



# Town of Sudbury

## Housing Trust

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### MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2022 AT 8:00 AM

### VIRTUAL MEETING

**Housing Trust Members Present:** Chair Carmine Gentile, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Karl Pops, and John Riordan

**Housing Trust Members Absent:** Vice Chair Robert Hummel, Cynthia Howe, and Susan Scotti

**Others Present:** Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission Member Stephine Oliver, Community Preservation Coordinator Ryan Poteat, and Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Liz Rust

Mr. Gentile called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

#### 1. Minutes

June 23, 2022 – Mr. Riordan made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Dretler. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

July 25, 2022 – Mr. Riordan made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Cronin. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

August 9, 2022 – Mr. Gentile made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Dretler. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

August 11, 2022 – Mr. Gentile made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Dretler. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

September 1, 2022 – Mr. Gentile made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Dretler. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

## **2. Other or New Business**

Mr. Gentile made an announcement that Mr. Pops would be leaving the Housing Trust on October 1, 2022. He thanked Mr. Pops for his involvement and work with the Housing Trust.

## **3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission Discussion**

Mr. Gentile announced that Stephine Oliver from the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission was joining the meeting and asked to deviate from the planned meeting order to be respectful of her time.

Ms. Oliver introduced herself and explained the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission was connecting with different Town boards and commissions to facilitate collaboration. She spoke about the Lived Experiences Project and explained it was a storytelling project where individuals come together to share their life experiences but specifically those that have to do with racism and prejudice.

Ms. Oliver also briefly spoke to how working with the Housing Trust could improve the outcomes for the people of Sudbury.

Mr. Gentile took the opportunity to share a life experience of his own that specifically related to housing and diversity.

Ms. Oliver offered the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission website for the Housing Trust to keep on record: [www.sudburylivedexperiences.org](http://www.sudburylivedexperiences.org).

## **3. Program Update**

- Small Grant Program – Discussion on Program Parameters

Ms. Rust provided an update on the Small Grant Program. She discussed a memo sent from Mr. Riordan to the Select Board which was the catalyst for the ARPA award. Ms. Rust further explained that a language change may be needed from “COVID loss of income” as part of the program’s parameters. She recognized the resonating effects of COVID and suggested striking the language. Other areas of the program she suggested revisiting were as follows:

- Making the application process on a rolling basis; i.e. first come, first serve.
- Changing the minimum estimate requirement from two to three.
- Increasing the grant limit from its current amount of \$5,000.
- Removing or increasing the cap of \$10,000 in a 7 year period, with a 1 year waiting period.
- Allowing funds to be available to landlords, changing the language to “primary residence.”
- Removing the word “optional” for property information.

Ms. Rust advised there may be deferred maintenance and the discussion was specifically regarding opening the Small Grant Program to small landlords. She explained her suggestion was to eliminate the language “owner occupied.”

Ms. Dretler suggested the possibility of a percentage-based assistance program and Ms. Rust agreed this could be a potentially helpful language change.

Mr. Pops expressed his preference to keep structured dollar amounts for accounting simplicity.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to make the following adjustments to the Small Grant Program:

- Increase the Small Grant Program project limit from \$5,000 to \$7,500.
- Delete the words “uses the property as their primary residence for an entire year during the 12-month period following the completion of the repair.”
- Substitute the words “two or three” for required quotes submission, currently stated at “three.”
- Make applications “a rolling application” in place of fixed.
- Remove the word “optional” on page two under “Property Information.” Property information would now be required.
- Increase the cap to “no more than \$15,000” or two \$7,500 grants.

Seconded by Ms. Cronin. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

○ Mortgage Assistance Program – Update

Ms. Rust briefly updated the Housing Trust on the number of applicants (there were five). She spoke about Mr. Poteat doing more outreach and noted the Town Social Worker had expressed concern about the complexity of the application process.

#### **4. Financial Update**

○ Ratify FY23 July Transactions

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

Ms. Dretler made a motion to ratify the FY23 July Transactions, seconded by Ms. Cronin. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

○ Review FY23 Community Preservation Act Funding Request and CP-3 Form

Ms. Rust mentioned the Community Preservation Act funding request amount previously voted on by the Housing Trust was unusually high.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to accept the Community Preservation Committee application language as presented, with an estimated funding request of \$730,000, which was 25% of the forecasted Community Preservation Act revenues for FY24, seconded by Mr. Riordan. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

## **5. Program Update**

- Tenant Rental Assistance Program – Review of Program Materials

There was concern expressed the form presented was not complete. The Housing Trust requested Town staff to fill in the number of tenants, number of units, and a phone number for Ms. Rust's office before the close of business.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to empower the Housing Trust Chair to review and approve the application form and materials, seconded by Ms. Cronin. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

At 9:39 AM, Mr. Riordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Dretler. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Pops – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.