



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Deval L. Patrick, Governor ♦ Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretary

August 30, 2013

Ms. Louise Sousa  
Executive Director  
Mattapoissett Housing Authority  
One Acushnet Road #53  
Mattapoissett, MA 02739

Re: Maintenance and Management Concerns

Dear Ms. Sousa:

I am writing regarding our concerns with the management practices at the Mattapoissett Housing Authority. The MHA has been the focus of a number of onsite reviews by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). As a result of these reviews, it has come to our attention that there are many disconcerting issues with the operations of the MHA that have been ongoing for a number of years, including: maintenance, capital repairs, operating budgets, tenant relations and selection, lease enforcement, and general business practices.

In 2008 a comprehensive review was conducted by DHCD where many deficiencies were discovered. Since then, DHCD staff has continued to follow up and work to address these deficiencies by offering technical assistance, staffing tenant meetings, and performing limited scope reviews on rent calculation.

A maintenance assessment conducted by the DHCD's Facilities Management staff (FMS) in 2010 found excessive vacancies, ineffective supervision of maintenance employees and systems and a failure to properly identify and resolve tenant caused conditions through consistent lease enforcement. This report led to three years of oversight by the FMS staff. However, the MHA continues to be unresponsive to its maintenance needs.

Most recently, the pattern of mismanagement was confirmed by a visit to MHA on August 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 by Facilities and Housing Management staff. Observations from this most recent visit include:

- Removal of the computer work station to the Executive Directors residence so that she may work from home
- Work hours of the Executive Director are unscheduled and reported to be worked at home or late night at the office
- Displacement of a tenant from Village Court, Unit 10 for greater than one month due to an unaddressed plumbing leak

These observed practices require immediate attention of the MHA Board of Commissioners and staff, such as:

- All Mattapoissett Housing Authority's property, including, but not limited to, computers, tenant files, housing applications, and employee time sheets, must immediately be returned to the MHA office **by Wednesday, September 4, 2013.**
- The Executive Director must work at the MHA office during regular work hours, **starting Wednesday, September 4, 2013**
- MHA staff must adhere to the maintenance schedule discussed with DHCD staff to allow the tenant to reoccupy Village Court, Unit 10

In addition to these steps, DHCD will be reaching out to the Board of Commissioners to discuss an approach to moving forward to ensure proper management and maintenance of the MHA.

For questions or additional information about the observations noted in the letter, please contact Kim Gomez, Housing Management Specialist, at 617-573-1221 or [kim.gomez@state.ma.us](mailto:kim.gomez@state.ma.us).

Sincerely,



Lizbeth Heyer  
Associate Director  
Division of Public Housing and Rental Assistance

cc: Margaret DeMello, Chairperson  
Charles McCullough, State Appointee  
MHA Board of Commissioners