

Medfield Housing Authority

Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025

Location: Medfield Housing Authority, Conference Room (Hybrid via Zoom)

Time: 6:02 PM

1. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Medfield Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairperson Kathy McDonald at 6:02 PM. The Chair confirmed that the meeting was properly noticed and convened in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

2. Roll Call

Present:

- Kathy McDonald, Chairperson
- Lisa Donovan, Commissioner
- Rob Canavan, Commissioner
- Stacey Yakel, Tenant Commissioner
- Paul Hinkley, Commissioner
- Candace Avery, Executive Director

A quorum was established.

3. Public Meeting Announcements

Chairperson McDonald began with the standard pre-meeting announcements outlining the requirements of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Members of the public were informed of their right to record or transmit the open session of the meeting provided they give prior notice to the Chair. Ms. McDonald acknowledged that resident Chris McCue Potts was recording the meeting and confirmed that the Housing Authority was maintaining an official audio record.

The Chair further reminded attendees that while members of the public may attend, they may not speak without recognition from the Chair. The Chair retains the right to maintain order and remove disruptive individuals if necessary. No public comments were offered at this time.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

Chairperson McDonald noted that the minutes from the June 10, 2025 meeting remain tabled. The Board then reviewed the minutes from the August 12, 2025 meeting. No revisions or edits were suggested.

Motion by Commissioner Lisa Donovan to approve the August 12, 2025 minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Rob Canavan. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Accounts Payable (August–September 2025)

Executive Director Avery presented the accounts payable report covering August through September 2025, totaling \$38,175.29. She clarified that the only check cut after the September 16th meeting was a \$100 reimbursement to Renee Johnson for patio chairs previously approved by the Board.

Chairperson McDonald inquired about a charge listed as “remove snowblower/install mower,” questioning its timing. Ms. Avery explained that the mower had been borrowed from the Ashland Housing Authority, which will reimburse Medfield for that service as it was necessary maintenance on Ashland equipment. The Board expressed appreciation for the collaboration between authorities.

Motion by Commissioner Paul Hinkley to approve the accounts payable totaling \$38,175.29. Seconded by Commissioner Stacey Yakel. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Executive Director’s Report (Presented by Candace Avery)

Ms. Avery reported that the Authority is now fully leased, with two recent vacancies filled within the 14-day DHCD turnaround guideline. One two-bedroom unit was filled by internal medical transfer; the subsequent vacancy was promptly leased from the CHAMP (Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Program) waiting list.

Maintenance and Operations: Ryan, the Maintenance Supervisor, has been performing exceptionally, overseeing unit turnovers, preventative maintenance, and capital projects. Notable work includes completion of the generator installation, door buzzer system, alarm testing, and replacement of expired batteries for emergency systems. Coordination with a new energy audit company is underway to complete lighting upgrades.

Resident Services: Resident Service Coordinator Missy from HESSCO continues to engage residents with the ‘Hearts to Home’ meal program, providing homemade-style meals as an alternative to Meals on Wheels. Attendance was modest due to seasonal illness and travel but feedback was positive. Missy also assists residents with CHAMP application uploads and holds weekly office hours Mondays from 8:30 AM–12:30 PM. The Board commended her initiative and support for residents’ service access.

Emergency Preparedness: Ms. Avery announced coordination with the Medfield Fire Department to finalize an emergency response policy and ensure accurate unit layouts and designated evacuation points. She referenced a valuable resource obtained at the Mass

NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) Annual Conference providing templates for emergency planning. Residents will be notified prior to upcoming fire drill exercises.

Additional Updates:

- PMR (Performance Management Review) anticipated in December 2025.
- Recognition planned for local resident “Bubble Gum Bob” Kenefick during Medfield Day.
- Tri-County Technical High School will tour the property to view student-led pavilion projects.
- Commendation issued to Tenant Commissioner Stacey Yakel and resident volunteers for neighbor support and care initiatives.
- Lisa Donovan welcomed back as a State-Appointed Commissioner; clarification noted regarding the Governor’s Office appointment timeline.

Motion by Commissioner Rob Canavan to accept the Executive Director’s Report with the noted language edit. Seconded by Commissioner Lisa Donovan. Motion passed unanimously.

7. FY2026 Budget Presentation (Rick, Accountant)

Accountant Rick presented the FY2026 operating budget, explaining that DHCD’s allowable operating cost increase for the fiscal year was 5%. He emphasized the benefits of early submission to expedite state approval. The budget includes an augmentation request to raise reserves to the DHCD-recommended 35% threshold, following a prior-year denial.

Rick detailed that Medfield’s reserve dropped primarily due to pavilion project costs and an electrical upgrade during turnover. He projected approximately \$12,000 annual income from the new solar net metering program, which directly supplements the reserve. An additional \$10,000 in administrative funds from capital improvements is also expected from EOHLC (Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities).

He highlighted several financial points:

- Employee benefits increased due to revised County Retirement assessments (\$25,000, up from \$5,000).
- Maintenance labor includes a 3% wage increase.
- Inclusion of \$10,000 mower purchase and \$8,000 contingency for unforeseen turnover costs.
- Legal fee reimbursement increased from \$3,500 to \$4,000.
- Added \$600 allowance for tenant celebration and community engagement events.

The Board discussed recent legal expenses of approximately \$8,000 and reviewed reimbursement procedures under the regional legal service agreement. Commissioner McDonald emphasized the importance of timely invoicing to maintain accurate financial tracking. Rick confirmed that any reimbursements or adjustments would be properly reconciled at year-end. Candace Avery noted \$24,000 remains available in capital funding for pending reimbursements through CAPHub, delayed due to state processing timelines.

Motion by Commissioner Lisa Donovan to approve the FY2026 Budget as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Rob Canavan. Motion passed unanimously. All members signed the DHCD budget certification forms.

8. Comprehensive Permit Application

Attorney Kurt James presented the developer's 40B comprehensive permit amendment request, explaining that the amendment would formally exclude the proposed development parcel from the existing project permit, eliminating overlapping jurisdictional language.

Chairperson McDonald raised concern over the final clause authorizing the Executive Director to take 'such further actions as she may deem necessary,' citing the potential to delegate excessive authority without board oversight. Mr. James clarified the clause was boilerplate and could be removed without affecting the developer's process. The Board agreed to strike the final paragraph.

Motion by Commissioner Stacey Yakel to approve the Comprehensive Permit Application as amended, striking the final 'further voted' paragraph. Seconded by Commissioner Paul Hinkley. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Board Positions and Governance Discussion

Chairperson McDonald initiated a discussion on adherence to the Authority's 1968 bylaws, noting requirements for annual elections of officers including Chairperson, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. She emphasized the board's duty to conduct regular policy reviews, performance evaluations of the Executive Director, and oversight of contractual agreements.

Commissioner Lisa Donovan and Executive Director Avery noted that policy updates have been ongoing but acknowledged the extensive volume of documents requiring review. The Board agreed to continue updates and revisit the election schedule for officers in January 2026 to align with bylaw provisions.

The Chair recommended developing a formal performance review process for the Executive Director to ensure consistent feedback and compliance with governance best practices.

10. Public Participation / Comments

No public comments were offered during this meeting.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, Chairperson McDonald entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Commissioner Paul Hinkley to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Lisa Donovan. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM.

Submitted by:

Candace Avery, Executive Director / Recording Secretary

Approved by:

Medfield Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Date of Approval: 10/14/25

Materials Included in Board Packet:

Agenda

June 10th, 2025 and August 12th 2025 Minutes

Account Payable Report

Budget Materials

New Gate Comprehensive Permit Information

Medfield By-Laws

Management Agreements

Article information for resident Robert Kennefic

Chairwoman Lisa Donovan's State Appointment and Ethics Certification forms