

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND (AHTF)  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, January 17, 2023 at 6:30 PM  
Remote virtual meeting by ZOOM.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Fred Clark (Chmn.), Bill Cooke, Krystyna Kersica, John Katz, Ananda Timpane and Joseph Method.

**Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 6:47 PM** and read Governor Baker's Orders of March 12, 2020 and July 16, 2022.

**Mr. Clark** Apologized for the late start. There were technical reasons and he expressed his expectation to open future meetings in a more timely fashion.

**Approval of past minutes:** Mr. Cooke made a motion to approve the minutes of November 22, 2022. Motion seconded by Mr. Reed. Mr. Cooke made one correction regarding his distribution of a post card throughout the Town. Unanimous approval by roll-call of the minutes as corrected.

**Mr. Clark** said that he wanted to devote the meeting to future matters, new ideas. First he wanted to cover some miscellaneous matters. The first was to recognize Habitat's advertisement about the Grove Street house. He summarized that there was lots of activity and several interested parties.

**Mr. Reed** asked if the board might be able to see who was interested or applying?

**Mr. Clark** commented that the Grove Street house was Habitat's project and that they are handling the applicants.

**Mr. Cooke** reminded that there are pictures of the Grove Street project on the AHTF web site < gbhousing.org >.

**Mr. Clark** reported that the North Plain Road project was being readied to be presented to the Planning Board on February 12<sup>th</sup>. He had been sitting in with the Habitat lawyer. The Town wants to be sure that all the houses will be counted in the Town's affordable housing inventory. Somewhere between 20 and 30 houses need to be sold at the 80% AMI level or less.

**Mr. Clark** indicated that the Town has an opportunity to acquire a nice parcel of flat, buildable land on a bus route, with sewer and water nearby and big enough for 4 houses. He will be following up. He also said that a member of the Selectboard might want to allocate funding for

AHTF out of room tax receipts. He had suggested \$500K spread over two or more years. The Town gets about \$1 million annually, and he suggested \$200K or \$250K now and another like amount in year or two. He reminded that Town Meeting voted to allocate short term rental tax

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to the AHTF. That is expected to be about \$10K. Several members suggested that the Board ask for half of the room tax. Mr. Clark said that, instead of seeking a Town Meeting vote for a Town Budget item, a Room Tax allocation may be wiser because Room Tax comes in as “free cash” next year.

**Mr. Clark** reported that the CPA ask was \$300K for FY2024. The CPC was “luke warm” about it and asked for a breakdown of programs and projects. CPC were concerned about a lack of detail and they reduced the AHTF package to \$265K for “any affordable housing purpose”.

**Mr. Katz** asked how much cash does AHTF have now?

**Mr. Clark** responded \$145K, noting that AHTF will need to refund the Emergency Housing Fund in support of Construct with probably \$45K or \$50K. On other projects, the Town received \$2.1 Million of ARPA money and committed \$600K to the Windflower project which will provide 13 rooms/units of workforce housing. The Town asked for 5 affordable housing units and designated the AHTF to organize/administer the deed restrictions. In the Marble Block, the Town asked for 5 affordable units at 60% AMI and designated AHTF to organize/administer the deed restrictions.

**Returning to Habitat’s Grove Street Project** there was a discussion of the photos on the AHTF web site and a review of Habitat’s selection process which includes a lottery among prequalified applicants administered by Habitat.

**Mr. Clark** reviewed the 2023 AHTF Budget Spread Sheet showing expected use of balance forward funds from FY22 and how they are expected to be used in FY23, FY23 expenditures of FY23 CPA money, and any anticipated balance forward into FY24.

**A discussion of Tiny House / ADU Project(s) followed .**

**Ms. Timpane** was pessimistic about the cost of an ADU effort, but she thought that the Tiny House Pad idea could be done.

**Mr. Method** acknowledged that a Tiny House is a big asset for the renter. He thought that AHTF might want to build a database of qualified tenants that are pre-qualified.

**Mr. Clark** wants the Board to talk about where AHTF is going. He noted that the group has limited financial resources and limited time to devote to achieving goals and objectives.

**Ms. Timpane** felt that the ADU concept and the Tiny House project are both worthy of attention. Rather than building a database, she would prefer to use the pilot project as a way to measure interest by the number and quality of participant applications.

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**Mr. Method** noted that while Ian Rauch says that an affordable residence costs \$200K, AHTF says that it can incentivize an affordable residence for only \$100K.

**Mr. Clark** opined that AHTF will never be able to buy its way out of the affordable housing crisis.

**Mr. Cooke** asked why not develop an incentive for ADU construction like a small grant combined with a real estate tax holiday?

**Mr. Method** said he wants to talk about ADU issues and answers at the next meeting.

**Mr. Clark** Agreed that ADU units will be a discussion for the next meeting, and he wants Mr. Cooke to talk about tax incentives.

**Mr. Cooke** suggested that AHTF send a letter to Smitty Pignatelli and Paul Mark asking to make the residential tax exemption available to local towns to incentivize local affordable year-round rentals.

**Mr. Reed and Ms. Timpane** both agreed that, rather than start a new subject at this late hour, the group should think on it and come prepared for a good discussion at the next meeting.

**Mr. Clark** opined that, in the future, the Town should resist big affordable housing developments. His feeling is that affordable housing should be scattered throughout the Town. He reiterated that at the next meeting, a principal subject for discussion will be the ADU and that **the next meeting of the AHTF would be Tuesday, Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30PM.**

**CITIZEN SPEAK TIME:** None

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Hearing no objection, Mr. Clark adjourned the meeting at 8:14PM.**

Respectfully,

Shepley W. Evans  
Administrative Support

