

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 7, 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: Cheryl van Epps

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**
- 3. APPROVE AGENDA**
- 4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**
 - a. Comments from the public on Consent items and items not on Agenda
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. Approve minutes from March 3, 2026 meeting
- 6. BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a. Housing Trust - Top two priorities for the goal(s) of the trust
 - b. Human Services Fund - update on committee member from Housing Commission
 - c. Update on Planning Commission liaison
 - d. Review potentially moving Housing Commission meeting time
- 7. MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES**
- 8. ADJOURN**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Anna called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

No changes to the agenda were made.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved unanimously.

4. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

No comments from the public were made at this time.

5. APPROVE MINUTES FROM MARCH 3, 2026 MEETING

Lauren motioned to approve the minutes, Noah seconded. The minutes from the March 3, 2026 meeting were approved unanimously.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Housing Trust - Top two priorities for the goal(s) of the trust
 - i. HC members shared and discussed the following ideas:
 - 1. Offer money for existing housing to be brought up to code, e.g., set aside money for people to make improvements such as bathroom/kitchen fans, insulation, remediate mold; goal is to increase number of people able to live in these homes
 - 2. Support individuals with mini-grants to transition homes to make suitable to age in place, e.g., ramps
 - 3. Support ADUs to make it easier/feasible to add or convert; offer incentives for adding/creating; zoning is being addressed to support, so Trust programs would support complementary opportunities
 - 4. Community housing, e.g., support home shares or community-style living within large homes/buildings
 - 5. Consider marketing and media support
 - 6. Consider community infrastructure
 - 7. Concerns raised about aging infrastructure and doling out funds in small amounts to numerous individuals versus adding new housing for community members to support economic circulation
 - 8. Must consider long-term sustainability of the fund and ongoing funding sources
 - ii. While some HC members were in agreement about small improvement grants to residents, Lois prefers to use the money to leverage grants for new moderate needs housing which would return money to the town via taxes and consumer spending.

- iii. HC members will investigate focusing on:
 - 1. ADUs, e.g., incentive creating
 - 2. Existing home quality improvement related to health, safety, and accessibility
 - 3. Ask contractor to explore other funding opportunities to support housing development within Town of Essex and how to fund, e.g., through partnerships

- iv. **Action:** Anna and Brittany to work together before May HC meeting to identify next steps for Housing Trust Fund

- b. Human Services Fund - update on committee member from Housing Commission
 - i. Cutoff missed for 2026; reach out in January 2027 to obtain a committee member for next year
- c. Update on Planning Commission liaison
 - i. Georgia Lavigne added as Planning Commission liaison
- d. Review potentially moving Housing Commission meeting time
 - i. Meeting time will move to 12:15 - 1:15 PM, first Tuesday of every month

7. MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES

No member or staff were discussed.

8. ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:51 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.