

**Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund (MAHTF)**  
**Meeting Minutes – April 19, 2023**

**Attendance:** Mary Antes, Jacqueline Espiritusanto-Vega, Laura Kaplan, Michael Staiti, and Susan Weinstein

**Absent:** Cherry Karlson

**Open Meetings:** At 7:00pm, M. Staiti called the meeting of the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (Trust) to order on Zoom and identified the members in attendance.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Materials Discussed/Distributed:** Agenda for meeting; minutes of 3/7/23 meeting; emailed documents from C. Karlson: background information, amended Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Declaration of Trust (redlined and amended versions), original Declaration of Trust; and Financial Reports and Affordable Homeowner Assistance Program document emailed today by S. Weinstein

**Notes:**

**1. Minutes:**

The minutes for March 9, 2023 were tabled.

**2. Financial Report**

A member to serve as treasurer has not yet been appointed. The audit will need to be done over the summer. The Trust uses the same auditing firm as the town. S. Weinstein will check with the Finance Department and will contact the WHA's fee accountant, Rich Conlon, to see if he could audit the Trust.

**3. Updates**

After months of waiting for a response, M. Staiti reported that the town had a problem with the RFP he put together for 11 Hammond Road. J. Bugbee forwarded to M. Staiti a sample 850-page RFP for the renovation of Station 2. M. Staiti said no contractor will bid on an RFP of that size for a 1,100 square foot house. M. Staiti will seek an appointment with J. Bugbee to get an RFP out as soon as possible. He said the current process of developing single housing units is too cumbersome and not working. In the future, the Trust should do larger projects with partners that can get project done more efficiently.

Good Shepard Parish project is moving along.

**4. Updated Trust Documents**

C. Karlson was unable to attend the meeting. This agenda item will be tabled until the next meeting.

**5. Home Repair Program**

Town Counsel had very few comments regarding the Home Repair Program document. S. Weinstein reviewed and the Trust discussed each comment. The comment about the initial paragraph was not clear to the members. One can preserve the affordable units but can remedy (not preserve) the occupants from injury, harm, or destruction.

*Page 1: Is your home eligible for the Program?* There was agreement to add to the final bullet requiring the home-owner to be in compliance with the Zoning Bylaw the phrase “or deemed to be a lawfully pre-existing nonconforming use or structure.”

*Page 2: How much money can you apply for?* The ‘vagueness’ is okay because we do not intend to enforce repayment for the \$7,500 grant program.

*Page 3: What legal information do you need to know?* The unit needs to be owner-occupied but assets are not monitored. While the Trust would prefer the owner to be income eligible, its interest is that the unit remains affordable. We would not impose new restrictions, just requiring the owner to repay the Trust when the unit is sold.

*Page 8: Public meetings and records* Add “To the extent permitted by law” to the statement that the Trust will endeavor to maintain the confidentiality of records . . .”

Discussion continued about the application rather than the program itself. It was agreed that applicants must meet the 80 percent of the area median income (AMI) guideline but, if two applicants apply for our limited funds, preference would be given to those at 60 percent over those at 80 percent of AMI.

J. Espiritusanto-Vega asked who is going to review the applications and who will inspect the repairs to ensure they are complete. S. Weinstein suggested that the WHA might review the applicant’s eligibility for a stipend. Criteria must be clear to ensure impartial application. M. Staiti said he could take the lead on inspections or the Trust could contract with the WHA. He also pointed out that some work will require a building permit so the town will do the final inspection. Other work, like roof repairs or a new furnace, does not require a permit so the Trust will need to make other inspection arrangements.

Contractors will be paid directly upon completion of the work. L. Kaplan asked about contractors who need money up-front to purchase materials. M. Staiti said generally the Home-Owners Association would provide the up-front money and most contractors will wait for the money. The Trust is providing supplemental funding.

S. Weinstein will revise the documents and L. Kaplan will do a final review. S. Weinstein will work on the application, and will add a flow chart. It was moved and seconded to approve the Home Repair Program as outlined in the Affordable Homeowner Assistance Program as edited (J. Espiritusanto-Vega/S. Weinstein). The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote (Antes, Espiritusanto-Vega, Kaplan, Staiti, Weinstein) 5 yays. M. Staiti thanked S. Weinstein and L. Kaplan and will have the document posted on the town’s website.

**6. Topics Not Anticipated**

There were no topics not anticipated.

**7. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm on Zoom. Agenda items will include the Trust documents and an update on the RFP. S. Weinstein moved and L. Kaplan seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 by a roll call vote of 5 to 0. (Antes, Espritusanto-Vega, Kaplan, Staiti, Weinstein) 5 yays.