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LOWELL HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MARCH 2, 2022

Mercier House
21 Salem Street
Lowell, Massachusetts

--- Reported by Jacqueline P. Travis ---

1 Board of Commissioners:

2 Philip L. Shea, Chairman

3 Joanie L. Bernes, Commissioner

4 Mony Var, Commissioner

5 Matt Marr, Commissioner

6 Rodney Elliott, Commissioner

7

8 Lowell Housing Committee:

9 Gary K. Wallace, Executive Director

10 Adam J. Garvey, Assistant Executive Director,

11 Chief Operating Officer

12 Sherry GIBLIN, Chief Financial Officer

13 Kevin J. Murphy, General Counsel

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Mr. Shea: Can you hear me okay?

Mr. Wallace: Sure.

Mr. Shea: I just want to welcome everybody to the meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the March 2nd, 2022 meeting. And to get started I'll ask the clerk to call the roll.

Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

Ms. Bernes: Here.

Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

Mr. Elliott: Here.

Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

Mr. Marr: Here.

Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

Mr. Shea: Present.

Mr. Wallace: And Commissioner Var.

Mr. Var: Here.

Mr. Wallace: Five present.

Mr. Shea: According to the agenda, Item Number 1, which is approved.

According to the agenda is the election of the new year which involves the chairperson of the Lowell Housing Authority. And I believe that by the

1 clerk identifying the committee member, and they are
2 to indicate the person they'd like to chair the next
3 12 months.

4 So with that being the case, I'll ask the
5 clerk to call the roll.

6 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

7 Ms. Bernes: Here. Oh, Phil Shea.

8 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

9 Mr. Elliott: Commissioner Shea.

10 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

11 Mr. Marr: Commissioner Shea.

12 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

13 Mr. Shea: Philip Shea.

14 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Var.

15 Mr. Var: Philip Shea.

16 Mr. Wallace: Five votes for Chairman Shea.

17 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

18 The next item is the Item Number 3, that's
19 the election of the vice chairperson for the next
20 12 months for the Board of Commissioners of the
21 Lowell Housing Authority. The clerk will call the
22 roll and each person will name the individual
23 commissioner that they'd like to see be vice
24 chairperson.

1 The clerk call the roll.
2 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.
3 Ms. Bernes: Mony Var.
4 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.
5 Mr. Elliott: Commissioner Var.
6 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.
7 Mr. Marr: Same. Money Var.
8 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.
9 Mr. Shea: Mony Var.
10 Mr. Wallace: And Commissioner Var.
11 Mr. Var: Mony Var.
12 Mr. Wallace: Five votes for Mony Var.
13 Mr. Shea: Congratulations, Mony.
14 Mr. Var: Thank you.
15 Mr. Shea: The next item on the agenda is
16 the report of the chairperson, which I was a little
17 surprised. I didn't realize the chairperson gives
18 the report. So I will just briefly, for the record,
19 and I hope I'm speaking loud enough. We tried to get
20 the microphones to be more in sync than they have
21 been rather than being an echo chamber.
22 So with that being the case, I'll just say a
23 few words. First of all I think I should preface my
24 remarks by thanking the Commissioners of the Lowell

1 Housing Authority for selecting me as the chairperson
2 for next 12 months. Needless to say, it's something
3 that I've enjoyed. I've enjoyed actively
4 participating with the staff and with the members of
5 the Board as we move forward. In the past year I can
6 only tell you that it's -- I want to thank -- I want
7 the record to indicate I want to thank Commissioner
8 Robert McMahon for serving with me on the executive
9 board. We had some interesting articles of debate in
10 the last 12 months. He was very, very helpful.

11 I'd like to also have the record indicate as
12 the chairman, I'd like to thank Vice Chairperson Mony
13 Var for actively participating with me on the finance
14 board for the past 12 months. That was very
15 challenging and I do believe the finance board made
16 some recommendations to the Board. We only make
17 recommendations to the Board and the Board votes yes
18 or no. And we made recommendations to the Board to
19 increase the benefits of salary to employees,
20 increase bonuses to the employees, bring in a
21 registered nurse who's serving as a medical adviser,
22 bringing in a person who is the human resource person
23 in order that she can properly review applications.
24 And we had a lot of meetings, we spent a lot of time,

1 we don't necessarily talk about it, but it was -- it
2 was very competitive at times with our Chief
3 Financial Officer Sherry Giblin who is very, very
4 bright, very hard working. And with our director and
5 acting director, Adam Garvey, Director Wallace.

6 So I want to thank you, Mony, for all your
7 time and effort that you put in and as you know, the
8 next meeting will be in April. And at that time the
9 chairman will announce the committee's assignments
10 for the following 11 months.

11 I'd also like at this time to have the
12 record indicate my thanks to Commissioner Joanie
13 Bernes for her efforts in helping us with the
14 continuing work with the community rooms, her effort
15 with respect to throwing a pizza party, with her
16 efforts with respect to trying to get residents in
17 buses down to a day at the beach. All of those
18 things that she's done, and in the meantime still
19 takes care of her mother. So I'd like to thank
20 Commissioner Joanie Bernes for her activity and for
21 her support, for her work with the Board of
22 Commissioners have -- let's say presented to the
23 Board.

24 I'd also like to thank Commission Matt Marr

1 who's the labor rep who has watched over our capital
2 expenditures and budgeting for his advice not only on
3 the South Common project, but his advice -- in fact
4 he corrected me one night over the railing, and I
5 stand to be corrected occasionally. Probably more so
6 than not. But Commissioner Marr has been very, very
7 active for a guy that some days, particularly when
8 it's 100 degrees out, he doesn't mind getting up at
9 4:00 in the morning to leave Lowell to go to his job
10 in Worcester and then come back here and walk in here
11 at two after 5:00 just to participate in the
12 meetings. And so I'd like to thank publicly
13 Commissioner Matt Marr for his input and his wisdom.
14 And he knows that this is a pro-labor union board.
15 Everybody I think knows we support unionism. And if
16 we hire a person, a developer that is not union, Matt
17 is really a good person to be sure they are paying
18 minimum wage.

19 And I'd also like to publicly thank
20 Commissioner Matt Marr for his judgment and wisdom
21 with respect to construction and the expenditure of
22 hundreds of thousands of dollars. And so I'd like
23 the record to indicate that.

24 So with that being the case, I look forward

1 to reading -- I did read the annual report that the
2 Director has given to us, and I'm glad that you have
3 secured some of the items that the Board of
4 Commissioners have recommended. Particularly in the
5 hiring. And I'm glad also to see that you acted
6 quite quickly when the union made a suggestion to us
7 that they probably will need a little bit more help.
8 Particularly with an electrician and the other
9 person.

10 So I see that all being a positive. I do
11 know and I think Mony Var agrees with me, we've had
12 very good conversations with our department heads.
13 And I notice here tonight some of our -- four out of
14 five property managers, they know what the record
15 indicates with respect to how this Board feels about
16 them.

17 Without their professionalism, without their
18 effort, without their diligence we have no shot of
19 succeeding. I've always felt that the property
20 managers are the heart and soul of the operating
21 team. The operating team being the executive
22 officer, our chief financial officer, our assistant
23 director, our director. Those are the people out
24 there doing the work for our population.

1 We have 1,800 units, we have 2,800 employees
2 and needless to say, they're very helpful in handling
3 the -- let's just say in handling the problems that
4 they've encountered daily because of the population
5 in the housing.

6 I also want to thank Attorney Kevin Murphy,
7 who's our general counsel, for his words of wisdom
8 and advice with respect to items that we've had come
9 up at the executive committee level, and also in the
10 finance committee.

11 So with that being the case, I look forward
12 to participating actively. As you know, being a
13 product of the housing, as Joanie Bernes was a
14 product of the housing, Bobby McMahon was a product
15 of the housing, it's a pleasure to serve on this
16 Board. It's a pleasure. And I know that we feel
17 that way. And so with that being the case, I think
18 that report was five minutes longer than I had
19 anticipated, but I just wanted everyone to realize
20 that I do look forward to leading the Board. The
21 chairman of the Board should lead the Board. The
22 members of the Board should direct the chairman in
23 the direction he should take.

24 We're a five member board. We all have an

1 equal vote. And the Board should direct the chairman
2 in the direction they want to take.

3 So with that being the case, I will conclude
4 my remarks by thanking the members of the Board of
5 Commissioners for electing me chairman for the next
6 12 months. And with that being the case, I hope
7 that's a -- that's the report of the chairperson,
8 which I didn't realize until today I had to say
9 anything.

10 So with that being the case, I will ask that
11 a motion be made by Commissioner Mony Var, seconded
12 by -- sorry, by Vice Chairperson Mony Var, seconded
13 by Commissioner Matt Marr, the words -- the report of
14 the chairman be accepted. And I ask that the
15 Director call the roll.

16 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

17 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

18 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

19 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

20 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

21 Mr. Marr: Yes.

22 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

23 Mr. Shea: Yes.

24 Mr. Wallace: And Vice Chairman Var.

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Mr. Var: Yes.

Mr. Wallace: That's five yeas.

Mr. Shea: Thank you.

The next item on the agenda is Item Number 5, report of the general counsel. Attorney Murphy, thank you.

Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, the good news is there are no serious legal issues affecting the Lowell Housing Authority to report, so that is as good news as you can get.

We continue to do our work on a daily basis, approving contracts, making sure work is done in the Housing Authority, and making it a safe, decent and sanitary place to live.

Most of our time is spent in the housing court because we deal with tenant issues. Most prevalent tenant issue obviously is nonpayment of rent. We continue to make sure that we pursue any tenant that owe rent and enter into payment plans with them to pay their past due rent. Because we don't want -- our endgame is not to evict anybody. We're in the business of providing housing, so we try in every way to make sure that that person can stay

1 in the housing. And I have to really thank the
2 administration, Dr. Wallace, Adam Garvey, MaryAnn
3 Maciejewski and all the managers, I don't want to
4 single them out because I missed one last time and
5 paid the price for it.

6 I must say that every manager does an
7 extraordinary job and the administration in making
8 sure that all of the units, all 1,600 units, that's
9 an incredible amount of units, are safe, decent and
10 sanitary.

11 We have been benefitted in the past year by
12 the federal programs that have been passed down to us
13 from such a graft and sharer that paid for past due
14 rent of tenants who haven't been able pay their rent.
15 So that helps us out tremendously.

16 But one of the real issues that I see where
17 the administration and the managers are working
18 diligently on to try and solve is the social problems
19 that exist in the Housing Authority. Be it drugs,
20 alcohol, disruptive behavior. We're seeing a lot of
21 people not living in a sanitary manner. A lot of
22 hoarding in the Housing Authority. And what this
23 does is it affects the other neighbors that live
24 around them. And they're supposed to have quiet

1 enjoyment of their units. And when you have this
2 type of disruptive behavior, you can't have that
3 quiet enjoyment. But the administration has proved
4 very hard to bring in people that can counsel these
5 tenants to behave in a manner that they don't
6 negatively affect their neighbors. And also the
7 managers work very, very diligently to try and
8 eradicate any of the negative issues that are going
9 on in the housing.

10 So I'll tell you it's -- I always use that
11 figure, 1,600 units, it's a lot of units to manage,
12 but we do it in a great manner. And that's all due
13 to the administration and the managers. And I work
14 closely with them and I admire them every day for the
15 work that they do.

16 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Mr. Shea: Thank you for your remarks. And
18 with that being the case Item Number 5, general
19 counsel has just given his remarks, I will ask for a
20 roll call vote.

21 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chair?

22 Mr. Shea: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

23 Mr. Elliott: Can I ask a question? I'm
24 turning, Mr. Chair, to Dr. Wallace. How many

1 clients, how many residents are officially --

2 Mr. Shea: Can you talk into the mic? The
3 microphone system is not very good. Thank you.

4 Mr. Elliott: I bring a motion to -- can you
5 tell me through Mr. Chairman, Dr. Wallace, how many
6 residents are impacted by a number of individuals
7 that haven't paid rent and do we have a dollar amount
8 on what that effect is from a revenue perspective?

9 Mr. Wallace: We do. I think the finance
10 person can be more specific about that.

11 Mr. Elliott: I understand that COVID has
12 had an impact. And are there any -- well I will let
13 you answer that question first and then I have just
14 one follow-up. How many residents and what the
15 impact is.

16 Ms. Giblin: I don't have a number of
17 residents that owe rent at this time. I can get you
18 the full DAR figure. I don't have it with me right
19 now, but I can get that to you.

20 Mr. Elliott: Okay. That's fine. About how
21 many residents?

22 Mr. Wallace: It's less than five percent.
23 So we collect about 95 percent of all rent due.

24 Ms. Giblin: Yeah, our collection rate is

1 within 97 percent at this point.

2 Mr. Elliott: I mean, I really had no idea.
3 You hear, you see stories across the country, across
4 the --

5 Ms. Giblin: And we received over \$200,000
6 in 2021 in share payments.

7 Mr. Elliott: Okay. And my follow-up
8 question through you, Mr. Chairman, Attorney Murphy,
9 how often are you in housing court and what is --
10 what is the number of adjudicated cases that we see,
11 if any?

12 Mr. Murphy: Well the housing court has
13 changed its model in the past two years from in-
14 person hearings to Zoom hearings. We used to be in
15 just on Mondays, unless there was an emergency. But
16 now we are in probably on a Zoom hearing probably --
17 not the whole day but, you know, probably for an hour
18 in the morning, hour in the afternoon, four out of
19 five days a week. Yeah, because they're Zoom
20 hearings now, so they're not just -- they used to
21 just take all the Lowell cases and put them on
22 Mondays in court and you resolved everything on
23 Mondays. But now since they're on Zoom hearings,
24 they just put them every day. It's been a nightmare

1 for the housing managers, because they've had to make
2 sure that they were available for the different
3 hearings, whether they were in the morning or the
4 afternoon. But they've done a great job preparing on
5 those. But I expect within probably six months we'll
6 go back to in-person hearings and probably be
7 hopefully one to two days a week.

8 Mr. Elliott: Are we successful, the Housing
9 Authority, on finding a payment plan or helping these
10 individuals out? I'm sure some of them have fallen
11 on hard times and then some others just may not.

12 Mr. Murphy: In the housing court, the
13 housing specialists have been very, very cooperative
14 with us. That because they understand, first of all,
15 they're paying a nice rent. When I say nice, to
16 them. Economically they're not being overburdened by
17 the rent that they're paying. And 2, the housing
18 specialists would say you should be paying the
19 rent. It's based upon your income. If your income
20 goes down you automatically get a reduction in your
21 rent. You've got to pay the rent. They really
22 mandate that, that the rent be paid and institute
23 repayment plans.

24 The real problem we've had in the past few

1 years is with the disruptive tenants. Because with
2 the pandemic, the courts have been very reticent to
3 evict people because they're saying -- and I hate it
4 when they use the term, they always say the Housing
5 Authority is the housing of last resort. I don't
6 think it is. I always say to the judge we're not the
7 housing of last resort. We take pride in the
8 condition of our units and the behavior of its
9 tenants.

10 But one of the biggest problems we've had is
11 disruptive tenants because the housing court has been
12 reticent during the pandemic to evict any disruptive
13 tenants.

14 Mr. Elliott: Attorney Murphy, how many
15 cases are we looking at, counts of disruptive tenants
16 on a monthly basis?

17 Mr. Murphy: Well I would say on a weekly
18 basis we average about 10 cases in the housing court.
19 So that's 40 cases a week. And I would say out of
20 the 40 cases a week, 10 of them are disruptive
21 behavior. And when I talk --

22 Mr. Elliott: What is the disposition? Are
23 they evicted or given a second chance?

24 Mr. Murphy: They're given a second chance

1 usually because we have a lot of -- you know, we have
2 drug issues with people using drugs that we implement
3 the one strike policy that the federal government
4 allows us to implement, is that we can get them out
5 in 48 hours rather than 30 days.

6 We also have a lot of partying at nighttime
7 that, you know, the noise affects the neighbors and
8 we have to deal with those. So I would say, I would
9 say out of 40 cases a week, probably 10 are
10 disruptive.

11 Mr. Wallace: 40 a month.

12 Mr. Murphy: 10 a month.

13 Mr. Wallace: They're mediated and usually
14 service plans are put into place, social services are
15 brought in to assist us to assist them in making sure
16 that they adhere to the rules.

17 Mr. Murphy: And I will say one thing, the
18 housing court is very, very strict. If they enter
19 into an agreement and they don't abide by the
20 agreement, they are evicted.

21 Mr. Elliott: Right.

22 Mr. Murphy: So they're given a chance, but
23 they get one bite at the apple and if they misbehave
24 again they're evicted.

1 Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Attorney Murphy.
2 Thank you, Dr. Wallace. That's very helpful for me
3 to know, I'm sure the members of the Board, that
4 there is a process, there is social services that are
5 -- you know, that there are -- something's going to
6 happen if you're not -- it's not fair to the other
7 residents and just, you know. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 Mr. Shea: Thank you, Commissioner Elliott,
9 for your comments. And I want to thank Attorney
10 Murphy for his comments.

11 I have a trivia question for Attorney
12 Murphy, and I like to have trivia questions every now
13 and then. Can you tell me, who was the great
14 legislator that filed legislation back in the '70s to
15 create housing court for the Massachusetts community?

16 Mr. Murphy: Create the housing authority in
17 Massachusetts?

18 Mr. Shea: Housing court.

19 Mr. Murphy: That was you.

20 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

21 Mr. Murphy: I was working for him at the
22 time. I drafted it.

23 Mr. Shea: Believe it or not, I followed the
24 legislation with the housing court because I saw some

1 -- and it's like yesterday, although I just thought
2 holy mackerel, it's 45 years ago. Because there was
3 some people in Lowell that just really -- they were
4 abusing tenants. They were taking advantage of the
5 tenants. So we had this idea to funnel this housing
6 court building and it became law two years later.
7 And I guess -- I don't go there, but apparently it's
8 always filled.

9 Mr. Murphy: No, you're right. Because I
10 remember in those days that the -- some landlords,
11 specifically one who was the biggest slum landlord in
12 Lowell, would go and rent a security guard's outfit
13 and go to collect the rent from his tenants. And
14 they thought it was the police collecting the rents,
15 telling them they had to pay. So that's why the
16 housing court was established, to prevent
17 unscrupulous actions like that.

18 Mr. Shea: Well thank you. So with that
19 being the case, Item Number 5, the report of the
20 general counsel, I'll ask for a motion by Vice
21 Chairman Mony Var, seconded by Commissioner Joanie
22 Bernes. And clerk with call the roll.

23 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

24 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

1 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

2 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

3 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

4 Mr. Marr: Yes.

5 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

6 Mr. Shea: Yes.

7 Mr. Wallace: And Vice Chairman Var.

8 Mr. Var: Yes.

9 Mr. Wallace: That's five years.

10 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

11 The next item is Item Number 6, report of
12 the Executive Director. So you might just move to
13 6.1.1.

14 Mr. Wallace: I can give a brief report.

15 Mr. Shea: Okay. You're going to give a
16 brief report.

17 Mr. Wallace: Sure.

18 Mr. Shea: The Chair recognizes the
19 Executive Director, Dr. Wallace.

20 Mr. Wallace: First of all, since you
21 brought it up, Mr. Chairman, since the last board
22 meeting about the acoustics and the audio
23 difficulties in this room, the staff has met with a
24 vendor, a consultant has come in and we're awaiting,

1 hopefully shortly that we're going to get some
2 recommendation from them of what we can do in the
3 room. In the meantime the technician was able to
4 make some slight adjustments, and I think we've
5 already -- basically we're not getting the feedback.
6 It's already working. But we're hoping to be able to
7 fix this so we don't have this issue going forward.

8 The other thing is we did get in your
9 packet, your meeting packets tonight the goal
10 narratives that I had provided in here, and I'll just
11 quickly take a quick run through it.

12 First of all, the Authority's financial
13 indicator score and fiscal indicator score, obviously
14 with COVID we're not being scored on those items
15 because we haven't been able to really address them
16 and we're just carrying over our 2019 scores for both
17 of those.

18 In the affordable housing section, these
19 were goals set by the Authority. They were free
20 opportunities from three affordable housings in the
21 city, the Happy House Reinvention, the Merrimack
22 Street corridor, and the Rivers Edge. And I provided
23 some narratives in here to update the Board on where
24 we are with that.

1 The state COLA engagement technology, which
2 our communications rep, Nina Roche, has really taken
3 a lead on that. She's just about completed the
4 digital filing in the leasing office, moving on
5 quickly to the admissions office and finance
6 department next, and then lastly we'll complete all
7 of our digital filing with the property managers.

8 Also you notice in here that I did mention
9 that we have now installed the 27 digital screens
10 throughout the Authority. It's a way for us to
11 message the residents what's going on, to keep people
12 engaged and involved in that. And in that regard
13 staffing, board initiatives, we were able to address,
14 as you had mentioned earlier, with new hires focusing
15 on diversity. But also we did bring aboard our HR
16 generalist, our health advisor, a new electrician.
17 We got those things done.

18 And then the other initiative of the Board
19 was to relocate the leasing and occupancy office.
20 They actually had begun the move. They moved in
21 there yesterday, today, and I think they will be
22 completely up and running by Friday of this week, 89
23 Appleton Street.

24 And then lastly was the energy performance

1 contractor in phase 2, with only two items left to go
2 on that, the South Common Village. This was a 6
3 million dollar endeavor to work with Ann Resco.
4 Again, zero cost to the Authority. All of the
5 improvements and upgrades which I've listed in here
6 are paid back from the savings. So those were some
7 major initiatives from the Board that we were able to
8 carry out successfully. And that's my report.

9 Mr. Shea: Thank you for your comments. At
10 this time I'll ask any commissioner if they have any
11 questions for the Director pertaining to the
12 information he gave with respect to the 2021 goal
13 updates.

14 Mr. Var: I have a quick.

15 Mr. Shea: Commissioner Mony Var.

16 Mr. Var: I'd like to know if at the new
17 location, will there be a press release with the new
18 location or we have a ribbon cutting event coming.

19 Mr. Wallace: Yeah, so the Chairman had
20 mentioned that to us last Thursday, I think. And
21 staff is working on doing that possibly next week.

22 Mr. Shea: What was that?

23 Mr. Wallace: That you had mentioned to do
24 the ribbon cutting and do a press release about the

1 grand opening, we're working on that event.

2 Mr. Shea: Well okay. I think that's a step
3 in the right direction. I had information late this
4 afternoon indicating that they're still working on
5 getting that -- those quarters prepared so they
6 wouldn't be moved in. And I'm sorry, I see Tha Chhan
7 here. I should have earlier mentioned about the
8 effort that he and his assistants down there made to
9 make that transfer. But once again, it goes back to
10 the Board. The finance committee brought the item to
11 the Board to move them. It's a substantial sum of
12 money. It's a substantial contract. There's a lot
13 more to it, particularly for a person like myself,
14 not necessarily a techy, there's a lot more to it
15 with moving, and it looks like it's all going a step
16 in the right direction.

17 Tha and his assistant Allison have been
18 working hard for the last four to six weeks. And the
19 Director and the Assistant Director have been very
20 helpful in facilitating that move. And I just think
21 it's going to be -- it's just going to be a great
22 place for people to go to file applications, get
23 information about housing admissions. So I'm glad
24 that it's moving along.

1 The ribbon cutting, you can organize
2 sometime and maybe we can have a little story and a
3 ribbon cutting and invite, you know, invite up
4 whoever you want. And I think that's all good stuff.

5 But from what I understand in talking to Tha
6 Chhan, who I have a great amount of respect for, he
7 indicates the staff is very enthusiastic about that
8 move. And I can see why. But then again, thank you
9 to Gary and Adam and to Sherry for working with us on
10 the finance committee, working with the Board of
11 Commissioners to help make that a possibility.

12 So with that being the case -- Commissioner
13 Marr, please.

14 Mr. Marr: Dr. Wallace, what's the deal with
15 Adam House? How are we doing with that?

16 Mr. Wallace: So in the narrative I provided
17 in here, Renew, as you know, owns the building. The
18 land is still owned by DCR. Local legislators are
19 working with general counsel to get the land sold to
20 the Housing Authority which will then ground lease
21 the land to Renew so that we can create up to five
22 units of bedroom supported housing in there. And the
23 legislation's been filed and probably our attorney
24 can speak to that.

1 Mr. Marr: So we are making headway there.

2 Mr. Murphy: Yeah, we're making a lot of
3 headway. The biggest stumbling block is, throughout
4 the years is that the Department of Environmental
5 Management required us to provide a suitable parcel
6 to swap with them. And the city just never come up
7 with a suitable parcel. But now DEM, Department of
8 Environmental Management is the owner of the
9 property, has agreed that we will get an appraisal,
10 and then we will pay cash for that parcel of land.

11 We're just waiting for the legislation to
12 pass. Right now it's in House Ways and Means and
13 we're just waiting for it to be recorded out of House
14 Ways and Means to the full house. But it is moving
15 along finally.

16 Mr. Marr: Thank you. That's all I have.
17 Thank you.

18 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chair.

19 Mr. Shea: The chair recognizes Commissioner
20 Elliott.

21 Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just
22 following up on Commissioner Marr. In full
23 disclosure I work at DCR, Department of Conservation
24 and Recreation now, superseding the agency of DEM.

1 So the legislation has to pass, right, and
2 there's no conflict. So just a question -- this is a
3 good project. I know it's been frustrating. I know
4 that I -- you know, prior to, you know, even as
5 counsel before that, I understand the frustration.
6 The land swap just never happened, right? There was
7 no interest from DCR's perspective.

8 Mr. Murphy: No, it's just that we couldn't
9 come up with a suitable parcel in the city of Lowell.
10 Every time that --

11 Mr. Elliott: The city didn't want to swap
12 that piece of land.

13 Mr. Murphy: No.

14 Mr. Elliott: Okay. So this -- I'm sorry to
15 interrupt you. I'll get to the point. So the sale
16 of the property requires an act of the legislature in
17 order to disclose.

18 Mr. Murphy: A full blown boat.

19 Mr. Elliott: Okay. Well, like I said, this
20 was a good project. That property has been an
21 eyesore. It's a historic building, right? And I
22 think this is a great use for it. It was a long time
23 coming that we didn't know what to do with it. So do
24 you have any anticipated time, Attorney Murphy, when

1 this could possibly take place?

2 Mr. Murphy: Well they just started to get
3 back into in-person sessions, which is going to be a
4 benefit to us. It requires a full formal vote of the
5 legislature. So doing it Zoom hasn't been very good
6 for us, but I expect -- I would expect within a month
7 or two we should have it all finalized.

8 Mr. Elliott: That's good news. And we're
9 ready to go with funding.

10 Mr. Wallace: No, but we have some avenues
11 that we could look at including using some of the
12 sales proceeds from the static site position.

13 Mr. Elliott: I did see that in the report.
14 Thank you. Yes, it's a 9.5 item.

15 I think it's a good project and I hope it
16 works and I hope we can move on. So thank you,
17 Mr. Chair.

18 I have some other questions, Mr. Chair, on
19 something else.

20 Mr. Shea: Thank you very much. Is there
21 any other question to the Director?

22 Mr. Elliott: Not on these, but I have some
23 others, Mr. Chair.

24 Mr. Shea: Are you still on Item Number 6?

1 Mr. Elliott: Still on Item Number 6. The
2 goal updates.

3 Mr. Shea: All right.

4 Mr. Elliott: That's the report that we're
5 working on.

6 Mr. Wallace: Right.

7 Mr. Elliott: And I have a motion to present
8 a little bit later. This is a good report. It gives
9 you an update and screenshot of what's going on. Do
10 you have any idea how much savings we're going to
11 achieve from the energy performance contract, Phase
12 2? I mean, there's been a lot of work, LED fixtures
13 all over the place.

14 Ms. Giblin: Yeah, so the savings will
15 exceed the \$6 million project and the savings will
16 cover the entire portion of that deck. So it's over
17 6 million dollars.

18 Mr. Elliott: That's great. That's good
19 news.

20 The other good news is the Celtics won.

21 I did have a question, you know, Dr. Wallace
22 can answer it. So the financial indicator score, we
23 should see that increase if all assessments in full
24 in the future. Why is it at 70 percent?

1 Mr. Wallace: The fiscal? The fiscal
2 indicator?

3 Mr. Elliott: Yes, the fiscal indicator I'm
4 talking about.

5 Mr. Wallace: We scored a 33 out of a
6 possible 40 in 2019 and are still carrying that score
7 over because they haven't been -- we haven't been
8 able to get into the units to do some of the
9 improvements. And HUD has not been sending
10 inspectors out to do the scores. So we're carrying
11 it over. But the goal is to increase that 33 out of
12 40 points to 36 out of 40 points.

13 Mr. Elliott: Okay. Thank you. That's it.
14 Those are the only questions that I had. Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman.

16 Mr. Shea: Are there any other questions for
17 the Director pertaining to Item Number 6?

18 Seeing none, Commissioner Matt Marr,
19 seconded by Vice Chairman Money Var, move to accept
20 Item Number 6, the report of the Executive Director.
21 And the clerk will call the roll.

22 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

23 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

24 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

1 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

2 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

3 Mr. Marr: Yes.

4 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

5 Mr. Shea: Yes.

6 Mr. Wallace: And Vice Chairman Var.

7 Mr. Var: Yes.

8 Mr. Wallace: Five yeas.

9 Mr. Shea: Item Number 6.1.1, motion to
10 ratify past actions of 2021. With that being the
11 case -- who filed this motion? Is this filed by you?

12 Mr. Wallace: This has been a standing
13 motion that's been on at the annual meeting for since
14 -- I said to Kevin, since 1939. And I think it's
15 just a housekeeping motion that's on there.

16 Mr. Murphy: I think it's a historical
17 motion for the annual meeting. I don't think you'll
18 see it on the agenda next year.

19 Mr. Shea: Any questions pertaining to
20 ratify past actions in 2021?

21 Commissioner Elliott.

22 Mr. Elliott: I just don't know what actions
23 of the past.

24 Mr. Murphy: Well any and all votes that

1 were taken by the Board members would be ratified by
2 this vote, that they still remain in full force and
3 effect.

4 Mr. Elliott: Can we get a list of those? I
5 wasn't here, so I'm not going to --

6 Mr. Murphy: I'm just saying it's a
7 historical vote. It's just -- it's part of the
8 annual meeting. I don't think if we're here next
9 year we'll see it on the agenda.

10 Mr. Elliott: Okay.

11 Mr. Murphy: Okay?

12 Mr. Elliott: Thank you.

13 Mr. Shea: Your welcome. Okay. That being
14 the case, Item Number 6.1.1, motion to ratify past
15 actions of 2021, we have Commissioner Mony Var --
16 Vice Chairperson Mony Var, second by Commissioner
17 Joanie Bernes. How's that, just to lead the way, and
18 the clerk will call the roll.

19 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

20 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

21 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

22 Mr. Elliott: Present.

23 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

24 Mr. Marr: Yes.

1 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

2 Mr. Shea: Yes.

3 Mr. Wallace: Vice Chairman Var.

4 Mr. Var: Yes.

5 Mr. Wallace: That's four yeas, one present.

6 Mr. Shea: All right.

7 Next item is Item 6.1.2, motion to
8 appointment a Lowell Housing Authority Board member
9 to the revitalization effort towards new urbanism
10 board of directors for a three-year term, expiring
11 March 2, 2025. With that being the case, I now ask
12 the Director to explain that.

13 Mr. Wallace: So the bylaws and the renewal
14 commission call for one board member to be appointed
15 from the Board of Commissioners. And they're for
16 three-year terms. Matt Marr is the present
17 representative on the Board of Commissioners on the
18 renew board. His term expires in March. So we're
19 bringing it forward with this board to send one of
20 their members to the renew board to represent.

21 Mr. Shea: Okay. With that being the case,
22 any question on this motion?

23 Mr. Elliott: I move to appoint Matt Marr.

24 Mr. Shea: There's a motion by Commissioner

1 Elliott, seconded by Vice Chairperson Mony Var to
2 appoint our labor representative on the Board of
3 Commissioners of the Lowell Housing Authority
4 Mr. Matt Marr to this board for a three-year term
5 expiring March 2nd, 2025. Any question? Seeing no
6 questions, the clerk will call the roll.

7 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

8 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

9 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

10 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

11 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

12 Mr. Marr: Yes.

13 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

14 Mr. Shea: Yes.

15 Mr. Wallace: Vice Chairman Var.

16 Mr. Var: Yes.

17 Mr. Wallace: Five yeas.

18 Mr. Shea: Thank you. Item Number 7, old
19 business. Do we have any old business, Mr. Director?

20 Mr. Wallace: No.

21 Mr. Shea: Next item is Item Number 8, new
22 business. New business under A, 8.1.1 is a motion to
23 request personal sub-subcommittee meet with the
24 Executive Director, union rep, director of

1 maintenance, property managers regarding maintenance
2 of buildings. Is that motion filed by a
3 commissioner?

4 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

5 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

6 Mr. Wallace: All three motions were filed
7 by Commissioner Elliott.

8 Mr. Shea: Okay. With that being the
9 case -- it's a motion. Do I hear a second? I see
10 Vice Chairperson Mony Var seconds the motion.

11 Commissioner Elliott.

12 Mr. Elliott: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
13 motion speaks for itself. In the meeting over the
14 course of the last month, you know, folks of various
15 union representatives and property managers and sort
16 of the central theme was the centralization of
17 maintenance of staff and/or workforce. And I think
18 we need to have a discussion about how these work
19 orders are being followed up. The property managers
20 get them and then distribute them to the maintenance
21 staff. But after that what's -- you know, where do
22 you close the loop? How is it followed up from the
23 workforce? It's done in some cases and it's my
24 understanding some are not.

1 So I thought I'd file this motion and have a
2 discussion. I know that there's been some change
3 throughout the years where there was a manager --
4 maintenance supervisor and then another model was
5 adopted so there was not. So I filed this motion to
6 have a discussion.

7 I know the Chair has had conversations as
8 well, unbeknownst to me, prior to filing this motion
9 relative to this. So that's the motion, Mr. Chair.
10 Just have a discussion on what is suitable, how can
11 we be most efficient, how can we be sure that work
12 orders are being completed when they're out there.

13 It seems like an awful lot of property
14 managers to do all of the responsibilities and ensure
15 that there's follow up following -- whether it's, I
16 don't know, a complaint or work order for a spilled
17 coffee in the hallway and it getting cleaned up and
18 it is not. So things of that nature. Should there
19 be a supervisor? I mean, I personally think there is
20 in my organization, as an organizational structure,
21 but I don't have all the answers. And I don't know
22 what is best, but it seems that it's important to
23 have a discussion and come up with a solution where
24 it's most efficient with the property managers and

1 maintenance staff, as well as the residents. So
2 that's the motion, Mr. Chair.

3 Mr. Shea: The motion before us is to be
4 heard from the personnel subcommittee. I would like
5 to indicate that the subcommittee -- basically
6 Commissioner McMahon was the chairperson. As you
7 know, the subcommittee's to be appointed by the
8 Chairman at the April 13th meeting. At that time we
9 will note who the chairperson of the personnel
10 subcommittee will be, as well as the other member.
11 We have two member subcommittees. And because we
12 have a three member subcommittee, it would be in
13 violation of the open meeting law and bid for it,
14 that's why we have two members.

15 This motion will be referred -- at the
16 request of Commissioner Elliott it will be referred
17 to the personnel subcommittee. And that subcommittee
18 will be identified -- the members will be identified
19 at the April 13th meeting.

20 So with that being the case, any other
21 questions by any commissioner?

22 Hearing none, I have a motion by
23 Commissioner Matt Marr, seconded by Commissioner
24 Joanie Bernes to accept the 8.1.1 under the provision

1 that I just indicated, that the committee or
2 personnel subcommittee to be named next month.

3 With that being the case, the clerk will
4 call the roll.

5 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

6 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

7 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

8 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

9 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

10 Mr. Marr: Yes.

11 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

12 Mr. Shea: Yes.

13 Mr. Wallace: Vice Chairman Var.

14 Mr. Var: Yes.

15 Mr. Wallace: That five years.

16 Mr. Shea: The next item is Item Number
17 8.1.2, the motion to request the Executive Director
18 to provide a report on the status and plans for the
19 final phase of the Rivers Edge development. And that
20 item is before us, I have a feeling that that motion,
21 I think under the impression that Mr. Commissioner
22 Elliott understands more today about that situation
23 than he did when he filed the motion. Back on
24 May 10th, May 10th this committee voted unanimously

1 with reference to Rivers Edge to the executive
2 committee. Since May 10th the executive committee
3 has been waiting for the plans by Rivers Edge on the
4 development. With that being the case, I don't mind
5 sending this to the Director in order that he give us
6 a report recommendation. I do think that we remain
7 silent on that issue. And if you look at the minutes
8 of the meeting dated May 10th you'll see that the
9 committee voted unanimously to postpone meeting
10 publicly action-wise on Rivers Edge because of the
11 potential -- at that time we felt the potential of
12 future litigation and we should not be part of
13 something that, you know, or part of. So I think
14 that that's -- that's about as far as I want to go on
15 the record. But I do I understand Commissioner
16 Elliott's concern about that subject matter. But I'm
17 sure he didn't realize when he filed this motion that
18 we already indicated that we're not going to talk
19 publicly about Rivers Edge until they come back to
20 us. And incidentally, I don't mind sharing, I wasn't
21 -- I don't mind sharing with the Board that -- just
22 to give you some more information about what has been
23 going on in the past, I don't mind sharing with the
24 Board that we had a meeting set up.

1 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chair, the motion, has it
2 been seconded on my motion?

3 Mr. Shea: Yes. I'm trying to speak on your
4 motion, but in answer to your question, I think there
5 should be a motion to refer this to the Director for
6 a report of recommendation. However, I'm going to
7 ask Attorney Murphy to make answer to the question as
8 to whether we can even discuss this.

9 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chair.

10 Mr. Shea: Yes.

11 Mr. Elliott: A motion has been made and I'm
12 looking for a second and then I would like to speak
13 on it.

14 Mr. Shea: Say that again.

15 Mr. Elliott: I filed the motion -- pardon
16 me, a public agenda has been posted. I made a motion
17 and I need a second to proceed.

18 Mr. Shea: Well with that being the case,
19 then I'll vote against the motion. It doesn't make
20 any sense to have a discussion on a motion that you
21 already discussed to be under water.

22 Mr. Elliott: Okay. A motion has to be
23 made, Mr. Chair, we second and discuss it and dispose
24 of it after.

1 Mr. Shea: Well --

2 Mr. Elliott: And I understand the point
3 that has been made, however, I will be cognizant of
4 this, I want to make a motion.

5 Mr. Shea: Well first of all, I only can
6 tell you the motion is only seconded if it's going to
7 be seconded for discussion only. The bottom line is
8 certainly this. I tried to put on the record as to
9 what the short brief history of the situation was
10 dating back to May 10th. And therefore, that's
11 basically it. And, you know, I do think if there's
12 any discussion we should go into executive session to
13 discuss it because of the potential for future legal
14 litigation pertaining to this matter. And my
15 interest is only one thing, it's to protect the
16 integrity of the Housing Authority for being --
17 because some people thought that we were involved
18 with respect to the development out there. We're
19 involved very limited. Very, very limited extent.
20 And I think you know -- maybe you don't, but I'm sure
21 you do. So with that being the case, why -- how can
22 we talk about something that we already voted we're
23 not going to talk about? So if someone -- if
24 Commissioner Mony Var were to second your motion for

1 the purpose of discussion, you want to have a vote on
2 the motion, that's fine with me. But I can tell you
3 one thing, it does not serve the best interest of the
4 Housing Authority or the Board of Commissioners to
5 have this discussion. Because, once again, some
6 people just don't get it straight. We have nothing
7 to do with it. The whole thing. The development was
8 done by a private corporation. We only -- only
9 oversight that we have is to approve the plan that
10 they want to build. And so far we haven't approved
11 that plan for a variety of reasons. So therefore, if
12 you want to insist on having a motion, we'll have a
13 motion. I just want everybody to know that the
14 Chairperson expects to vote no on the motion because
15 it does not serve the best interest of the Board of
16 Commissioners or the Lowell Housing Authority. And
17 that's what we should be interested about.

18 So with that being the case, we have a
19 motion that was made. I look forward for anybody
20 voting yes for the motion or voting with me, no.
21 But that --

22 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chair.

23 Mr. Shea: Please call the roll.

24 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chairman.

1 Mr. Shea: Yes.

2 Mr. Elliott: The motion was made, it was
3 seconded and I want to speak on the motion before
4 it's voted on. Thank you.

5 Mr. Shea: Okay.

6 Mr. Elliott: And I concur, I understand
7 that the Lowell Housing Authority plays a role. And
8 I understand now that there's a motion to be made as
9 a result of previous votes, that's understood.
10 However, I did bring this up months ago as a member
11 of the Lowell City Council. I think that's one of
12 the most, in my opinion -- I was a member of the city
13 council when this came before the council for a vote
14 to file a petition and voted for it. It was very
15 controversial. We had many, many opinions, including
16 the archdiocese of Boston. With that being said, it
17 was adopted and there has been certainly some
18 challenges, and the latest challenge does raise some
19 concern. So that's why -- I don't know the status of
20 it, Mr. Chair, or members of the Housing Authority,
21 and that's why I simply filed a motion.

22 So we're never going to jeopardize the
23 Housing Authority, or quite frankly enable the
24 legislation, that's the Housing Authority, that's the

1 Lowell City Council, the Department of Housing and
2 Development on any substantial changes to reflect
3 changes.

4 So I appreciate your sentiment. I agree, I
5 don't want to expose the Housing Authority or the
6 City, but it's also imperative at a time when
7 affordable housing is -- that we finish this phase.
8 I know I'm preaching to the choir, that it needs to
9 be done. Affordable housing is at a premium these
10 days. It's a good project. Helps a lot of people
11 that are in need. That's the purpose of this.

12 So I think it makes sense that we go into
13 executive once the report is available so there is no
14 jeopardy. I think that makes all the sense in the
15 world. And I think a future motion, once that report
16 is made, that we go into executive session and have a
17 discussion of what is the plan, what is the timeline,
18 and what is going to be completed.

19 So we're on the same page, Mr. Chair. I
20 understand, but I just wanted to explain that's the
21 motion I made, and to get a report. An update. And
22 at some point in time -- and I'd even be willing to
23 amend my motion to say once that report is done, that
24 we go to executive session and have a discussion on

1 how this final phase can be complete, what is the
2 plan with which we have to approve, counsel has to
3 approve, the ACD has to approve funding. And that's
4 -- that's the motion.

5 So thank you and yeah, that's the reason why
6 I filed the motion.

7 Mr. Shea: Thank you, Commissioner Elliott.
8 As I indicated, I'll be voting no. I ask the clerk
9 to call the roll.

10 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

11 Ms. Bernes: No.

12 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

13 Mr. Elliott: Point of clarification, do we
14 want a report or do we not want a report? According
15 to the Chair.

16 Mr. Shea: I thought it was very clear.

17 Mr. Elliott: Do we want a report? That's
18 what the motion requests.

19 Mr. Shea: If I can finish what I was
20 saying.

21 Mr. Elliott: Sure.

22 Mr. Shea: I like not to be interrupted.

23 As I was saying, I intend to vote no because
24 it's not in the best interest of the Lowell Housing

1 Authority to have a public discussion on this subject
2 matter. It's been in subcommittee, the executive
3 subcommittee since May 10th. It's up to Rivers Edge
4 to straighten out their problems with the developer.
5 And when they do, come back to us for our review of
6 the plan. And that's about all I want to say
7 publicly. And I think in the best interest of the
8 Lowell Housing Authority, the Commissioners, this
9 motion which I wanted to refer to the Director, which
10 apparently is not in the spirit of the rules, the
11 motion has been made and seconded. I intend to vote
12 no because I don't think this is a motion that's in
13 the best interest of the Housing Authority.

14 The clerk will call the roll.

15 Mr. Elliott: My clarification. This report
16 says exactly what you mentioned, Mr. Chair. It's
17 just asking for a report.

18 Mr. Shea: Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

19 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

20 Ms. Bernes: No.

21 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

22 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

23 Mr. Shea: Commissioner Marr.

24 Mr. Marr: No.

1 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

2 Mr. Shea: No.

3 Mr. Wallace: Vice Chairman Var.

4 Mr. Var: No.

5 Mr. Wallace: Four nays, one yea.

6 Mr. Shea: The next item is Item Number
7 8.1.3, motion to request the Executive Director
8 contact Lowell Telecommunications Corporation
9 regarding televising Board of Commissioners meetings
10 for residents. Do I hear a second?

11 Mr. Marr: Second.

12 Mr. Shea: Seconded by Commissioner Marr.

13 Mr. Elliott: Thank you. The motion, again,
14 speaks for itself. I think it makes sense that one
15 of the largest public agencies in this city, just
16 like many other organizations in the city, the
17 planning the board, regulatory boards, have public
18 access. Publicly televised meetings. And I think it
19 makes sense to do it in the interest of transparency,
20 in the interest of providing opportunities for the
21 residents to see this.

22 It's funny, I was in a couple of housing
23 complexes -- thank you, Mr. Chair. I've been in a
24 number of the properties and, as you mentioned in the

1 report, there are these new screens that provide
2 information to residents. I don't know if these
3 meetings can be streamed, it's something to look at,
4 in the community rooms. I thought it was a great
5 opportunity for the residents to see this meeting
6 without having to come down, particularly with COVID.

7 So I did speak with the executive director
8 of LTC, she's going to get back to me. She thought
9 it was a good idea. She's going to look at the
10 staffing as well as equipment. And I have to see if
11 it's possible.

12 So I hope it can happen, whether it's
13 recorded and rebroadcasted, I think that would be
14 good for the residents and the people in the city.

15 I have to say I received a lot of quality
16 feedback from folks just being able to watch this
17 meeting as well as other meetings, the regulatory
18 meetings, planning board, they're all available and
19 people do watch them.

20 That's the motion. Thank you.

21 Mr. Shea: The motion made, seconded by
22 Commissioner Marr. Any other questions on the
23 motion?

24 Mr. Marr: I'd like to speak on the motion.

1 I agree with Commissioner Elliott with the
2 transparency part. I think it may be good for our
3 image, especially with the Rivers Edge thing going
4 on, could be something good for us to show that
5 there's nothing to hide. Transparency is always
6 good. Especially if -- I do think there's a chance,
7 I know that there may be some out of control things
8 that could arise from it, but we don't have to keep
9 this on. This doesn't have to be a permanent thing.

10 Mr. Elliott: No. A pilot program and see
11 if it works.

12 Mr. Marr: If it works and there's positive
13 feedback with it, on every side, what's the harm? If
14 you have negative feedback coming in from someplace,
15 I mean, you can always 86 it. You know.

16 Mr. Shea: I have a question. Mr. Director,
17 give us a little back history when you attempted this
18 when Buddy Quinn was the chairman.

19 Mr. Wallace: So it was never attempted to
20 broadcast it live or televise.

21 Mr. Shea: Just give us a little bit of the
22 history.

23 Mr. Wallace: I would say talking 10,
24 12 years ago there was an effort from a commissioner

1 to get residents to come down to the meetings to
2 participate in the meetings. And I would say that at
3 that time people were making public comments about
4 issues that probably should have remained private.
5 And it did kind of implode. And so the Board had
6 decided to do away with that.

7 Mr. Shea: Did they start it?

8 Mr. Wallace: We never -- these were never
9 televised. These were just to get bodies to the
10 meetings to get more participation, more public
11 input, more public comments. The motion was well
12 intended, no doubt, but we did have some issues.

13 Mr. Shea: Well I notice the motion was
14 filed, I received it. Did you have a discussion with
15 Elliott -- Commissioner Elliott pertaining to this
16 motion?

17 Mr. Wallace: We did.

18 Mr. Shea: Could you tell the Board the
19 discussion?

20 Mr. Wallace: It was just a conversation in
21 regards to his motion, why he was doing it. And I'd
22 given him some feedback to some issues that had
23 happened. And I think at that time he felt as though
24 we shouldn't go forward with this.

1 Mr. Elliott: We had conversations, you're
2 -- exactly the motion. Yeah, I wanted to think about
3 it. And I thought about the city council meetings,
4 and we do have individuals that occasionally come
5 down and disrupt the meetings. But that's the
6 responsibility of the chair. Or in the case of the
7 city council, it's the responsibility of the mayor.

8 So it does happen from time to time, but
9 they're public meetings. These are people that
10 either live, pay rent, pay taxes here in the city and
11 I personally think that it's important to provide
12 transparency, broadcast of this meeting. So people
13 will want -- people don't want to -- you know, vote
14 for it, that's fine. I just think it's important.
15 We're in the day and age of modern technology. So
16 make a decision on whether we should or we shouldn't.
17 We had a conversation, explained the situation and I
18 thought about it. Maybe it's not, maybe it is. But
19 I do think it is.

20 Mr. Shea: Well the only reason I bring it
21 up is that I was told, and I want the record to
22 indicate I was told emphatically that you had a
23 discussion with the Director and you told the
24 Director that you wouldn't file this motion. And I

1 was told that you're not going -- you weren't going
2 to file the motion because the Director explained to
3 you the difficulties. And then two days later you
4 were down to file the motion.

5 So what I want you to tell us, Commissioner
6 Elliott, are you for this motion or are you against
7 it? Because you've been on both sides. Just tell us
8 what you think.

9 Mr. Elliott: Sure, Mr. Chair. I think
10 Mr. Marr made it out pretty good. There are some
11 positives. There are a lot more positives, in my
12 opinion, than there are negatives. There are some
13 drawbacks. Please don't -- can I just finish real
14 quick? Of course there is some drawbacks. Of course
15 I took that into consideration. And, again, the
16 request -- the Director said A, it can happen. There
17 are some advantages. You have to weigh the
18 advantages with the disadvantages.

19 But I do think in the interest of the public
20 that these meetings, that they be broadcasted. There
21 is a record of it, they'll be recorded and/or
22 rebroadcast. So I don't think we should get mined
23 down, you know, in this discussion. The motion is
24 made. This is how I feel. I think it's an important

1 step for the Housing Authority and I stand by the
2 motion.

3 Mr. Marr: This doesn't necessarily have to
4 be a live broadcast either. You can record it and --

5 Mr. Elliott: That's correct.

6 Mr. Marr: -- play it at a separate date.

7 Mr. Elliott: That's correct.

8 Mr. Marr: So if we do have a full on circus
9 when we review, go back and check the tape, I mean,
10 because it could happen, but, I mean, but it's a
11 public -- it is a public meeting, you know.

12 Mr. Elliott: Sure. Don't get me wrong, I
13 don't have all the answers. This is my second
14 meeting and I know there are individuals that are lot
15 more experienced with this. And if it doesn't work,
16 and as Commissioner Marr said, then fine. But I do
17 think it's important to send this message to the
18 public.

19 Mr. Shea: There's a motion before us to
20 approve the item for the Executive Director to report
21 a recommendation, I intend to vote no. And I think
22 it's in the best interest of the Housing Authority,
23 the Board of Commissioners that we continue to
24 operate the way that we've operated successfully for

1 the last two and a half years that I've been here.
2 And I don't want to turn this place into a circus.
3 And I'm afraid if you go down that road it'll be like
4 Tuesday night at the fights. And so I don't want to
5 participate in that type of foolery. I'm here to
6 represent the residents of the Authority. And I want
7 to do what's best for the residents of the Authority.
8 I don't want TV cameras in here because I want to --
9 I'm going to end there.

10 So with that being the case, there's a
11 motion before us, I'm voting no.

12 Mr. Elliott: Mr. Chairman, can I follow-up?

13 Mr. Shea: Go ahead. Please.

14 Mr. Elliott: Thank you. This isn't about
15 Tom Foley. There's nothing to do with that
16 whatsoever. Mr. Chair, can I finish? Mr. Chair, can
17 I finish? I didn't interrupt you.

18 Mr. Shea: Please talk into the mic so I can
19 understand what you're saying.

20 Mr. Elliott: Move the question. That's
21 fine. This is about -- as I testified, we have three
22 channels in the City of Lowell so the people of the
23 City of Lowell can see what their government is doing
24 in their meeting publicly. Unadulterated. So I

1 stand by it. I think it's important. We'll continue
2 doing business without letting the people -- make it
3 convenient for people, making it transparent for the
4 people so they can see for their own eyes and they
5 don't have to come down here, like every other
6 community, then that's fine. But that's the motion.
7 I think it's important. So we'll move to question.

8 Mr. Shea: Any other questions? As I
9 indicated, it's not in the best interest of the
10 Housing Authority. So please call the roll.

11 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

12 Ms. Bernes: No.

13 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

14 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

15 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

16 Mr. Marr: Yes.

17 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

18 Mr. Shea: No.

19 Mr. Wallace: Vice Chairman Var.

20 Mr. Var: Absent.

21 Mr. Wallace: Two yeas, two no, one present.

22 Mr. Shea: The motion fails to fly. With
23 that being the case, Item Number 8 (b) Executive
24 Director announcements.

1 Mr. Wallace: No announcements.

2 Mr. Shea: Item Number 9, motion to adjourn.

3 The motion is made by Vice Chairperson Mony Var,
4 seconded by Commissioner Matt Marr, motion to
5 adjourn. The next meeting will be April 13th, and
6 the clerk will call the roll.

7 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Bernes.

8 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

9 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Elliott.

10 Adjourn. Motion to adjourn.

11 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

12 Mr. Wallace: Commissioner Marr.

13 Mr. Marr: Yes.

14 Mr. Wallace: Chairman Shea.

15 Mr. Shea: Yes.

16 Mr. Wallace: And Vice Chairman Var.

17 Mr. Var: Yes.

18 Mr. Wallace: Five yeas.

19 (Whereupon the Board of Commission's meeting
20 adjourned at 6:16 p.m.)
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