



Town of Sudbury

Housing Trust

HousingTrust@sudbury.ma.us

Flynn Building
278 Old Sudbury Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-639-3387
Fax: 978-639-3314
www.sudbury.ma.us/housingtrust

MINUTES

MAY 7, 2020 AT 7:45 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Housing Trust Members Present: Chair Cynthia Howe, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, and Carmine Gentile

Housing Trust Members Absent: None

Others Present: Select Board Member Pat Brown, Executive Director of the Sudbury Housing Authority Sheila Cusolito, Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, John Riordan, and Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Elizabeth Rust

Ms. Howe called the meeting to order at 7:58 AM.

1. Minutes

a. Approve Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2020

Ms. Cronin made a motion to approve the minutes of March 5, 2020. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Aye, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.

2. Finances

a. Vote to Ratify the FY20 February and March Transactions

Ms. Rust provided an overview of the transactions for February and March of FY2020. She noted there was not a significant amount of activity but the lottery work was still continuing.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to approve the February and March FY2020 transactions. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Aye, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.

At this time Mr. Riordan arrived at the meeting.

3. New Business

a. Emergency Rental Assistance Program – Review and Potential Vote

Ms. Rust explained how the idea for this program and guidance on this matter came about. The program is intended to provide renters some relief for those who have been impacted by the COVID-19 situation and are having trouble making their rent during the pandemic. Ms. Rust

indicated there would be three grant cycles (June, August, and October), where people could apply for rental assistance for a period time. She noted other communities in the area were pursuing the implementation of this program but were still figuring out how to fund this type of a program. Ms. Rust recommended a minimum of \$20,000 be allocated to the program.

Ms. Cronin clarified Ms. Rust was asking the Housing Trust to fund the program for Sudbury and Ms. Rust confirmed that was correct.

Ms. Howe asked Ms. Rust to explain who the program would assist. Ms. Rust stated the program would simply be emergency assistance, there would only be a maximum of 12 months of assistance, participants must be living in Sudbury and have been impacted by COVID-19, and the dwelling unit had to be in satisfactory condition. Ms. Rust noted the program would only apply to households which did not already have a local, state, or federal subsidy; had household incomes of 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or lower; and were not in affordable dwelling units.

Ms. Dretler asked which other communities were participating for a June 1, 2020 launch deadline. Ms. Rust stated it appeared Sudbury and Lexington would likely be launching this program, and possibly Bedford as well. There was then discussion regarding the possible need for the program, and several attendees chimed in with the inquiries they had received about such a program.

Ms. Dretler asked what the financial impact on the trust fund would be if \$20,000 were allocated to this program and Ms. Rust explained the impact to the fund.

Ms. Brown noted that if Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds were intended to be used, it would require a vote of Town Meeting, which would not be occurring until the fall of 2020 at the earliest.

Ms. Howe felt anything the Housing Trust could do to help residents of the town would make sense. She noted the Coolidge at Sudbury Phase II and the Avalon at Meadow Walk developments really needed assistance, but noted the program participants would probably only be from Avalon. Ms. Rust indicated there would not be a 100% certainty as there may be others in town who would qualify for the program. Ms. Dretler asked and Ms. Rust confirmed, the left over funds from the program would remain with the Housing Trust.

Mr. Gentile made a motion for the Housing Trust to sponsor the Emergency Rental Assistance Program beginning June 1, 2020 with an allocation of \$20,000 for Sudbury residents. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Abstain, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.

Ms. Cronin asked Ms. Rust to reach out to the Town Social Worker to be able to refer households to program.

b. Small Grant Program – Review and Potential Vote

Ms. Rust noted five (5) new grant requests had been submitted during the latest application period and she briefly described each project for which funding was being requested. Projects included

roof work, bathroom and kitchen repairs, and a wheelchair walkway, as well as others. This was the only grant cycle for FY2020

Ms. Howe asked about the discrepancy in some of the quotes for one of the projects.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to approve all five (5) Small Grant Program requests. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Aye, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.

Ms. Howe recommended staff promote the Small Grant Program during the COVID-19 pandemic as this could be a valuable resource for many households.

4. Old Business

a. Trustee Roster

Ms. Rust noted Ms. Howe, Ms. Cronin, and Ms. Dretler all needed to be reappointed to the Housing Trust as their terms expired in April of 2020.

Ms. Cronin stated there was a new Sudbury resident she wanted to contact to see if he had any interest in joining the Housing Trust.

Ms. Dretler asked how the terms of the memberships could be more balanced. Mr. Duchesneau noted it was a challenge because all membership terms were two years and therefore every other year several members had their terms expiring. Discussion ensued about possible staggering of terms and recruiting new members.

Ms. Brown asked the Housing Trust to consider having the membership terms end at the end of May.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to recommend the Select Board reappoint Ms. Howe, Ms. Cronin, and Ms. Dretler to the Housing Trust. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Aye, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.

5. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The Housing Trust confirmed their next meeting would be June 4, 2020 at 8:00 AM.

Ms. Cusolito noted the Sudbury Housing Authority would be discussing the possibility of having a Sudbury Housing Authority member serve again on the Housing Trust. She stated she would be in touch with Ms. Howe and staff with further updates at a later time.

At 9:02 AM, Mr. Gentile made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Howe – Aye, Cronin – Aye, Dretler – Aye, and Gentile – Aye.