



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

AUDITOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

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SUZANNE M. BUMP, ESQ.  
AUDITOR

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March 1, 2011

2011-0736-3A

Thomas Turner, Chairman  
Newton Housing Authority  
82 Lincoln Street  
Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461

Dear Chairman Turner:

Enclosed is an audit report for your review. This audit of the Newton Housing Authority covers the audit period January 1, 2008 to January 28, 2011. This is one of a number of audits commenced and largely completed during the tenure of my predecessor, State Auditor A. Joseph DeNucci. Should you desire more information relative to this audit, please contact me.

I look forward to fostering a cooperative relationship between our respective offices. If my staff or I may be of assistance at any time, please do not hesitate to call upon us. I know we both share the goal of making government work better.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzanne M. Bump".

Suzanne M. Bump  
Auditor of the Commonwealth



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Thomas Turner, Chairperson  
Newton Housing Authority  
82 Lincoln Street  
Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461

Dear Mr. Turner:

In accordance with Chapter 11, Section 12, of the Massachusetts General Laws, we have conducted an audit of certain activities of the Newton Housing Authority for the period January 1, 2008 to January 28, 2011. The objectives of our audit were to assess the adequacy of the Authority's management control system for measuring, reporting, and monitoring the effectiveness of its programs and to assess compliance with laws, rules, and regulations applicable to each program.

Our audit was conducted in accordance with applicable generally accepted government auditing standards for performance audits and, accordingly, included such audit tests and procedures as we considered necessary.

To achieve our audit objectives, we reviewed the following:

- Tenant-selection procedures to verify that tenants were selected in accordance with Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) regulations.
- Vacancy records to determine whether the Authority adhered to DHCD procedures for preparing and filling vacant housing units.
- Annual rent-determination procedures to verify that rents were calculated properly and in accordance with DHCD regulations.
- Accounts receivable procedures to verify that rent collections were timely and that uncollectible tenants' accounts receivable balances were written off properly.
- Site-inspection procedures and records to verify compliance with DHCD inspection requirements and that selected housing units were in safe and sanitary condition and to determine whether the Authority has in place an updated official written property maintenance plan for its managed properties.
- Procedures for making payments for payroll, travel, and fringe benefits to verify compliance with established rules and regulations.

- Authority expenditures to determine whether they were reasonable, allowable, and applicable to the Authority's operations and were adequately documented and properly authorized in accordance with established criteria.
  - Procedures for making payments to landlords under the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program to verify compliance with the contract provisions and determine whether rental charges by landlords were consistent with established rules and regulations.
  - Property and equipment inventory-control procedures to determine whether the Authority properly protected and maintained its resources in compliance with DHCD requirements.
  - Contract procurement procedures and records to verify compliance with public bidding laws and DHCD requirements for awarding contracts.
  - Cash management and investment policies and practices to verify that the Authority maximized its interest income and that its deposits were fully insured.
- DHCD-approved operating budgets for the fiscal year in comparison with actual expenditures to determine whether line-item and total amounts by housing program were within budgetary limits and whether required fiscal reports were submitted to DHCD in a complete, accurate, and timely manner.
  - Operating reserve accounts and capital reserves to verify that the Authority's reserves fell within DHCD provisions for maximum and minimum allowable amounts and to verify the level of need for operating subsidies to determine whether the amount earned was consistent with the amount received from DHCD.
  - Modernization awards to verify that contracts were awarded properly and that funds were received and disbursed in accordance with the contracts, and to determine the existence of any excess funds.

In addition, we determined the amount of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds that the Authority has applied for, received, and expended.

Our tests in the above-mentioned areas disclosed no material weaknesses. Based on our review, we have concluded that during the period ended January 28, 2011, the Authority maintained adequate management controls and complied with applicable laws, rules, and regulations for the areas tested.

Sincerely,



Suzanne M. Bump  
Auditor of the Commonwealth

cc: Harvey Epstein, Executive Director