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Ayer Affordable Housing Trust Open Session Meeting Minutes: October 25, 2023

TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK



Geof Tillotson, presiding. Meeting called to order at 6:24pm

AAHT Trustees present: Geof Tillotson (Acting Chair), Colleen Krieser, Cyndi Lavin (Clerk), Shaun Copeland, Patricia Bagni-Latimer (7:08pm)

AAHT Members absent: James Stephen (Vice-Chair)

Also present: Alicia Hersey – AAHC + AAHT Administrator; Pauline Conley; Cindy Knox – IT; Bob Williams

Agenda Item: General Business

Motion: A motion was made by Shaun Copeland and seconded by Colleen Krieser to approve the meeting agenda. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

Review and approval of minutes from August 30, 2023: no changes made

Motion: A motion was made by Shaun Copeland and seconded by Colleen Krieser to approve the minutes. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

Public Comment: None

Agenda Item: Town Meeting followup, 2024 CPC Funding

The AAHT request for funds from the CPC was approved: \$72k for ARAP (for 12 families), \$125k for future acquisitions, and \$3k for administrative expenses (the audit). Geof Tillotson questioned if multiple requests should be made in the future, in case one category is denied. As it is currently, that would deny the entire request. Colleen Krieser pointed out that amendments can be made from the floor, but it is something for the Trust to think about.

Agenda Item: Ayer Rental Assistance Program (ARAP)

Alicia Hersey questioned if 3 years of potential rental assistance through the Ayer Rental Assistance Program was appropriate, and she recommends that the Board review the 3-year period. She suggested that perhaps the program should be 1 year with only a chance of renewal for only 1 additional year. There will only be space for 2 to 3 new families in FY24, because all of the current families will qualify for another year. Cyndi Lavin suggested that current families need to be grandfathered, whatever the decision is. Brittany Beaudry, Town Social Worker, is just starting to get in touch with all of them to work towards more sustainable housing. Alicia also suggested thinking about requiring 50% AMI instead of 60% for applicants, and Shaun Copeland agreed that 2 years was very reasonable. There was a discussion on how to change the language of the program in order to lower expectations that multiple years of support will be available. Cyndi suggested changing the language to have everyone put back into the pool at the end of the year and be ranked again, rather than allowing them to simply roll over if they still meet the requirements.

Agenda Item: Future of Housing in Ayer

Alicia Hersey and Geof Tillotson gave an overview of the meeting contents.

(7:08pm, Pat Bagni-Latimer entered the meeting)

Alicia reported that the information gleaned at the meeting will be used for some zoning updates and for future planning. There was great representation by the planning board and other boards at the meeting. Pauline Conley was disappointed by the lack of representation by people who are not on

Town boards. A written summary of the findings will be made. Everyone is aware that denser, more affordable housing (along with more Affordable housing) is what the Town needs to work towards.

Upcoming meetings:

November 29, 2023 at 6:15pm

December 27, 2023 at 6:15pm

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by Cyndi Lavin and seconded by Colleen Krieser to adjourn at 7:23pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, elongated loop followed by a horizontal line that curves slightly upwards at the end.