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**Affordable Housing Committee**

Town of Hinesburg

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**Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2023**

**Remote Zoom Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**Committee Members Present:** Carl Bohlen, Mary Beth Bowman, Beth Whitlock, Dave Nagel, Rocky Martin, Xander Patterson, Emily Raymond, and Dale Wernhoff.

The meeting came to order at approximately 7:00 PM.

*FY24 Budget Request Discussion:* For the Hinesburg Fiscal Year 2024 budget, the Hinesburg Affordable Housing Committee (HAHC) in October 2022 requested a total of $12,000 in funds. $2000 was for our general operating expenses and $10,000 was for a new Housing Fund that we hope to use to ease the financial burden of affordable housing costs in our community. In December 2022 we discovered our request had been reduced to $5000 during the Select Board’s preliminary budget discussions. This meeting is to discuss our response to the budget request reduction.

Xander asked for a review of all the potential funding sources we may have for a housing fund. Carl recalled there are three sources:

1. town budget – we had requested $10,000 from the town’s yearly budget;
2. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds – the town is receiving $1.3M in funds, of which we’ve requested $100K go towards the Housing Fund; however, the town has not discussed dollar amounts for this fund, but only funding ideas, and the town isn’t sure these funds could be spent by 2026 which is required by the ARPA regulations, which leads to
3. Revolving Loan Fund – the town has a revolving loan fund set up when Vermont Smoke and Cure came to town. There is $100,000 available in the fund, $50,000 of which is going towards Kelley’s Field expansion project, leaving $50,000 potentially for our Housing Fund.

After much discussion, we all agreed it would be best to ask for as much as possible for the housing fund even if that meant zeroing out any operating funds. Carl will send a memo to the Town Manager to reinstate our housing fund request while reducing our operating funds to a minimal amount.

*HAHC Direction Discussion:* Our committee has five new members in less than two years. Several of the new members asked if the longer-term members could share their accumulated wisdom on various affordable housing topics, and share the history of the committee. Carl suggested bringing in speakers to review affordable housing knowledge while also providing information on any new approaches to the topic. Since funding is such a limiting issue for affordable housing, Xander suggested we speak to experts who know where the funding sources are. Beth suggested contacting affordable housing committees in other towns to share methods and ideas. Carl suggested partnering with UVM on a relevant project as we have done in the past.

It was decided that for our next meeting, Carl would see if either Alex Weinhagen, Director of Planning and Zoning for Hinesburg, or Kathy Beyer, Senior Vice President for Real Estate Development for Evernorth, would be available to provide us with the latest data in the affordable housing field. We’ll also work on a question list for what we want to know and what direction we want our committee to go.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 PM.

**Next Meeting –**

Date, time, and topics to be determined; see agenda on the town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Wernhoff

HAHC Secretary

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