



Cathy Sheehan, Executive Director

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**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026
5:30 p.m.**

I. Called Meeting to Order at 6:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Ayes

Veronica Miranda
Patricia Morsillo
Aaron Paternoster
Emily Ullman

Nays

Romell Kidd

III. Discussions – Open Meeting Law Complaint by Veronica Miranda, Board Member against the Salem Housing Authority, Board of Directors. The Open Meeting Law Complaint is attached hereto for reference.

See Attached Summary of Article III.

IV. Other Business /Late Communications

There was no other business or late communications.

V. Adjournment

Patricia Morsillo moved to adjourn the Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 at 6:58 p.m. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Veronica Miranda
Patricia Morsillo
Aaron Paternoster
Emily Ullman

Nays



Equal Opportunity Employer



**SUMMARY OF ARTICLE III OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE SALEM HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF WEDNESDAY,
APRIL 29, 2026 AT 6:00 P.M.**

Board Contract Complaint Discussion

The board held a special meeting to address an open meeting law complaint filed by Board Member Veronica Miranda against the Salem Housing Authority Board Members regarding a contract with Conditioning Leaders for mediation and strategic planning. Aaron Paternoster explained that the board contracted with Conditioning Leaders approximately two years ago for strategic planning and mediation services. The board discussed the open-ended contract and how Aaron Paternoster and Emily Ullman decided to reach out to Conditioning Leaders to determine their preferences for resolving the situation.

Contract Procedure Violation Discussion

The board discussed a contract with Conditioning Leaders that was closed outside of a scheduled meeting, which some members believed should have been a full board decision. Emily acknowledged that she should have brought the contract back to the board for discussion and apologized for not understanding the full context. Aaron and other board members agreed that there was a violation of proper procedure, with Aaron acknowledging his role in not maintaining enough stability on the board during the process. The discussion ended with Veronica asking for clarification about a reference to October 8th, 2025, regarding the cancellation of mediation sessions.

Open Meeting Law Violation Discussion

Aaron Paternoster and Emily Ullman provided context about previous communication attempts to schedule meetings and move the process forward. Patricia Morsillo emphasized the importance of addressing the violation properly and noted that the board needs to handle future similar issues by bringing them back to the board for discussion and disposition.

Meeting Structure and Procedures Discussion

Patricia Morsillo emphasized that formal rules promote respectful discussion and compliance beyond just open meeting laws. Cathy Sheehan notes that mistakes happen unintentionally and the board has been conducting business professionally and orderly. The discussion focused on balancing informal operation with necessary formal procedures to ensure compliance.

Contract Cancellation and Next Steps

The board agreed to add a formal vote to formally end the contract to their May 2026 meeting agenda, where they will also discuss proposals for how to move forward.



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Instructions for completing the Open Meeting Law Complaint Form

The Attorney General's Division of Open Government interprets and enforces the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A of the Massachusetts General Laws, Sections 18-25. Below is the procedure for filing and responding to an Open Meeting Law complaint.

Instructions for filing a complaint:

- o Fill out the attached two-page form completely. Sign and date the second page. File the complaint with the public body within 30 days of the alleged violation. If the violation was not reasonably discoverable at the time it occurred, you must file the complaint within 30 days of the date the violation was reasonably discoverable. A violation that occurs during an open session of a meeting is reasonably discoverable on the date of the meeting.
- o To file the complaint:
 - o For a local or municipal public body, you must submit a copy of the complaint to the chair of the public body AND to the municipal clerk.
 - o For all other public bodies, you must submit a copy of the complaint to the chair of the public body.
 - o Complaints may be filed by mail, by email, or by hand. Please retain a copy for your records.
- o If the public body does not respond within 14 business days and does not request an extension to respond, contact the Division for further assistance.

Instructions for a public body that receives a complaint:

- o The chair must disseminate the complaint to the members of the public body.
- o The public body must meet to review the complaint within 14 business days (usually 20-22 calendar days).
- o After review, but within 14 business days, the public body must respond to the complaint in writing and must send the complainant a response and a description of any action the public body has taken to address the allegations in the complaint. At the same time, the body must send the Attorney General a copy of the complaint and a copy of the response. The public body may delegate this responsibility to an individual member of the public body, its counsel, or a staff member, but only after the public body has met to review the complaint.
- o If a public body requires more time to review the complaint and respond, it may request an extension of time for good cause by contacting the Division of Open Government.

Once the public body has responded to the complaint:

- o If you are not satisfied with the public body's response to your complaint, you may file a copy of the complaint with the Division by mail, by email, or by hand, but only once you have waited for 30 days after filing the complaint with the public body. Mail may be sent to: The Division of Open Government, Office of the Attorney General, One Ashburton Place - 20th Floor, Boston, MA 02108. Emails may be sent to: openmeeting@state.ma.us.
- o When you file your complaint with the Division, please include the complaint form and all documentation relevant to the alleged violation. You may wish to attach a cover letter explaining why the public body's response does not adequately address your complaint.
- o The Division will not review complaints filed with us more than 90 days after the violation, unless we granted an extension to the public body or you can demonstrate good cause for the delay.

If you have questions concerning the Open Meeting Law complaint process, we encourage you to contact the Division of Open Government by phone at (617) 963-2540 or by email at openmeeting@state.ma.us.



OPEN MEETING LAW COMPLAINT FORM

Office of the Attorney General
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Your Contact Information:

First Name: Veronica Last Name: Miranda

Address: 9 Garden Terrace

City: Salem State: MA Zip Code: 01970

Phone Number: 8573189817 Ext. _____

Email: vmiranda@salemha.org

Organization or Media Affiliation (if any): Salem Housing Authority Board

Are you filing the complaint in your capacity as an individual, representative of an organization, or media?

(For statistical purposes only)

☒ Individual ☐ Organization ☐ Media

Public Body that is the subject of this complaint:

☒ City/Town ☐ County ☐ Regional/District ☐ State

Name of Public Body (including city/town, county or region, if applicable): Salem Housing Authority Board of Commissioners

Specific person(s), if any, you allege committed the violation: Emily Ullman, Aaron Paternoster

Date of alleged violation: February 2026

Description of alleged violation:

Describe the alleged violation that this complaint is about. If you believe the alleged violation was intentional, please say so and include the reasons supporting your belief.

Note: This text field has a maximum of 3000 characters.

I am filing this Open Meeting Law (OML) complaint regarding a decision made outside of a public meeting to discontinue a mediation and Following an investigation into allegations of a hostile work environment involving board conduct in Summer 2024, "professional coaching On March 11, 2026, I learned that this engagement had been discontinued following discussions between Conditioning Leaders and Board Because this engagement was formally approved by the Board as part of addressing governance and conduct concerns, the decision to dis I do not believe any potential violation was intentional. However, I respectfully request that the Board review this matter to ensure complia

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

Note: This text field has a maximum of 500 characters.

I respectfully request that the Salem Housing Authority Board take the following actions:

- Review and discuss this matter in a properly posted public meeting to determine whether Open Meeting Law requirements were violated
- Clarify and document the process by which the decision to discontinue the mediation engagement was made, including the roles of Board leadership and any staff involved/influencing the process
- Determine whether the discontinuation of the engagement should be reconsidered or formally ratified by a vote of the full Board in an open meeting.
- Ensure that future decisions involving Board-approved contracts or initiatives are made only through proper deliberation and voting in compliance with Open Meeting Law
- If a violation is found, take appropriate remedial steps, including acknowledging the violation and committing to corrective practices moving forward

Review, sign, and submit your complaint

I. Disclosure of Your Complaint.

Public Record. Under most circumstances, your complaint, and any documents submitted with your complaint, is considered a public record and will be available to any member of the public upon request. However, the Attorney General's Office will not disclose your address, phone number or email address in response to a public records request.

Publication to Website. As part of the Open Data Initiative, the AGO will publish to its website certain information regarding your complaint, including your name and the name of the public body. The AGO will not publish your contact information.

II. Consulting With a Private Attorney.

The AGO cannot give you legal advice and is not able to be your private attorney, but represents the public interest. If you have any questions concerning your individual legal rights or responsibilities you should contact a private attorney.

III. Submit Your Complaint to the Public Body.

The complaint must be filed first with the public body. If you have any questions, please contact the Division of Open Government by calling (617) 963-2540 or by email to openmeeting@state.ma.us.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the provisions above and certify that the information I have provided is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: Veronica Miranda

Date: 3/25/2026

For Use By Public Body
Date Received by Public Body:

For Use By AGO
Date Received by AGO:

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