

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Housing Commission (HC): Anna Brouillette (Chair), Lauren Ressue (Vice Chair), Carolyn Ellenberger (Clerk), Noah Detzer, Lois Whitmore

Administration and Staff: Brittany McGregor (Town of Essex)

Guests: Anne Miller, Michael Oman, Bill Butler

1. Call to Order
2. Agenda additions/changes
3. Public to be Heard
4. Approval of Minutes
 - Approve minutes from December 2, 2025 meeting
5. Business Items
 - Wisdom House Presentation
 - Housing Trust Fund
 - Housing Commission Report for 2025 Annual Report
6. Member and Staff Updates
7. Adjourn

1. CALL TO ORDER

Anna called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

No comments were made by the public.

4. APPROVE MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 2, 2025 MEETING

The minutes from the December 2, 2025 meeting were approved unanimously.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Wisdom House Presentation
 - i. Michael Oman (Jericho) and Bill Butler (Underhill) presented information about Wisdom House, a multigenerational community for Jericho and Underhill
 - ii. See VTDigger article (<https://vtdigger.org/2024/09/23/a-group-of-residents-pursues-multigenerational-housing-project-in-jericho/>) and presentation slides for more information
 - iii. Michael and Bill were thanked for sharing their time and knowledge; Wisdom House offers an attractive example of building homes and community in partnership with the town
- b. Housing Trust Fund
 - i. The Selectboard has included \$37,500 in their proposed budget for "Housing Trust Fund - Research & Seed Funding"
 - ii. Proposal includes \$7,500 to support research (e.g., to identify potential models and funding mechanisms) and \$30,000 as seed money
 - iii. It remains to be determined how the Fund would be used
 - iv. Following Selectboard approval, the item must be approved by voters as part of the overall Selectboard budget approval process

Housing Trust Fund - Research & Seed Funding

- c. Housing Commission Report for 2025 Annual Report
 - i. A 1-page update from the HC for the Annual report must be submitted by January 16, 2026
 - ii. Report should include 2026 priorities and goals
 - iii. **Action**: Lauren to update text from the 2024 report for this year's submission

6. MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES

- Anna will attend the Planning Commission meeting on January 8 to share updates from the HC
- The next 2 HC meetings (February, March 2026) will be held at the police department due to the regular meeting room not being available; the meeting can be joined by zoom as usual
- The HC will add to the February meeting agenda discussion of a potential Roundtable/Housing Night
- **Action:** Brittany to circulate zoning regulations; Noah to lead Housing Commission member review and updates
- Noah proposed creating a plain language guidance on existing zoning regulations once finalized

7. ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:05 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.