

Manufactured Homes Commission
Minutes of Meeting Held On
October 19, 2021 at 10:30 am¹

CALL TO ORDER: 10:35 am

In Attendance: Sandy Overlock, Kathy Zorotheos, Tracy Sharkey, Ethan Mascoop, Dan Less from AGO, Chris Jee and Thomas Berry from DHCD.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for the April meeting were not processed in time to approve at this meeting, so those minutes will be approved at a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Dan Less has offered to take over as secretary for the commission. He will have a paralegal take notes at future meetings and the AGO will write up minutes based on those notes and the video recording. The paralegal is not available to attend this meeting, so the minutes for this meeting will be written based on the commissioners' notes and the video recording.

Motion to appoint Dan Less as secretary at 10:46am by: Tracy Sharkey

Seconded by: Kathy Zorotheos

Discussion: No further discussion

All in favor: Unanimous

Mr. Mascoop introduced Max Miller, one of the graduate students he is working with, to present an update on outreach to DPH and boards of health regarding vaccination in manufactured housing communities. They found that no boards of health were tracking COVID-19 infection or vaccination rates in MHCs. There was a range of vaccine outreach efforts with boards of health that were already familiar with the MHCs being more involved and having more coordinated programs with other agencies. Before meeting with DPH, they compiled a list of parks in municipalities with great than average MHC sites and lower than average vaccination rates. DPH responded with data on estimated vaccination rates based on street addresses within these parks. They then proceeded to look for contacts within these parks, but the councils on aging within the municipalities were largely uninvolved with or even unaware of MHCs. Sandy Overlock provided some contacts within the identified parks, which yielded three successful outreach attempts to help verify the information returned by DPH and gauge interest in booster clinics. The commissioners expressed concern at the lack of attention being paid to these communities by state and local health agencies. Mr. Mascoop raised the idea of forming a subcommittee in the commission that could act on these issues year-round and then report to the commission quarterly. Ms. Sharkey suggested that a paid state employee would be needed in lieu of a subcommittee to actually get work done. Mr. Jee suggested that the commission should draft recommendations to file with the state in the annual report as contemplated by the statute.

¹ The meeting was held remotely pursuant to An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-pursuant-to-the-act-extending-certain-covid-19-measures>). The public could participate remotely through video or telephone.

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Motion to establish a subcommittee to address needs of MHCs at 11:25am by: Ethan Mascoop

Seconded by: Tracy Sharkey

Discussion: No further discussion

All in favor: Unanimous

Mr. Mascoop suggests that the subcommittee would be a two-member subcommittee with an ex officio commissioner as an advisor. Mr. Jee offered to be a personal resource for the subcommittee to rely on if not an official ex officio advisor as he has not been formally designated by DHCD. Mr. Mascoop and Ms. Sharkey volunteered to serve of the subcommittee.

Motion to appoint Ethan Mascoop and Tracy Sharkey to the two-person subcommittee with

Chris Jee from DHCD and Dan Less from AGO as advisors at 11:34am by: Ethan Mascoop

Seconded by: Tracy Sharkey

Discussion: No further discussion

All in favor: Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS

The commission will meet January 18, 2022 at the Taunton Highway Department; April 19, 2022 at the Chicopee Library; July 19, 2022 at the Worcester Senior Center; and October 18, 2022 at the Plymouth Library.

The commissioners discussed how best to get the word out about upcoming meetings in order to boost attendance. Ms. Overlock suggested that putting an ad in a local paper could help, which Dan mentioned the AGO may be able to help fund.

Ms. Sharkey asked Mr. Less whether the AGO and DHCD when reviewing changes to park rules could compel owners to notify tenants about the commission and its meetings. Mr. Less responded that they cannot compels owners to provide such notice because it is not required by the statute.

The commission discussed the mobile home tax fee that MHC residents must pay to the towns and the fact that it seems that money is being spent elsewhere. Ms. Sharkey suggested that finding out how much money is going to individual boards of health from MHC taxes could be a good first step in getting the boards to take action with respect to MHCs. Mr. Less recommended that someone could issue a public records request to obtain records of those funds. Ms. Sharkey suggested starting with Peabody since they have been the most responsive to MHCs.

Ms. Overlock provided the commission with the update that Sandcastle in Attleboro is for sale. The rent regulation petition is with the statehouse, and it will be signed and sent back. The residents will not be able to afford to purchase the park, but they are working with Rep. Hawkins. Additionally, House Bill 1402 and Senate Bill 904 for alternative dispute resolution was heard last Tuesday. Mr. Mascoop suggested discussing the proposed changes to the commission in the bills at the next meeting.

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OPEN FORUM

Ava (*last name unintelligible*) asks whether members of the Manufactured Home Federation can assist with some of this work. Ms. Overlock responded that the Federation's board would have to discuss. Ava also suggested that getting a public interest story in the newspapers would be more effective than an ad in spreading word about the commission's work and when it meets.

MOTION TO ADJOURN at 12:16pm by: Tracy Sharkey

Seconded by: Ethan Mascoop

Discussion: None

All in favor: Unanimous