

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE MOLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

May 20, 2024

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Moline Housing Authority was held at 5:30 PM in the Spring Valley Community Building located at 1150 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Moline, IL 61265.

Board members present were Vice-Chairperson Diane Fox, Raegan Jones, Melvin Grimes and Andy Rodriguez. Staff members present were Executive Director John Afoun and Recording Secretary Maria Nino. Legal counsel was in attendance. Also, in attendance were Katherine Kane and Joshua Shenkus.

1. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chairperson Fox called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 15, 2024:** Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 15, 2024 were reviewed. Motion was made, and seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 15, 2024, as presented. All voting members present voting “aye”, none against; the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried.
3. **Executive Director’s Report:** Verbal report provided by Mr. John Afoun.

a. **Resolution #1074:**

Resolution #1074 was to approve/authorize the Intergovernmental Agreement with Rock Island Housing Authority. Mr. Afoun stated he met with the Rock Island Housing Authority Executive Director three weeks ago and discussed things we can do in common to work together to achieve economy of scale especially on development. This would save our respective housing authority money. For instance, the developers get a big chunk of the money, but we are confident we are able to work together to develop our respective housing authorities. This would allow us to work together with the Rock Island Housing Authority. All voting members present voting “aye”, none against, the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution #1075:**

Resolution #1075 was to approve/authorize the Procurement Policy Revision to raise the micro purchasing threshold to \$50,000. Mr. Afoun stated this would allow time savings, less paperwork, and efficiency. Commissioner Jones asked why it was so low before. Mr. Afoun responded this is because HUD has been slow to change. He told them to be assured we still have the checks and balances in place. All voting members present voting “aye”, none against, the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution #1076:**

Resolution #1076 was to approve/authorize a Reasonable Accommodation Request for bird feeder. Mr. Afoun stated that this is one of the most difficult issues he has ever brought to the Board. He has never brought a reasonable accommodation request since he has been there. Our policy clearly states tenants should not feed wild animals. There are two tenants who made a request. First, they came and said it is their hobby, they like birds. Next, we had a letter from their social worker stating this is a reasonable accommodation. Typical reasonable accommodation here might be moving from one unit to

another to accommodate for a physical condition, etc. The law does not require us to grant this. We have to weigh it if it will cause a huge monetary burden or is unreasonable. Mr. Afoun stated he is recommending to the Board that we approve this subject to the conditions outlined in his report. Vice-Chairperson Fox asked if we are allowing bird feeders. Mr. Afoun said not across the board, but under reasonable accommodation we would allow only in this case. Vice-Chairperson Fox said she feels as soon as others see these people have bird feeders then everyone will want one. Commissioner Grimes said he has a couple concerns. He stated with this one it concerns me because once you open the door for this exception what is to stop a whole lot of other exceptions. The other thing he read was that the tenant would be responsible for 100% of any damage that might be done to the property. If they are already on low income, how would they be able to take care of this. To me a bird feeder is a stretch. Next thing you know others will want things like this. Commissioner Jones talked about ten stipulations in here. They have many birdfeeders stuck to windows at her work, Wilson Junior High, and they have never been an issue. Vice-Chairperson Fox said it can't just be two people and it will need to be a blanket. People will say they got it so I want it too. She said the majority of old people like watching birds. They are calming and it is for anxiety. Mr. Afoun said initially they requested this for their leisure. Next thing we knew they brought reasonable accommodation after the request was denied. Mr. Afoun's recommendation was to say no initially. He is strongly suggesting this would be looked at in a case by case basis. Commissioner Rodriguez said that we are setting a precedence to opening up even more people requesting bird feeders. He said that people could walk outside to see the birds or go for a walk along the river. Mr. Afoun said the law does not compel us to, but encourages us to grant reasonable accommodation requests. Commissioner Jones said that bird feeder food is the worst for rodents. She asked what will they do if we say no. Mr. Afoun said they would probably go to lawyers. He said this is maybe the borderline type of thing and he doesn't know if courts can enforce that we must allow it. Vice-Chairperson Fox asked as a tenant that has a pet where the pet fee is paid for due to reasonable accommodation would they get charged a fee. Mr. Afoun responded no as this would not be for a pet. Commissioner Jones asked what our maintenance staff thinks. Mr. Afoun said that they are strongly against it. He said he came with the diplomatic point of view. Commissioner Grimes moves not to approve Res. 1076 on pet waiver. All voting members present voting "nay", none for, the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion rejected unanimously.

**Resolution #1077:**

Resolution #1077 was to approve/authorize the Bad Debt Write Offs. All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

- b. Approval of Financial Report:** The financial reports were not available due to the fiscal year end work.
- c. Section 8 Report:** The Board reviewed the Section 8 Report as presented. Vice-Chairperson Fox asked if we can apply for more vouchers. Mr. Afoun responded when the time comes he will apply for more.
- d. Public Housing Report:** The Board reviewed the Public Housing Report as presented. There was a report for each AMP as well as one showing the information for both AMPs combined. This report gives a data analysis to track and report the statistics to the Board.

Vice-Chairperson Fox asked if we still have a specific person that does the pest control. Mr. Afoun responded yes.

- e. **Development/Maintenance Reports:** The Board reviewed the Capital Funds & Maintenance Progress Report, which showed current and future projects. The report also addressed work orders.

Mr. Afoun said that Trotter has completed the project. They have been paid out and it is all done. They did the warranty work and did a good job on that.

The FSS Program and ROSS Program statistics were reviewed. Vice-Chairperson Fox asked if we are happy with the new ROSS Coordinator. Mr. Afoun replied yes, we are.

- 4 **Resident Advisory Board (RAB) Report:** Verbal report provided by Ms. Katherine Kane.

Ms. Kane stated that as you know I have been out of the meetings for a few months. I have been working with the ROSS Coordinator, Mr. Nathan Edwards, on surveys of what services residents might need. We have been working on what ideas we have for people to join RAB and seeing what other housing authorities in bigger cities do to get ideas. Mr. Edwards is going to work with Operations Manager, Mr. Al Cueller, to get approval to work on information to place on our website.

- 5 **Any other business that may come before the Board including comments from the general public:**

Ms. Kane stated she would like to speak as a resident and not as a RAB member about this. She said she has been doing this for a few years and there have been lots of times when she gets uncomfortable about how the residents are talked about sometimes. Most times she bites her lip, but today she has a problem. It is not the place of anyone in this room to weigh in on what accommodations someone needs or does not need. That is the position of their support team. Our position here is to decide if it is reasonable or not. Ms. Kane said that not everyone can go take a walk and look at birds or go by the river. It is offensive and not appropriate for people to talk about things the way they are talking. You need to use respectful language when talking about residents or others. People who live in low income they are people who are very familiar with anxiety. I did not like some of the language in this conversation. I would have genuinely been offended with some of the things that were talked about. Vice-Chairperson Fox said that nothing she said she meant offensively and she apologized if it was offensive. Ms. Kane said to try to consider the people who are talked about. Vice-Chairperson Fox said everyone judges everyone and I don't think that anything was malicious. Ms. Kane stated that a lot of things were being dismissive unintentionally. Commissioner Jones said thank you to Ms. Kane for bringing these things to their attention. Vice-Chairperson Fox also thanked Ms. Kane for this.

- 6. **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, a motion was made, and seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:13 P.M.

---

Leslie Stange-Crotty, Chairperson