



# Town of Sudbury

## Housing Trust

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### MINUTES

**MARCH 10, 2022 AT 8:00 AM**

### VIRTUAL MEETING

**Housing Trust Members Present:** Chair Cynthia Howe, Vice Chair John Riordan, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Carmine Gentile, Robert Hummel, Karl Pops, and Susan Scotti

**Housing Trust Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Liz Rust, Town Counsel Lee Smith (KP Law), and Liz Valenta from the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO)

Ms. Howe called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

#### **1. Minutes: Approve Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2022, if presented**

At this time Ms. Dretler joined the meeting.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to approve the minutes of February 10, 2022. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Abstain, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Pops – Abstain, and Ms. Scotti – Absent.

#### **3. Sudbury Housing Trust – Draft Bylaw**

Mr. Duchesneau provided an overview of why a local bylaw in Sudbury was needed in order to make the agreed upon terms and rules by which the Housing Trust operates enforceable. This local bylaw was never implemented, therefore, in the opinion of Town Counsel, the agreed upon terms and rules were unenforceable.

Mr. Smith indicated this was more of a housekeeping matter as all parties had been operating under the terms and rules that had been agreed upon, but this local bylaw would formally implement those regulations as they are not currently enforceable.

Ms. Rust noted there were specific rules regarding Trustee membership and the ability of the Housing Trust to buy and sell property which are not in the state legislation, but the Town of Sudbury had wished to implement these terms to dictate the way the Housing Trust operates.

Ms. Howe clarified this would simply be codifying the Housing Trust's existing operational language and Mr. Smith confirmed that was correct. Ms. Rust noted the proposed bylaw reflected exactly how the Housing Trust had been operating for the last 15 years.

Mr. Riordan asked if other Housing Trusts in the state had this type of language in a local bylaw. Ms. Rust indicated other Housing Trusts around the state were also now working to implement their own local bylaws.

Mr. Riordan wondered if the local bylaw would allow the Select Board to potentially pocket veto a recommendation by the Housing Trust, as this was how he was reading the legislation. Mr. Smith indicated that scenario was in the realm of possibility, but also noted it was fairly unlikely to occur.

Ms. Dretler stated she wanted to go back and look at the Town Meeting minutes from when the Housing Trust was created, and also wanted to review and understand the amendments which had occurred to the state legislation regarding Housing Trusts.

Ms. Cronin inquired as to why something different/extra needed to be done which was different from what other Housing Trusts have had to do which were simply and only created by the state legislation. Mr. Smith indicated the Sudbury Housing Trust's Declaration of Trust called for extra requirements which are not set forth in the state statute and, as such, a local bylaw needed to be created to actually have these terms be enforceable.

Amy Lepak, one of the original Housing Trust members and current Chair of the Sudbury Housing Authority, indicated it was always the intent to have the Select Board approve large purchases by the Housing Trust. She also did not recall anyone being against the required approval of the Select Board for land purchases.

At this time Ms. Scotti joined the meeting.

Mr. Riordan noted various instances in the proposed local bylaw which required Select Board approval before the particular action could be taken. He also called out a few formatting items which needed to be addressed.

Ms. Rust noted the money in the Housing Trust's fund did not need to be re-appropriated each year and could be accessed by the Housing Trust at any time once it was in the Housing Trust's possession.

Ms. Rust indicated February 13, 2007 was when the Select Board discussed the Housing Trust and the local bylaw.

There was discussion regarding the Fair Housing Committee, the Community Housing Committee, and the Housing Trust, which had been created in the past.

Ms. Cronin inquired if Select Board approval was only necessary for purchases of land. Mr. Smith noted there were other items which required Select Board approval, but purchasing land was one of them.

Ms. Howe asked for this item to be placed on the April 2022 meeting agenda.

## **2. Financial Update: Vote to Ratify the FY22 January Transactions**

Ms. Rust provided a brief overview of what the transactions entailed.

Mr. Pops confirmed the remaining amount of funds in the Housing Trust's account for the rest of the fiscal year.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to ratify the FY22 January Transactions. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

## **4. Sudbury Rent Relief Program**

### ○ Update on Phase 1 Initial Applications

Ms. Valenta noted the money went very quickly to those who needed assistance. She also indicated they were still working through some funding distribution details for some households, but almost everyone received assistance at the beginning of March of 2022.

### ○ Update from Task Force, including (American Rescue Plan Act) ARPA Funds Request

Ms. Howe stated the Sudbury Rent Relief Program Subcommittee had met regarding the program. She noted the Subcommittee had determined a household income floor threshold needed to be created for the program in order to automatically qualify households for the program.

Ms. Valenta indicated there were also discussions regarding income verification materials.

Ms. Howe stated there was general acceptance to allow for a longer application period for applicants.

Ms. Dretler affirmed the Housing Trust should move forward with their ARPA funding request to the Select Board to support this program.

There was discussion regarding combining the Housing Trust's ARPA funding request with the Town Social Worker's ARPA funding request.

Mr. Dretler provided a status update on the ARPA funding project selection and funding release process.

There was discussion regarding the ARPA funding amounts requested for each of the following Town supported programs:

Rental Assistance Program: \$125,000  
Small Grants Program: \$75,000  
Mortgage Assistance: \$75,0000

Mr. Pops raised an inquiry about the Housing Trust's interest in looking to create an additional affordable housing unit at some point during the rest of the year.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to communicate to the Town Manager and Select Board the continued need for housing assistance through ARPA as outlined in the October 25, 2021 request and to authorize the Housing Trust Chair to advocate for this request. Ms. Gentile seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

## **5. Mortgage Assistance – Review Program Materials**

Ms. Rust noted there were not any materials in the packet regarding this matter.

## **6. 67-73 Nobscot Road – Site Feasibility Analysis Update**

Mr. Riordan noted additional information was recently received from the consultant (Beals + Thomas) and the next 67-73 Nobscot Road Subcommittee meeting was being coordinated to be held as soon as possible.

There was then discussion regarding holding a special meeting jointly with the Sudbury Housing Authority to cover only this topic.

Ms. Lepak provided some brief comments regarding the Sudbury Housing Authority's thoughts on the project to this point when considering costs and the need for grants.

## **Other or New Business**

Brief comments made were made by Mr. Hummel and Mr. Riordan regarding the Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Communities. Mr. Duchesneau provided an update on where the Town stood on the matter. He indicated all options were still being considered and the Select Board and Planning Board were working to compile comments on the draft guidelines for the March 31, 2022 deadline.

At this time Ms. Rust and Ms. Valenta left the meeting.

### **Public Comment**

There were no additional public comments.

At 10:00 AM, Mr. Riordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.