laundry Machines***
- ***IHA Minutes for January 18, 2022 Board meeting***
- ***February 15, 2022 ED Report***
- ***Current Vacant Units/Work Order Complete/Incomplete Report***