

**Westport Affordable Housing Trust
Meeting of Nov. 16, 2022
at Westport Town Hall**

Participants: Chair Liz Collins (LC), BettyAnn Mullins (BM), Henry Lanier (HL), James Sabra (JS), Ann Boxler (AB), Craig Dutra (CD). Also present was Interim Housing Specialist Robert Barboza.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 4:02 p.m. with LC, JS, BM, and CD present. HL joined the meeting at 4:08 p.m., and AB joined the meeting at 4:12 p.m.

1. POA: The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance led by the Chair.

2. Minutes: Oct. 26, 2022 Regular Meeting.

MOTION by BM to accept the minutes of the Oct. 26, 2022 regular meeting as submitted. Second by JS. The motion passed on a 3-0-1 vote: BM aye, JS aye, LC aye, with CD abstaining as he was not present at that meeting.

3. Discussion of Housing Specialist RFP Submissions, Search Subcommittee Recommendation:

LC asked Search Subcommittee Chair Sabra to review the evaluation process for the only RFP response received. She collected the written evaluations provided by JS and BM. CD reported that the subcommittee had some questions about the proposed scope of work which had been resolved at the Oct. 12 interview session with the respondent. JS indicated that the Search Subcommittee was recommending that the Trust accept the submitted Proposal and negotiate a contract with Leonardi Aray Associates for the proposed services.

LC suggested the Trust should try to fast-track the hiring of a Housing Specialist because of the possibility there might be an affordable housing component to the former Westport High School re-development plan. She also noted that the Trust's grant application for Community Preservation Act funds is due by Dec. 15; she would like the incoming Housing Specialist to represent the Trust at that meeting. AB explained that the Long Term Building Committee's recommendation that the old high school be retained by the town for renovation into municipal offices, a senior center, school administration office space, a Highway Department facility, and possibly affordable housing, will be put before voters as a non-binding referendum question in the spring. AB suggested that the redevelopment cost estimates make it questionable whether voters would support the plan, especially since a property tax override effort is already in the works. There was more discussion of the Trust's role in discussions of the possible re-uses of the old high school and other potential surplus municipal properties.

MOTION by AB to accept the recommendation of the Search Subcommittee and move to negotiate a contract not to exceed \$40,000 per year with Leonardi Aray Associates for consulting services. Second by CD. The motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

The Chair indicated she would contact KP Law to initiate the contract negotiations, and notify the RFP respondent of the Trust vote. She suggested a Trust meeting on Dec. 7 or Dec. 14 might be called to consider the contract approval, or further discussions of a CPA grant application for Fiscal Year 2024 funding.

MOTION by AB to prepare a Trust application for \$60,000 in community housing funds for FY2024 to support the continued staffing of the Housing Assistance Office and the maintenance of the Trust's affordable housing support programs. Seconded by BM. The motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

MOTION by BM to adjourn the meeting at 4:40 p.m. Seconded by JS. The motion passed on a 6-0 vote.

Approved Date: 2/1/23