

ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
Minutes Monday, July 26, 2021 – online via Zoom

Pursuant to notice given, a Regular Meeting of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) was held on Monday, July 26, 2021 at 1PM via zoom. Present and constituting a Quorum for the purpose of conducting business were regular members Janet Adachi and Bernice Baran, and associate member Dan Buckley. Janet elevated Dan to a voting member for this meeting to establish a quorum.

Lara Plaskon from RHSO serves as ACHC's off-board Clerk and was present for the meeting.

Guests:

- None

Janet Adachi, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:10PM – delay due to technology issues. Janet read the meeting notice, including the Covid-related guidelines for the meeting.

I. Regular Business

- **Minutes** – The minutes from 6/14/21 were read. Bernice moved to the minutes and Dan seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

• **Financial Report**

Janet reported the following:

- Total ACHC assets as of 6/30/21 – bank accounts have increased by \$21.20 \$71,829.84. This includes savings (\$64,982.57), checking (\$945.15), and CD (\$5,901.92)
- CD (escrow account for Old High School) has been extended for another 5 years through 6/30/16. ACHC will continue to explore whether we need this CD.
- No change in other accounts – Balance for undesignated gifts funds is \$298,926.22, and balance of CPA funds is \$135,000.
- Dan moved to approve the financial report and Bernice seconded; Lara took a roll call vote and motion passed unanimously.

• **Regional Housing Services Offices Update**

Lara reported the following:

- RHSO met for the in person (for the first time since the pandemic) last week to plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Topics included: possible fair housing activities, hiring an additional RHSO staff person, continuation of monitoring projects, and release of 2020 census data and the updating of SHI reports.
- Lara continues to be busy with lottery and affordable re-sale work.

- **Chair Update**

Janet reported the following:

- Ann Corcoran from the Council on Aging (COA) is likely to be the new liaison to the ACHC from the COA Board.
- Annual Town Meeting approved Community Preservation Act (CPA) article, including \$40K for ACHC housing funds, \$500K for AHA's Main Street project.
- Town Meeting also approved warrant article providing for disposition of 26 Carlisle Rd parcel to Habitat for Humanity. Habitat will be submitting request to AHC for financing assistance in the next few months.
- Janet just received grant letter from Community Preservation Committee (CPC) regarding the grant to ACHC; Janet has signed to accept the grant on behalf of ACHC and returned the signed letter to CPC – this topic will be on the agenda and letter will be in the packet of the 9/13 meeting.
- Tavernier Place – plans for financing closing are moving along
 - 7/12 – Select Board approved Town Manager's execution of agreement to have Town participate in consolidated project financing closing process called MassDocs, which treats all project financing as loans. However, the plan subsequently changed.
 - 7/16 - Janet attended a virtual meeting with Common Ground, staff from the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and representative of the lenders/sources of financing to prepare for the financial closing, now projected for mid-September. One suggestion from the meeting was to have the Town's/ACHC's funding commitment be a grant rather than a loan (which is what ACHC had always contemplated) to simplify financing arrangements. ACHC can make a grant to Common Ground (CG) rather than to the borrower (446 Mass Ave LLC), and CG in turn can lend to the borrower. Town would not need to be part of the MassDocs consolidated financing agreement in this case. ACHC and CG still need to execute a grant agreement similar to the previous one in 2017 and 2018 for pre-construction grants of \$50K and \$60K (total of \$110K)
 - The condition of ACHC's original \$450K commitment was confirmation of the remaining project financing, so the payment from ACHC should be at the same time as the mid-September financing closing. Janet will confer with Town Manager and Counsel about getting new grant agreement drafted for inclusion on ACHC's 9/13/21 agenda.
 - DHCD has not appointed a closing attorney yet

- Meeting tomorrow regarding the local preference for Tavernier Place – DHCD requires a written statement to justify local preference. Meeting will include Janet, Liz Rust and Lara from RHO, Planning Director Kristen Guichard, and AHA Executive Director Kelley Cronin.
 - Bernice asked for clarification on the process for setting aside a certain percentage of units for local Acton residents. It was discussed that, although local preference requests are generally granted by DHCD, it is necessary to demonstrate housing needs among Acton residents and to request approval. In addition, attention must be paid to whether the local pool of applicants is diverse enough to reflect the percentage of minority populations in the larger region.
- Select Board assigned new member, Fran Arsenault, to be the new ACHC liaison
- Janet and Bob met with a representative from Suffolk Law re: fair housing and an overview of the process of testing for housing discrimination; Suffolk focuses on rentals. Analysis is expensive for one community to do alone, which is why many towns collaborate. RHO is also working on fair housing issues. ACHC needs to decide whether town should be involved in regional efforts regarding fair housing. One option is to participate via the WestMetro Consortium which recently completed a fair housing analysis for its member communities.

- **Member Reports**
 - Bernice reported that the final community meeting for AHA's Main Street project took place and it went well – they are hoping to go before the ZBA in September

II. New Business

- **Appointment of Andy Richardt as Treasurer for 2021-2022** – Andy confirmed with his employer that he is able to take on the role of ACHC treasurer; Bernice moved to affirm the appointment of Andy as treasurer and Dan seconded – Lara took a roll call vote and the motion pass unanimously.
 - Nancy has met with Andy and has begun to help transition him
- **Update about ACHC meetings for remainder of 2021** – termination of MA state of emergency on 6/15/21; ACHC may transition to in person meetings, so Janet has booked Rm. 126 at Town Hall for 7pm for the rest of the year; however, the September meeting will likely be virtual

III. Old Business

- Project updates - none

IV. Future Agenda Items

- 516 Massachusetts Avenue project overview
- Request for ACHC endorsement of jointly sponsored Housing for All/Acton Climate Coalition public information event on 7/17/21 – event will cover ways to save energy, reduce utility costs, and help protect the environment
- Presentation of proposal for rehabilitation trust
- Member suggestions

Dan moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:35pm and Bernice seconded. Lara took a roll call vote – motion passed unanimously.

The next ACHC meeting will be on September 13, 2021 – either at 7pm in Rm 126 at Town Hall, or virtually at 4pm.

STATEMENT OF DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT THIS MEETING:

Agenda, July 26, 2021

Minutes from June 14, 2021

Financial Report through 6/30/21

Housing Funds report through 6/30/21

Meeting Schedule 2021 – July through December