

HOUSING COMMISSION

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, June 1, 2022

Housing Commission (HC): Katie Ballard, Chair; Gabrielle Smith, Vice Chair; Emily Taylor; Michelle Teegarden

Administration and Staff: Robin Pierce, Essex Junction Community Development Director; Darren Schibler, Town Planner

1. CALL TO ORDER AND AGENDA ADDITIONS / CHANGES

Ballard called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM. **Smith proposed a motion changing the order of Business items, moving Planning Commission Collaboration from item f to item d. Ballard seconded. Motion passed 4-0.**

2. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public present initially. At 3:13 Rupesh Asher joined the meeting.

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Minutes

Approval of minutes from April 20, 2022 and May 12, 2022.

Smith made a motion, seconded by Taylor, to approve the minutes of April 20, 2022. The motion passed 4-0.

Teegarden made a motion to approve the minutes of May 12, 2022. Ballard seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

b. Recommendation to Selectboard and Trustees on Housing Commission Separation

Discussion: Schibler read the proposed letter to the boards aloud. Smith queried if the language regarding recommending new staffing for the City Housing Commission is strong enough. Teegarden concurred that the language should be stronger. Ballard noted we would like to get these recommendations in front of the boards as soon as possible, however, two commissioners were not present. Given that, she would entertain a motion.

Smith made a motion, seconded by Teegarden, to approve the memo as written in the agenda packet. Schibler noted that our current openings are on hold until our recommendations are received and the board makes decisions. Ballard noted that she is opposed to the motion today because she is seeking additional clarity on multiple points and wanting full Commission involvement in the memo approval, given the importance of this for the future of the commissions. Additionally,

she felt that the memo felt somewhat removed in tone and needs more intentional language to include the human factor. Discussion about the letter not being ready and wanting other commissioners input. Discussion about the hold on filling open positions. Redmond will not be available for summer meetings. The Commissions will be down to four active members with Teegarden not seeking reappointment (see below), which means all must attend every meeting to meet quorum. Concerns about the lack of action from the Selectboard and Trustees to fill the vacancy that has been open since March. Next joint meeting will be sometime later in June; Schibler will share our need for the vacancy to conduct interviews at that meeting.

Ballard called the motion to a vote. **The motion failed 0-4.**

Next steps, get feedback from Watson and Redmond and put it on the agenda for our next meeting.

Vacancies are now urgent. Teegarden and Smith's seats expire on June 30. If those seats are not filled by then, those seats will be vacant until filled. Unless they are filled by July 1, 2022, the Commission will have four members. Schibler will communicate our situation to the Selectboard and Trustees.

c. Membership and Recruitment Update

Teegarden will not be reapplying for a position on the Housing Commission. The next meeting will be her last. One vacancy, two open seats at the end of June (Smith and Teegarden). Smith will reapply, and there are three additional applicants.

d. Planning Commission Collaboration

The Town Planning Commission is initiating collaboration between commissions and committees as they create their work plan. Since we are currently thin on members, we may not be able to be active in this or other opportunities until we are back to full capacity.

Schibler will share information from the Planning Commission with the HC members. We will discuss it at our next meeting.

e. Work Plan Review: Housing Trust Fund

Postponed to the next meeting

f. Work Plan Review: Rental Registry

Postponed to the next meeting

4. Reading File

Discussion on reading file did not happen

5. Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:26 pm.

Minutes prepared by **Gabrielle Smith, Vice Chair**

Minutes reviewed and submitted by Mia Watson, Clerk

Minutes approved June 16, 2022