
Chapter 143. AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION IN THE TOWN OF ACTON.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. There is hereby established a nonprofit housing corporation which shall be known as the Acton Community Housing Corporation and shall be subject to the supervision of the board of selectmen of the town of Acton. The board of directors of said corporation shall consist of not less than five members who shall be appointed by the board of selectmen for staggered three-year terms as designated by said board of selectmen, such appointments to be made annually by said board of selectmen on or before June thirtieth. Members of said board of directors shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. Continuing members may act despite a vacancy in said board of directors and, for this purpose, shall be deemed to constitute a full board of directors. Any vacancy in said board of directors, however occurring, may be filled by the board of selectmen for the unexpired portion of the term.

Said board of directors shall exercise its powers and perform its duties for the purpose of investigating and implementing alternatives for the provision of and to provide for affordable housing for persons of low, moderate and middle income and other persons whose needs may be identified from time to time in said town. The powers and duties of said board as set forth herein are intended to be alternative and supplemental to and not in limitation of, the powers and duties of the Acton Housing Authority established pursuant to chapter one hundred and twenty-one B of the General Laws. The liability of said board and its members shall be limited to the same extent as the liability of a public employer and public employees as are limited by law.

SECTION 2. The board of directors of the Acton Community Housing Corporation shall have the powers and privileges conferred by the provisions of clauses (a) to (i), inclusive, and clause (k) of section nine of chapter one hundred and fifty-six B of the General Laws, and the following powers; provided, however, that no such power shall be exercised either in a manner inconsistent with this act or with any general or special law or to carry on any activity which is not in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this act:

(a) to adopt, amend and repeal rules for the regulation and conduct of its business including, but not limited to, the call and conduct of its meetings, the number of members which shall constitute a quorum and the mode of voting by proxy;

(b) to elect a chairman and vice-chairman, each of whom shall be members of said board, and a secretary and a treasurer, who need not be members of said board and who may be the same person. The treasurer shall give bond for the faithful performance of his duties in such form and such amount as approved and fixed by the board of selectmen. The cost of such bond shall be paid from funds of said board of directors. The chairman and, in his absence, the vice-chairman shall chair meetings of said board. The secretary shall be the custodian of all books, documents and papers filed with said board and of the minute book or journal of said board;

(c) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to make and execute all contracts and all other instruments necessary or convenient for the exercise of its powers and func-

Chap. 143

tions, subject to the approval of the town counsel of the town of Acton as to form;

(d) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to acquire or lease, by purchase or otherwise, and to own, hold and use on such terms and conditions and in such a manner as it may deem proper and to exchange, grant options on, sell, transfer, convey, assign, lease, pledge, mortgage, encumber, grant liens on and security interests in or to otherwise dispose of, on such terms and conditions as it may deem proper, real, personal or mixed real and personal property or any interest, easement or rights therein and any assets or revenues of the board of directors, as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out its purposes;

(e) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to enter into agreements or other transactions with the commonwealth or any political subdivision or public instrumentality thereof, the United States government or any federal, state or other governmental agency;

(f) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to enter into contracts or agreements with, and to employ from time to time, contractors, architects, engineers, consultants, attorneys, accountants, construction, financial and other experts, superintendents, managers and such other agents and employees as may be necessary in its judgment and to fix their compensation;

(g) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to receive and hold funds appropriated by the town and other funds, property, labor and other things of value from any source, public or private, by gift, grant, bequest, loan or otherwise, either absolutely or in trust, and to expend or utilize the same on behalf of the corporation for any of its purposes or to act as an agent or conduit in administering or disbursing funds or financial or other aid from any source; provided, however, that all revenues collected or received by the board of directors in connection with its activities, investments or transactions shall be expended only with approval of the board of selectmen of the town of Acton;

(h) to appear in its own behalf before boards, commissions, departments or other agencies of municipal, state or federal government;

(i) to procure insurance against any loss in connection with the property or activities of said board, in such amounts and from such insurers as it may deem necessary or desirable and, with the approval of the board of selectmen, to indemnify its members or agents if and to the extent specified from time to time in the by-laws of the corporation and subject to and in the manner provided by section six of chapter one hundred and eighty of the General Laws;

(j) to formulate and, with the approval of the board of selectmen, to carry out or monitor plans for projects involving the acquisition or operation of housing facilities of any kind or nature, and to construct, reconstruct, renovate, expand, extend, improve, repair, remodel, equip, furnish, maintain, manage and operate such facilities;

(k) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to fix and revise from time to time and to charge and collect rates, fees, rentals and other charges and sales prices for or in connection with the use, occupancy or other disposition of any housing facility or other property or portion thereof under its ownership or control;

(l) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to establish, impose, grant or amend, by deed, lease or any other means or method and to hold the benefit of, monitor, exercise and

Chap. 143

enforce lawful restrictions on the rental, sale, resale, use or occupancy of housing facilities or other property under its ownership or control, or other facilities or property designated by the selectmen of the town or restrictions with respect to the income of owners, tenants or occupants of such housing facilities or other property, or options and rights of first refusal with respect to such facilities or property and to waive, release or discharge any such options, rights or restrictions;

(m) with the approval of the board of selectmen, to enter into, perform or monitor agreements or other transactions with contractors, developers, brokers or other real estate professionals or any other person relating to the provisions of affordable housing for persons of low and moderate income in the town;

(n) to do any and all things necessary or convenient to carry out its purposes and exercise the powers conferred by this act; provided, however, that said board of directors may delegate to any committee or member of said board any action which said board is empowered to do or make or which said board shall have power to conduct by itself;

(o) no contract or agreement to purchase or accept as a gift, any right, interest or title to real property, shall be entered into until a site inspection has been made and a report received from a qualified person regarding the presence of hazardous materials or substances, as defined in chapter twenty-one E of the General Laws on or at the property.

SECTION 3. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, the income, assets and activities of Acton Community Housing Corporation shall be exempt from all taxes and assessments and said board shall not be subject to any provisions of chapter sixty-three of the General Laws or to any taxes based upon or measured by property or income, imposed by the commonwealth or by any political subdivision thereof. Said board is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into agreements with the assessor of the town of Acton and with the approval of the board of selectmen, wherein said board shall undertake to make to the town annual payments in lieu of taxes in connection with any real property acquired and owned by said corporation, the amounts of such payments to be reasonable sums stipulated in such agreement or agreements or determined in accordance with a reasonable formula so stipulated.

SECTION 4. The town of Acton may appropriate funds for carrying out, by said board, of the purposes as set forth herein. Any appropriation therefor may be raised by said town by taxation or otherwise. At least annually, the board of directors shall cause independent audits to be made of the books and records of said board, which annual audits shall be filed with the board of selectmen of said town.

SECTION 5. In the event that said board shall be dissolved in accordance with law at any time, all property and interests therein, and all assets and rights of said board existing at such time shall be transferred to the town of Acton by authority of this act, and title to all such property and all such rights shall vest in said town of Acton automatically without the need for further action or instrument and the town of Acton shall, to the maximum extent permitted by law and acting by and through its board of selectmen, assume, hold and exercise the powers and duties of the board of selectmen as set forth herein with respect to such property and rights so transferred to said town.

Chap. 143

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Approved June 28, 1996.

Chapter 144. AN ACT REQUIRING SCHOOL BUS HEADLIGHTS TO BE ILLUMINATED WHILE SUCH BUS IS IN OPERATION.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

Clause (7) of section 7B of chapter 90 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 1994 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the sixth sentence the following sentence:- The operator of a school bus shall cause its headlamps to be illuminated while such bus is in operation.

Approved June 28, 1996.

Chapter 145. AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE APPOINTMENT DATE OF TOWN COUNCIL EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY KNOWN AS THE TOWN OF METHUEN.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2-8(a) of Article 2 of the charter of the city known as the town of Methuen which is on file in the office in the archivist of the commonwealth, as provided in section twelve of chapter forty-three B of the General Laws, is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- City Accountant - the town council shall, on or before January fifteenth in odd numbered years, elect, by ballot or otherwise, a city accountant to hold office for a term of two years and until his successor is qualified.

SECTION 2. Section 2-8(b) of said Article 2 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- Clerk of the Council - the town council shall, on or before January fifteenth in odd numbered years, elect, by ballot or otherwise, a clerk of the council to hold office for a term of two years or until his successor is qualified.

SECTION 3. Section 2-8(c) of said Article 2 of said charter is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- City Solicitor - the town council shall, on or before January fifteenth in odd numbered years, elect, by ballot or otherwise, a city solicitor to hold office for a term of two years and until his successor is qualified.

SECTION 4. The terms of office of the current incumbents in the offices referred to in sections one, two and three shall be extended until January fifteenth, nineteen hundred and ninety-nine.