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LOWELL HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2023

Mercier House
21 Salem Street
Lowell, Massachusetts

-- Transcribed by Jacqueline P. Travis, RPR, CSR --

1 Board of Commissioners:

2 Philip L. Shea, Chairman

3 Mony Var, Vice Chairman

4 Joanie L. Bernes, Commissioner

5 Matt Marr, Commissioner (absent)

6 Rodney Elliott, Commissioner

7

8 Lowell Housing Committee:

9 Tha Chhan, Executive Director

10 Sherry Giblin, Chief Financial Officer

11 Kevin J. Murphy, General Counsel

12

13 Presentations by:

14 Rita Brousseau, Chief Procurement Officer

15 Jonathan Goldfield, Capital Asset Manager

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 Mr. Shea: Well, thank you very much for
3 waiting. Mony got here late. He got here ten
4 minutes late, and I asked him why, he didn't give me
5 the answer and I decided the reason he got here ten
6 minutes last was because the stock market went up
7 540 points and he was home counting his investments.
8 So nice to see you, Commissioner.

9 But anyhow, thank you very much. The
10 meeting of -- I won't ask Rodney why he was late,
11 chances are he was at the State House doing some work
12 or something. But the bottom line is welcome to the
13 Board of Commissioners meeting here on Wednesday,
14 December 13th. And with that being the case, the
15 clerk will call the roll.

16 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

17 Mr. Shea: Present.

18 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

19 Mr. Var: Here.

20 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

21 Ms. Bernes: Here.

22 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

23 Commissioner Elliott.

24 Mr. Elliott: Here.

1 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas, one absent.

2 Mr. Shea: Thank you. Next item on the
3 agenda is Item Number 2. And, Mr. Clerk, do we have
4 anything under Item Number 2?

5 Mr. Chhan: We do not have resident
6 correspondence.

7 Mr. Shea: Next item is resident
8 organization. Do we have anything?

9 Mr. Chhan: We don't, Mr. Chairman.

10 Mr. Shea: Next item is Item Number 4, the
11 subcommittee report. Do we have any subcommittees
12 reporting?

13 Mr. Chhan: No, Mr. Chairman, we do not
14 have.

15 Mr. Shea: And of course the next item is
16 the item which is probably the most important item
17 that we have on the agenda, if we have any money in
18 the bank to pay our bills, is the finance and audit
19 report. Our chief financial officer, Mrs. Giblin,
20 will give us that report. Thank you.

21 Ms. Giblin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 The Authority's operating statements for the
23 period ended September 30th, 2023 were provided to
24 the Board for their review. Our year end financials

1 have been finalized and timely submissions were made
2 to both HUD and EOHLA. These statements are subject
3 to audit, however, we do not anticipate any material
4 adjustments.

5 Audit planning has commenced and fieldwork
6 is anticipated to begin in March 2024 with the final
7 submission to HUD by June 30th, 2024.

8 I would like to take this opportunity to
9 provide the Board with a brief summary of operating
10 results for major programs for the fiscal year. As
11 anticipated, operating gains across our federal AMPs
12 has decreased by 138,000 before depreciation in the
13 month of September. Full accrual for operating
14 expenses and GASB 75 OPEB expense were main drivers
15 of the reduction. Our four federal AMPs close the
16 year with a total operating gain of 2.3 million
17 before depreciation. Net loss after depreciation is
18 683,000.

19 Our HUD new construction substantial
20 rehabilitation program Concord River Mill closed the
21 year with an operating gain of 164,000 before
22 depreciation. Net gain after depreciation is
23 157,000. This program exceeded budget expectations
24 for the fiscal year.

1 The state consolidated program closed the
2 year with an operating loss of 184,000 before
3 depreciation. Net loss after depreciation is
4 345,000. This program ended the fiscal year below
5 budgeted estimates. High vacancy rates, increasing
6 tenant accounts receivable, and pest infestations
7 requiring tenant relocation were main contributors to
8 the operating loss.

9 Our central office program closed the year
10 with an operating gain of 150,000 before
11 depreciation. Net gain after depreciation is
12 124,000. This program exceeded budgeted expectations
13 for the fiscal year.

14 And finally, the Section 8 program closed
15 the year with an operating gain of 170,000 before
16 depreciation. Net gain after depreciation is 91,000.
17 This program exceeded budgeted expectations for the
18 fiscal year.

19 I will provide the Board with a copy of the
20 audited financial statements and an update of any
21 significant adjustments or findings as soon as they
22 are made available.

23 And one more update for the Board, our HUD calendar
24 year '24 operating subsidy calculations were

1 submitted to HUD in November. At the time of
2 submittal HUD did not make available our rate
3 reduction incentive approvals, but instructed all
4 PHAs to submit without these amounts.

5 These rate reduction incentives are
6 significant and total over \$700,000 for the agency.
7 Just this week HUD approved the submittal and
8 adjusted for the rate reduction incentives. I will
9 provide the Board with the detailed calculations and
10 a summary report of our calendar year '24 operating
11 subsidy eligibility in January.

12 At this time I open it up to any questions.

13 Mr. Shea: Thank you very much. Any
14 question by any member of the Board of Commissioners
15 pertaining to this report? Seeing none, I just have
16 one question for the record. Could you just explain
17 to us a little bit better on page 2, your \$150,000
18 surplus in the central account.

19 Ms. Giblin: Yeah, so that's our central
20 office account. That's basically the management side
21 of the Housing Authority. So the 150,000 was mainly
22 because we had put aside for budgeted purposes some
23 legal expenses that didn't come to fruition in the
24 fiscal year. So that was the main driver of that

1 gain for fiscal year '23.

2 Mr. Shea: So that money sits -- that's
3 basically cash.

4 Ms. Giblin: It goes back into the reserves,
5 correct.

6 Mr. Shea: Okay. I just wanted to get that
7 on the record. That was all. Sorry, I think you
8 already gave me that answer to the question earlier.

9 Ms. Giblin: That's okay.

10 Mr. Shea: But thank you. Any other
11 question to -- seeing none, there's a motion by
12 Commissioner Rodney Elliott, seconded by Vice
13 Chairperson Mony Var to accept the report, and the
14 clerk will call the roll.

15 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

16 Mr. Shea: Yes.

17 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

18 Mr. Var: Yes.

19 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

20 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

21 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

22 Commissioner Elliott.

23 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

24 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas. One absent.

1 Mr. Shea: Next item on the agenda is Item
2 Number 6, the report of the chair. There may be a
3 couple of things I'll talk about later on, however,
4 at this time I think it's an appropriate time to
5 recognize one of our newer employees that just joined
6 us as a property manager, and I believe she's here
7 sitting in back of Sherry, so I really can't see her.
8 But nonetheless I just want the record and us to --
9 let me introduce to you Ashley. We welcome you,
10 Ashley, and thank you for joining us. And everyone
11 is very pleased with the fact that you did join us.
12 So welcome, and we just wanted the record to indicate
13 that, that you're here live and well with a smile on
14 your face. Thank you very much.

15 Mr. Elliott: Do you have a speech for us?
16 I'm just kidding.

17 Mr. Shea: Anyhow, thank you for that
18 information.

19 So Item Number 6, which we'll just skip over
20 it. Let's go to Item Number 7, the report of the
21 Executive Director. And this pertains to the
22 vaccination clinic for the housing residents and the
23 staff. And with that being the case, I'll just let
24 the Executive Director take it from here.

1 Mr. Chhan: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I just
2 have a quick report.

3 The Lowell Housing Authority has been
4 working in collaboration with the Cataldo Ambulance
5 Services to host vaccination clinics over four days
6 period. This will provide our residents the
7 opportunity to have both the flu vaccination and also
8 COVID vaccination. And the clinic located at the
9 following location -- it's a different date, okay?
10 The first one is at South Common, it happened today.
11 The second clinic is at City View Tower. Archambault
12 Tower. It will be happening tomorrow. The third
13 clinic will be at Farm Norton. Well, Beverly High,
14 at 117 High Street, and Highland Parkway at 508
15 Chelmsford Street, and that would be on Monday
16 the 18th. The last one, which is the fourth day,
17 which is Tuesday the 19th, it's going to be happening
18 here at 21 Salem Street. That will provide this
19 service to the residents of North Common Village
20 here.

21 All the public housing residents has been
22 informed by either hand delivered flyer or text
23 messages, or by email or by phone calls. Some of
24 them with a phone call.

1 And I wanted to thank the director of
2 JobPlus, Katie Sadlier, who is right here. And we
3 also -- it's a team comprised of seven member, Andrea
4 Hall, resident service coordinator; Kiss Quick who is
5 the family -- state family self-sufficiency
6 coordinator; Kelsey Tauer, the federal family
7 self-sufficiency coordinator; Heather Barker, JobPlus
8 team; and Christina Ortiz. This would not have been
9 possible without these seven people. And to set this
10 up it requires teamwork. It required persistent
11 effort. It required a lot of coordination so -- it
12 took a lot of time too. I want to congratulate them
13 for the job well done.

14 Thank you. That's all I want to report.

15 Mr. Shea: Okay. I thank you for that
16 report, and I like the fact how you spread around the
17 thanks to people that made it possible. And with
18 that being the case, any questions to the director
19 pertaining to his report on Item Number 7? Hearing
20 none, there's a motion by Vice Chairperson Mony Var,
21 seconded by Commissioner Rodney Elliot to approve
22 Item Number 7, and the clerk will call the roll.

23 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

24 Mr. Shea: Yes.

1 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

2 Mr. Var: Yes.

3 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

4 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

5 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

6 Commissioner Elliott.

7 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

8 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas, one absent. Motion
9 carried.

10 Mr. Shea: Okay. Thank you. Next item on
11 the agenda is Item Number 8(a). It's a report, and
12 incidentally, for the record, I should have indicated
13 moments ago also present is our Lowell Housing
14 Authority general counsel, Attorney Kevin Murphy.
15 With that being the case, Item Number 8, let me
16 introduce to you our general counsel, Kevin Murphy,
17 who's going to give a report on the City of Lowell
18 planning report. It pertains to the Merrimack Street
19 corridor project which is -- everybody knows right in
20 our backyard. So with that being the case, the chair
21 will recognize for his remarks Attorney Murphy.
22 Thank you.

23 Mr. Murphy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
24 through -- to you and the fellow Board Commissioners,

1 on behalf of the Executive Director of the
2 administration I'd like to present to you an update
3 on the Merrimack corridor proposal and our meeting
4 with the City of Lowell planning and development
5 relative to the Merrimack corridor proposals.

6 First and foremost, we're talking about two sites.
7 The first site is this land which is adjacent to the
8 Mercier Center. And the second site that we're
9 talking about is that land that's across the street
10 from City View Towers. Our consultant TAG, and all I
11 can tell you is TAG stands for the three initials of
12 his children, not anything more formal than that, but
13 we have asked our consultant TAG to come up with some
14 preliminary proposals for what could be developed on
15 those parcels if we choose to go forward, which I
16 know everybody wants to do.

17 So I'd like to just give you some of the
18 proposals that they have presented for these parcels.
19 Let's start with parcel number 2, the land across
20 from City View Towers, because there's only really
21 one option that they're presenting.

22 Mr. Shea: That's the vacant lot.

23 Mr. Murphy: That's the vacant lot across
24 from City View Tower, correct. And basically what it

1 would be under the existing zoning is a six-story
2 building with commercial space on the first floor,
3 office space on the second floor, and 28 units of
4 residential housing on floors 3 to 6. And there
5 would be 20 parking spaces provided in this proposal.
6 So now let's go to the second parcel, and that's the
7 parcel that's adjacent here to the Mercier Center.
8 Yeah, out back, correct. There's essentially three
9 options that they have provided. And, again, we must
10 say this is preliminary.

11 The first option would be a six-story
12 building with commercial space on the first floor,
13 75 units of residential housing on floors 2 through
14 6, and 19 parking places provided.

15 The second option that they provided is a
16 six-story building with 60 parking spaces on floors 1
17 to 2, and 60 residential units on floors 3 to 6. And
18 the third option that they've provided is a four-
19 story building with 45 parking spaces on floors 1,
20 and 45 units on floors 2 to 4.

21 Now, we met with the City of Lowell division of
22 planning and development and we forwarded beforehand
23 the concepts, these four concepts that the consultant
24 has provided to us. And really the City of Lowell is

1 fully supportive of our endeavor to create affordable
2 housing. The real issue is that the City of Lowell
3 likes to have commercial space on the first floor.
4 That's what they promote all the time. The problem
5 is, and the argument that we made to the City of
6 Lowell planning and development is that we're not in
7 the business of commercial brokerage.

8 There's not one building in our portfolio
9 right now that has commercial space. And really for
10 the future, it's not in our portfolio to provide
11 commercial space for businesses. It's very
12 difficult. And even more than that is that the cost
13 to build commercial space, office space and parking
14 is cost prohibitive. And if we were to include
15 commercial space in these proposals, we may very well
16 not be able to proceed with this development because
17 the cost would be too prohibitive. The
18 administration, especially Sherry can explain how
19 that is impacted.

20 So I think one of the positive things that
21 came out of the meeting with the City of Lowell is
22 that they agreed with us, because they said you know,
23 you're right. You aren't in the business of
24 providing commercial space. And as long as you

1 provide something on the first floor, like a laundry
2 or a gym or something like that on the first floor,
3 we'd be satisfied and we would support something like
4 that. So I think that was a positive aspect of that
5 meeting, is that they agreed with us also.

6 And the most important thing is that if we
7 eliminated commercial space from these options we
8 could probably build an additional 25 units of
9 affordable housing in the place of that commercial
10 space.

11 So, you know, we're in the business of
12 providing affordable housing. And it just makes
13 sense from the administration standpoint that we
14 provide affordable housing, not commercial space.
15 We're not going to get a CVS to locate on Salem
16 Street. We're not going to get a high-end Trader
17 Joe's or something like that. So from the
18 administration standpoint, and the City of Lowell
19 agrees with us, it makes far more sense to provide
20 affordable housing, rather than commercial space.

21 So what the administration is going to do is
22 we're going to meet with our consultant, and if the
23 Board is supportive of what we feel, is that we're
24 going to ask them to proceed with developing plans

1 that provide more affordable housing and no
2 commercial space. And also that they develop what's
3 known as a request for proposals, so that we can get
4 a developer to step in right now. Not us, but a
5 developer who knows all about providing affordable
6 housing tax credits, any other type of funding that
7 we can apply for to make this housing a reality.

8 We're talking about a Winn Development, a
9 Peabody Property, Common Ground, any other entities
10 that are experts in developing affordable housing.

11 So that's where we're at right now. I think
12 that we're still in the -- you know, we're still in
13 the preliminary stages about the developments and
14 they'll be more substantial plans submitted to you in
15 the future. But I think what we're looking for is
16 just an agreement from the Board at this point in
17 time, that we should be concentrating more on
18 affordable housing than commercial development. And
19 that we get a request for the proposal for developer
20 as soon as possible.

21 And if there are any questions, I'm
22 certainly willing to answer them. Any financial
23 questions relative to the increased cost relative to
24 commercial space, the administration is more than

1 willing and able to address that issue.

2 Mr. Shea: Does any member of the Board of
3 Commissioners have any questions for Attorney Murphy
4 or to Tha Chhan? We keep using -- would you explain
5 to us, we're going to do two buildings, total 109?
6 Is that basically --

7 Mr. Murphy: It's 103.

8 Mr. Shea: There will be a building here and
9 a building across the street, total 109 units.

10 Mr. Murphy: 103, I believe.

11 Mr. Shea: 103, whatever it may be. I don't
12 have my notes from when we met. But how do you
13 select the people that go -- that live there? How's
14 that selection process?

15 Mr. Chhan: In order to move this project
16 forward, first of all we have to identify the
17 population. The target population.

18 So based on the projected pro forma,
19 75 percent of the population that occupy in this unit
20 would be family or individual with income less than
21 50 percent of median income. And the reason is
22 because to fund this project we also need to propose
23 HUD to allow us to project base 60 units among 103
24 units there. And in order to qualify for that

1 project base, family must have an income less than --
2 between 50 percent or less then 50 percent to
3 qualify. We might have 10 for tax credit, and the
4 income must be less than 60 percent of the median
5 income.

6 We also going to request to see if the -- if
7 we can get the veteran voucher from Bedford Hospital.
8 Those also fall under the project based component,
9 which is 50 percent of median income as well.

10 Those are the population that we targeting.
11 And if that's what the proposal is, I'm going to
12 speak to that.

13 Mr. Shea: I don't want to be rude, but let
14 me just break you up there because I know you could
15 talk forever on the subject matter, but you hit the
16 subject matter that I really wanted to get at, what
17 you just said ring a bell with me. You may remember
18 two years ago we went before the -- we went before
19 the veteran council.

20 Mr. Chhan: Yes.

21 Mr. Shea: And when we told those fellas how
22 the building was going to be coming, and Mr. Gaffney
23 and his staff would really appreciate the fact that
24 we appear there, I hate to you tell you it was 26

1 months ago. 27 months ago. And we suggested to them
2 at that time that we were going to try to get some
3 units for disabled veterans.

4 Mr. Chhan: Yes.

5 Mr. Shea: And I know that you and Mark took
6 a journey up to Bedford to talk to the VA up there a
7 few months ago, and now we're coming back to the
8 present. And so that's really what I was trying to
9 get at with respect to the selection process. You
10 know, if we could -- is there a way that we can just
11 keep that commitment that we made 27 months ago as we
12 build this? I mean, maybe it's not just a premature
13 question, but, you know, we did go down that road
14 that August and made a big splash about what we're
15 going to do to help veterans. And of course,
16 unfortunately, like the sun, that got faded away. So
17 but for now we're back on the subject matter and I
18 just kind of think that that's a big item. And the
19 fact you guys went down to talk to them, you kept
20 Alisen involved, she's shaking her head, I think
21 that's a -- that's a critical -- that's a very small,
22 but that's a critical component to what I hope is the
23 future. And of course, you know, it's still a couple
24 years down the road. But I just thought, for the

1 record, I just hope we don't lose site of the fact
2 that we made that commitment to the veteran's council
3 in Lowell. And of course, you know, and in the
4 future I just hope that the record will indicate that
5 this Board and the Commissioners continue to support
6 that idea.

7 So that's -- that's really the point I was
8 getting at. The rest is -- it's -- it's -- there's a
9 lot to it. So that's all I wanted to do, and I know
10 the effort that you made, that nobody knows about
11 because you, at times you're pretty modest about your
12 extra work, but I know that you had a very fruitful
13 meeting down in Bedford with respect to the veterans.

14 So I just wanted that to come on the record
15 because, you know, sometimes people have short
16 memories, and the record will indicate what some of
17 those units are going to -- we're going to try to
18 keep that commitment. Does that make any sense?

19 Mr. Chhan: Yes, it does. And just to --
20 just to clarify that, that in itself we -- that is
21 building to the projected pro forma. So 60 project
22 base from Lowell housing and 20 VA voucher built into
23 it. That's what we get for that, Attorney Murphy
24 just report. It's built into it already.

1 Mr. Shea: Yeah, okay. I didn't -- I just
2 wanted to get that thought process for the record
3 because, you know, as time goes on people -- what did
4 they say and all that?

5 Mr. Murphy: The veteran's housing is a
6 significant component of this project.

7 Mr. Shea: That's all. Other than that --
8 other than that, I mean, I think it's great that
9 we're starting to move this bus down the road. You
10 know, it's been a long winding road and luckily -- I
11 appreciate your effort. And Kevin, you're effort
12 too. Yes, sir.

13 Mr. Murphy: Can I ask one thing from the
14 Board, can you give us some type of indication, do
15 you agree with our -- do you agree with our theory
16 about eliminating the commercial space and providing
17 for affordable housing in future plans?

18 Mr. Shea: I can speak for myself, since I'm
19 the proponent of that, you know I agree with it.

20 Mr. Elliott: Why don't we make a motion
21 that we direct the administration and counsel to
22 proceed with an RFP that does not include a
23 commercial component to it. Knowing that there will
24 be still some space for, you know, day care,

1 laundromat or something. Is that what you're looking
2 for?

3 Mr. Murphy: Yes. Exactly.

4 Mr. Elliott: I make that in the form of a
5 motion, Mr. Chairman.

6 Mr. Shea: Would you state your motion for
7 the record, please.

8 Mr. Elliott: Yeah, motion is to direct the
9 administration and counsel for the Housing Authority
10 to proceed with the request for proposal -- you need
11 a RFP, right?

12 Mr. Murphy: Yeah, we're going out for one
13 -- we're developing one right now.

14 Mr. Elliott: To develop an RFP without
15 commercial space as part of that.

16 Mr. Shea: Okay. The motion made by
17 Commissioner Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Mony
18 Var. And with that being the question, let's have a
19 roll call on that particular motion, put that into
20 the record. The clerk will call the roll.

21 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

22 Mr. Shea: Yes.

23 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

24 Mr. Var: Yes.

1 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

2 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

3 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

4 Commissioner Elliott.

5 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

6 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas. One absent. Motion
7 carried.

8 Mr. Murphy: Thank you very much.

9 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

10 So now there's a motion to accept the report of
11 Attorney Murphy to the Board of Commissioners, and
12 Commissioner Joanie Bernes makes that motion,
13 seconded by Commissioner Mony Var to accept the
14 remarks of Attorney Murphy pertaining to Item
15 Number 8(a), and the clerk will call the roll.

16 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

17 Mr. Shea: Yes.

18 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

19 Mr. Var: Yes.

20 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

21 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

22 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

23 Commissioner Elliott.

24 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

1 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas. One Absent. Motion
2 carried.

3 Mr. Shea: Thank you, Kevin.

4 Okay, now we're on to 8.1.1, motion to
5 approve the application submission of an increase to
6 the state resident coordinator grant funding. And
7 with that being the case, do you want to speak on
8 that? Thank you.

9 Ms. Giblin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The
10 motion that's before you is to increase the funding
11 for our state resident service coordinator grant.
12 Currently the grant is funded at \$50,000 per year.
13 40,000 to be used for salaries and benefits, and
14 10,000 to be used for flex funds. EOHLIC has released
15 a NOFA, notification of funding availability, stating
16 that they will increase this funding by \$10,000. In
17 order for the Housing Authority to be eligible for
18 the funding we have to have Board approval, and we
19 have to have had a resident meeting, which did occur
20 on November 29th. So we just need the formal Board
21 approval to move forward with the increased funding
22 application to EOHLIC.

23 Mr. Shea: Okay. Thank you for your report.
24 I see it right in front of us. And with that being

1 the case, I just assume that the Director goes for
2 this, and I assume that Alisen understands and goes
3 for this. And with that being the case, the clerk
4 will call -- Commissioner Mony Var, seconded by
5 Commissioner Rodney Elliot move to accept this report
6 under Item Number 8.1.1, and the clerk will call the
7 roll.

8 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

9 Mr. Shea: Yes.

10 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

11 Mr. Var: Yes.

12 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

13 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

14 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

15 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

16 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Elliott.

17 Four yeas. One absent. Motion carried.

18 Mr. Shea: Okay. Move that over here. Next
19 item on the agenda, Item Number 8.1.2. That motion
20 approves the change order replacement of existing
21 crawl space piping to Enterprise Equipment Company,
22 Weymouth, Massachusetts in the amount of \$27,138.65.
23 And with that being the case -- thank you. I --
24 could we have some comment on this request from

1 either Rita or Jonathan? Or even you, you can.

2 Ms. Brousseau: Good evening. My
3 understanding of this change order is for the
4 underground piping at AMP 1 on Adam Street. I
5 believe in order to avoid the interruption of water
6 supply to all of the buildings that are connected by
7 one pipe, they have to install a stoppage so that
8 they can continue to work to replace the piping.

9 Mr. Shea: Rita, who is the oversight person
10 on this job?

11 Ms. Brousseau: I believe Laura Watts.

12 Mr. Shea: Who?

13 Ms. Brousseau: Laura watts.

14 Mr. Shea: Laura, yes. Okay. Okay.

15 Well -- okay, thank you, I'm not going to say any
16 more. Well, with -- okay, well then you analyzed the
17 bill and it's doing -- payable?

18 Ms. Brousseau: Yes, and I believe the
19 engineers did a study to make sure that we weren't
20 being overcharged in the final pricing.

21 Mr. Shea: I just saw -- okay. With that
22 being the case I'm going to just -- I don't know how
23 to bang a nail into a piece of wood so I'm not going
24 to get into a discussion.

1 Any questions by any member of the Board of
2 Commissioners? Seeing none, Commissioner Rodney
3 Elliott moves, seconded by Commissioner Joanie Bernes
4 to accept Item 8.1.2, and the clerk will call the
5 roll.

6 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

7 Mr. Shea: Yes.

8 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

9 Mr. Var: Yes.

10 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

11 Commissioner Marr.

12 Commissioner Elliott.

13 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

14 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas. One absent.

15 Mr. Shea: Okay. Next item on the agenda
16 Item Number 8.1.3, motion to approve the 43 Summer
17 Street elevator project closeout, Enterprise
18 Equipment Company of Weymouth, Mass, in the amount of
19 \$39,876.24. And we have with us tonight our director
20 of capital asset management, Jonathan Goldfield, who
21 will give us an explanation of what's before us. We
22 welcome Jonathan.

23 Mr. Goldfield: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 Right, so when we close out a project we bring it to

1 the Board to let them know the project is completed.
2 And we don't release the final retainage, which is
3 what the bill represents of \$39,000 is. We hold five
4 percent on every invoice that we pay, in case there's
5 something at the end that needs to be taken care of
6 that wasn't covered or otherwise. In this case we've
7 taken care of everything. There's a couple of small
8 things that still need to be buttoned up. One is a
9 little bit of signage, and then some padding to hang
10 on the elevator walls to protect them. And those
11 were actually delivered today, and I approved the
12 samples that they brought today as well for the
13 final, but I won't release the check until everything
14 is finally installed. It's really de minimus at this
15 point. So rather than delay the closeout a month,
16 we're going to do it now because it is for all
17 intents and purposes complete.

18 Mr. Shea: Any question to Mr. Goldfield
19 pertaining to this? If not, I just have one question
20 for the record, please, Jonathan. Would you just
21 explain to us on -- in your description of the items
22 pertaining to the 637,000, just explain to us what
23 the training expense of 292,000, what is that about?

24 Mr. Goldfield: I'm sorry, what is what?

1 Mr. Shea: The training expense.

2 Mr. Goldfield: Training?

3 Mr. Shea: In the itemization of the
4 expenditures --

5 Mr. Goldfield: Oh, okay. So we have a box
6 of materials, as far as maintenance and cleaning and
7 how to clean the floor and clean the stainless steel,
8 and that has to take place as well. So the box was
9 delivered to me. And it's just a portion of the
10 schedule of values. It isn't really dollar for
11 dollar. I think what they do is they mass a number
12 of things in the training piece. This is \$2,000.
13 Right? So that includes showing our maintenance
14 staff the proper chemicals to use to clean the floor
15 and the stainless steel walls. And today was in fact
16 showing our guys how to hang the padding on the walls
17 of the elevator as well.

18 Mr. Shea: Well, you know, I don't know the
19 answer, other than if I did I wouldn't ask this, but
20 it just seems to me that to spend \$630,000 and you
21 got to spend a third of it, almost a half of it on
22 training --

23 Mr. Goldfield: No, it's 2,000. I don't
24 know what you're -- might not line up properly.

1 Mr. Shea: Thank you. My mistake.

2 Mr. Goldfield: No worries. They are hard
3 to read, that's why we have additional pages. The
4 forms are very hard to read.

5 Mr. Shea: Thank you.

6 Mr. Goldfield: You're welcome.

7 Mr. Shea: I'm glad you came up to clarify.
8 I'm saying to myself, that's a lot of money.

9 Mr. Goldfield: You really caught me by
10 surprise there. I'm like wait a minute.

11 Mr. Shea: I said they must be sending these
12 guys to Harvard or something.

13 Mr. Goldfield: Yeah, right. Speaking of
14 that, where is Dennis? We can ask him about that.
15 Are we all set?

16 Mr. Shea: I was saying we're paying them
17 more for training than we are the elevator.

18 Mr. Goldfield: Right, right, right.

19 Mr. Shea: Well, okay. Thank you very much.
20 Motion by Commissioner Mony Var, seconded by
21 Commissioner Joanie Bernes to accept the report given
22 to us pertaining to Item Number 8.1.3. The clerk
23 will call the roll.

24 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

1 Mr. Shea: Yes.

2 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

3 Mr. Var: Yes.

4 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

5 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

6 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

7 Commissioner Elliott.

8 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

9 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas.

10 Mr. Shea: Thank you. Next time on the
11 agenda is 8.1.4, a motion to approve Hale Street
12 electrical upgrade closeout to Ostrow Electrical
13 Company, final payment in the amount of \$3,810. And
14 we have information in front of us, and of course
15 coming to just give us a brief explanation is
16 Jonathan Goldfield again. Thank you.

17 Mr. Goldfield: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
18 Again, we finally closed out a project, we bring it
19 to you folks so you know that the project is finally
20 completed. We bring them, you know, to you when we
21 bid them if they're over a certain threshold. This
22 one was originally a small value contract we thought
23 we'd get done very quickly, but it wasn't done very
24 quickly. But we ultimately got it done and it's

1 complete and approved. And this is just closeout
2 documentation for your information. The final
3 payment of \$3,810 is basically the retainage that
4 we're holding.

5 Mr. Shea: Thank you, Jonathan. I just have
6 a question, a general question with respect to
7 elevators. As you know every year we spend an
8 enormous amount of money on elevators. We had a
9 program, did we not, that had identified what
10 elevators were going to be replaced. I see the chief
11 financial officer saying yes. Can you tell me, is
12 that program still going or did we take money from
13 that account and switch it?

14 Ms. Giblin: No, there's still an ongoing
15 effort to -- every year in our capital fund we
16 include at least one elevator. So we're still going
17 down that road replacing elevators in the order of
18 priority that were presented in that study.

19 Mr. Shea: I mean every year one or two
20 comes -- breaks, like in the middle of the night,
21 particularly up at Gorham Street I believe.

22 Mr. Goldfield: They're all -- all of the
23 elevators at South Common Village are being replaced.
24 As Sherry said, we've only been able to do one at a

1 time. We are actually going to be doing two at a
2 time that's in design right now, 145 and 183 Gorham,
3 a new design right now, they're both going to be done
4 at the same time.

5 Mr. Shea: You know, it's one thing if an
6 elevator breaks over at Bishop Markham that was built
7 in 1955. But it's another thing -- our most recent
8 elevator breaking was up there in -- up there in
9 Broadway Street, and that was built in 1978. It's
10 just like -- you just don't know when it's going to
11 happen.

12 Mr. Goldfield: They're components and
13 they're electronic. Usually when something like that
14 goes, I don't know whether it specifically happened
15 at High Street, but usually it's a controller or some
16 circuitry. Sure, the ropes have to be replaced and
17 things like that. But it's why we have a
18 preventative maintenance program, you try to stay in
19 front of it. But with the electronic stuff
20 especially, it's hard to predict. Ropes and pulleys
21 and things like that, they can usually tell.

22 Mr. Shea: Thank you very much for your
23 comments. Any question to Jonathan? Rodney? And
24 anybody? All set. Thank you.

1 Commissioner Rodney Elliott makes the motion
2 to accept, seconded by Commissioner Joanie Bernes to
3 accept Item 8.1.4, and the clerk will call the roll.

4 Mr. Chhan: Chairman Shea.

5 Mr. Shea: Yes.

6 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

7 Mr. Var: Yes.

8 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

9 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

10 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

11 Commissioner Elliott.

12 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

13 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas, one absent.

14 Mr. Shea: Item Number 9, old business. Any
15 old business, Mr. Clerk?

16 Mr. Chhan: There's no old business, Mr.
17 Chairman.

18 Mr. Shea: Item Number 10 is new business.
19 Any motion by members of the Board of Commissioners?

20 Mr. Chhan: No, Mr. Chairman.

21 Mr. Shea: That's 10(a).

22 Item Number 10(b) is the Executive Director
23 announcements. Do you have any announcements to
24 make?

1 Mr. Chhan: The only announcement I have,
2 we're going to have a holiday party on the 15th, this
3 coming Friday, at 11:30. We start at 11:30, for all
4 the employee and also the Commissioners. Hope to see
5 you there.

6 Mr. Shea: Other than that, I just want to
7 make a comment, because we're about to file a motion
8 to go into executive session to hear from our general
9 counsel, but I just wanted to indicate that the next
10 meeting of the Board of -- after we go into executive
11 session we're going to adjourn then. So for the --
12 so for the public to know, the next meeting that we
13 have is on -- I think it's January 10th. 10th. I'm
14 looking at --

15 Ms. Giblin: January 10th, yes.

16 Mr. Shea: Okay. Thank you. That's the
17 next meeting of the Lowell Housing Authority. And we
18 close out this year with this meeting; however, as I
19 indicated, we're going to go into executive session.
20 At the conclusion of that, that will adjourn the
21 meeting of the day. But the -- it's January 10th at
22 5 o'clock at the Mercier Center will be our next
23 meeting.

24 Other than that, I think all the members of

1 the Board just want to wish the Lowell Housing
2 Authority family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New
3 Year, and we certainly hope that everyone can stop by
4 the Christmas party. It's the first Christmas party
5 that we've had in my five years being here, and it
6 looks like the participation is going to be pretty
7 good. I'm delighted to see that. And so with that
8 -- it's amazing how quickly time goes by, Kevin. And
9 I look at you and Rodney and boy, we blink our eyes
10 and where did it all go? But the year 2022 -- '23
11 comes to an end.

12 So with that being the case, I will ask
13 everyone to -- oh, do we need a motion to go into
14 executive session?

15 Mr. Murphy: Yes, we need Commissioner Var
16 moves.

17 Mr. Shea: Right. Commissioner Mony Var
18 moves to go into executive session, seconded by --

19 Mr. Murphy: Move to go into executive
20 session, the purpose of which is to discuss strategy
21 with respect to litigation.

22 Mr. Shea: Strategy.

23 Mr. Murphy: Yes.

24 Mr. Shea: Okay. So Mony seconds that and

1 Rodney is -- Mony made the motion and Rodney has
2 second it.

3 Mr. Murphy: And we will adjourn from
4 executive session.

5 Mr. Shea: Do we need a roll call on that?

6 Mr. Murphy: You need a roll call.

7 Mr. Shea: Thank you. The clerk will call
8 the roll, please.

9 Mr. Chhan: Mr. Chairman.

10 Mr. Shea: Yes.

11 Mr. Chhan: Vice Chair Mony Var.

12 Mr. Var: Yes.

13 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Bernes.

14 Ms. Bernes: Yes.

15 Mr. Chhan: Commissioner Marr.

16 Commissioner Elliott.

17 Mr. Elliott: Yes.

18 Mr. Chhan: Four yeas, one absent.

19 Mr. Shea: We'll just recess for about ten
20 minutes and we'll come back. Thank you.

21 (Meeting in recess.)

22

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24