

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

**Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 6:30 PM
Remote virtual meeting by ZOOM.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Fred Clark (Chair,) Bill Cooke, Joseph Method, Krystyna Kurzyca, Ananda Timpane.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Garfield Reed

OTHERS PRESENT: Amy Turnbull and Eileen Mooney.

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM and read Governor Baker's and Governor Healy's Orders regarding public access to public meetings.

Mr. Clark announced that, by statute, at the first meeting after the beginning of the fiscal year, the Board must re-organize itself by electing officers. He then called for nominations for Chair.

Mr. Method nominated **Mr. Clark** and **Mr. Cooke** seconded the nomination. **Mr. Clark** called for any other nominations. There were none, and by roll-call vote **Mr. Clark was unanimously elected Chair.**

Mr. Clark then called for nominations for Vice Chair. **Mr. Method** nominated **Mr. Cooke**, and **Mr. Clark** seconded the nomination. **Mr. Clark** called for any other nominations, and **Ms. Kurzyca** nominated **Ms. Timpane**. **Mr. Method** seconded the nomination. After a brief discussion of the duties of the Vice Chair, both nominees expressed a willingness to serve and **Mr. Cooke** expressed a willingness to "mix it up".

Mr. Clark called for a roll-call vote for one of the two nominees, and **Ms. Timpane was unanimously elected Vice-Chair.**

Mr. Clark called for a vote on the minutes of the June 15th ADU Sub-committee meeting. **Ms. Timpane** raised a question about the language concerning families renting to children. **Mr. Clark** suggested a revision striking the language about owners renting to children and saying instead that *"More information is needed on Mrs. Murphy's rule on renting to family members."* **Mr. Clark** called for a motion to approve the minutes of June 15th as revised. **Mr. Cooke** made the motion requested by **Mr. Clark**, which was seconded by **Ms. Timpane**, and **approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

Mr. Clark called for a vote on the minutes of the June 18th full Board meeting. **Ms. Timpane** Called out a small correction on Page 2 where the phrase "buyer selection" should be "applicant selection" and on Page 3 the phrase "calculating 30% of AMI" may be an error. **Mr. Clark** opined that the phrase is an error. It should be that the rent should be calculated at 30% of 100% of AMI. **Mr. Clark** called for a vote to accept two amendments to the minutes of June 18th. By roll- call vote, unanimous approval 4 in favor with one abstention.

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Mr. Clark reported on Grove Street and North Plain Road. Grove Street had a very good open house. Habitat reports that they have 80 inquiries from buyers qualified for the lottery. Sale price will be \$250,000. On North Plain Road, the engineering firm is behind schedule producing the infrastructure plans to go out to bid. Therefore it is looking like construction cannot start until spring of 2024.

Mr. Clark requested to move on to the ADU PILOT PROPOSAL. The proposal outline had been circulated to the Board members.

Ms. Timpane made a motion: *“To adopt the ADU Pilot Proposal as outlined in the Affordable Housing Trust ADU Pilot Proposal document, and stipulating that rental rates on all ADUs in the Pilot Program comply with any and all affordable income rental guidelines.”*

Mr. Cooke seconded Ms. Timpane’s motion and made a motion to correct, on page 6 of the outlined Proposal, “AMI: AMI *maximum* of 100% for the tenant of the Rental Unit (ADU)”

Mr. Clark seconded Mr. Cooke’s motion.

Mr. Method made a motion to strike “50%” from the first bullet on page 7 of the Proposal so that the bullet reads simply “*with compliance forgiven at 10 years.*” Also striking completely the “Repayment” section and the last sentence of the first bullet on page 7. Also on page 8 in the 4th bullet, strike the phrase “– or 20 years, in cases in which the property owner has extended to 20 years-”

Mr. Clark called for a vote on Mr. Method’s motion, which he summarized as “*sun-setting the Program after ten years*”.

Mr. Cooke said he wanted the Program to be reviewed by Town Counsel.

Mr. Clark agreed and called for a roll-call vote: Mr. Cooke - yes; Mr. Method - yes; Ms. Kurzyca – no; Ms. Timpane – yes; Mr. Clark – yes. **Approved 4 to 1.**

Mr. Clark made a motion “*that the total dollar budget for the ADU Pilot Project be reduced from \$150,000 to \$75,000*”, and called for a roll-call vote: Mr. Cooke – no; Mr. Method – no; Ms. Kurzyca – no; Ms. Timpane – no; Mr. Clark – yes; **Defeated 4 to 1.**

Mr. Clark opined that he didn’t think the ADU Pilot Program proposal was ready for a vote yet, and, opening up the meeting for comments, he introduced Amy Turnbull.

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Ms. Turnbull opined that the criteria specified in the Pilot Project proposal for choosing between or among participating ADU proposals were weak and not really workable. She agreed that the \$150,000 budget was sufficient, but she worried that the Board would have difficulty justifying its choices of applicants to award with its support.

Ms. Timpane reminded that Mr. Rembold's suggestion had been that the Board sub-contract the task of evaluating individual applicants and their proposals.

Ms. Mooney asked who would make the evaluation of how much money an applicant reasonably needs to have to produce a proposed ADU.

Ms. Timpane suggested that a subcontractor/evaluator could bring its analysis of a few finalists to the table for a final vote of the Board.

Mr. Method suggested that a criterion that might be useful could be a calculation of cost effectiveness.

Mr. Clark opined that the discussion seems to indicate that there are still issues that need to be thought through, and that maybe the group is not ready to vote this evening. **Mr. Clark made a motion:** *"To table taking a vote and send the matter back to the sub-committee to work on criteria and amendments discussed at this meeting"*. **Mr. Cooke seconded the motion**, and a **roll-call vote was unanimous in favor**.

Mr. Clark announced that the CDC has proposed to buy the Thornwood Inn and run it as workforce housing, similar to the Windflower. They are looking for \$175,000 from AHTF. The property includes 14 rooms, all with bathrooms, a manager's house and possibly some extra land. If there is any interest on the Board's part, CDC will come back and present a proforma presentation. He suggested that the Board might want to issue an RFP to which the CDC and maybe others could respond, thereby avoiding the perception of favoritism.

Ms. Timpane suggested rather than issuing a one-time RFP that expires, maybe the Trust should issue a continuing open RFP.

Mr. Clark reported that Leigh Davis is advocating for a Real Estate Transfer Fee of 1% for properties that sell for over \$1million. Based on recent market statistics, such a tax could generate about \$200,000 annually and the proceeds would be tied to the AHTF. She wants the AHTF to support the concept at an upcoming Selectboard meeting and to get the word out that AHTF works to benefit Great Barrington only.

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Mr. Clark wants the Board to think about budgeting and planning. He made the distinction between CPA money, which comes to the Trust Fund with a unique set of limiting use restrictions, and money which comes to the Trust Fund directly from the Town with fewer constraints. He suggested that the Board should be working in May and June for a vote on a budget effective starting on July 1st and thereafter working on a prospective budget for the following fiscal year.

Ms. Timpane reminded that the Berkshire Delegation is holding a “summit” gathering at Lenox Town Hall on Friday, September 22nd.

Citizen Speak Time:

James Garzone of 84 North Plain Road urged the Board to be more aggressive in its search for funding. He encouraged the Board to seek other ways to raise money without raising taxes.

Mr. Clark announced that the next meeting of the Board would be at 6:30 on September 19th.

Adjournment: Hearing no objections, **Mr. Clark adjourned the meeting at 8:07 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Shepley Evans
Administrative Support