

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**SOMERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND**  
*JOSEPH A. CURTATONE*  
*MAYOR*

*Mary Cassesso, Managing Trustee*

***Trustees***

Lisa Davidson  
Ben Ewen-Campen  
Michael Feloney  
Donna Haynes  
Daniel LeBlanc  
Beth Monroe-Howe  
Martin Polignone  
Andrea Shapiro

**Minutes**

**May 10, 2018 Meeting – 6:15pm**

City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room  
93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143

Trustees present: Lisa Davidson, Mike Feloney, Donna Haynes, Daniel LeBlanc, Martin Polignone, Andrea Shapiro

Trustees not present: Mary Cassesso, Ben Ewen-Campen, Beth Monroe-Howe

Staff attending: Heidi Burbidge, OSPCD Housing Division

Meeting started at 6:20pm with Andrea Shapiro serving as chair.

**1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Trustees reviewed draft meeting minutes for the April 12, 2018 Trust meeting drafted by Heidi Burbidge. Donna Haynes introduced a **motion** to approve the April 12, 2018 meeting minutes which was seconded by Martin Polignone. The motion PASSED, 6-0.

**2. Communications**

Transfer Charge Draft Home Rule Petition status update

- Mike Feloney reported that the BOA Legislative Matters Committee held a second public hearing on May 7<sup>th</sup> related to a request for approval of a Home Rule Petition to authorize the City to impose a Real Estate Transfer Fee to support affordable housing, with specific exemptions to be established. Mike noted that of those who attended the meeting, more spoke in support than opposition. The Legislative Matters committee will consider the matter further at another committee meeting, before any request for consideration by the full BOA might be scheduled.
- Heidi Burbidge notified Trustees that she has drafted short biographies for each Trustee to review and edit, so that more information about those who serve on the Trust can be posted online in response to heightened interest.

Trustee terms and reappointments – next steps

- Heidi reported that terms of four current Trustees will expire at the end of May. The four Trustees are Mary Cassesso, Donna Haynes, Danny LeBlanc and Andrea Shapiro. Each of them can continue to serve until they are reappointed (or replaced). Heidi will follow up on next steps for reappointments.

Martin noted that he does not plan to seek re-appointment upon the end of his term in November. He noted that he was very grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Trust during his term and that his decision not to seek reappointment was based on personal circumstances. Heidi stated that she will initiate the process for advertisement for applicants to fill that position.

Trust Annual Report – distribution of final version (advance copies available)

- Mike reported that the AHTF Fiscal Year 2017 Report has been printed in hard copy with an electronic version posted on the City’s website. Heidi said that she would put a hard copy in the mail to each Trustee. She also asked Trustees to review a list she had drafted of people who would also receive hard copies in the mail or notification by email about the website posting of the report.

Semi-annual Trust update to CPC

- Heidi reported that she was updating a Fall 2017 report to the CPC on Trust activities related to CPA funds, and that staff would also be submitting a Spring 2018 report to them on behalf of the Trust.

### **3. Unfinished Business**

FY18 CPA RFPs

- Heidi noted that the deadlines for CPA proposals are May 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup>, for programs and projects, respectively. Trustees indicated that they would like to know the amount and nature of proposals before deciding what proportion of CPA funds to designate to projects vs. programs.

DOR response regarding Housing Support eligible uses

- Heidi shared a memo to Trustees that summarizes the feedback that the Department of Revenue provided at the request of the City Law department regarding eligible Housing Support uses for Trust and CPA funds. The main point of clarification is that use of CPA funds for Housing Support is limited to programs that provide rental assistance tied directly to a unit, through an agreement by or on behalf of the City with the owner to “buy-down” the rent to make the housing affordable. One-time emergency housing assistance for an individual or family facing eviction can also be eligible, when the landlord enters into an agreement to waive the eviction and reinstate the tenancy upon payment of the arrearage. Program assistance that is not contractually tied to a unit, such as landlord-tenant mediation, legal assistance, case management, housing counseling, financial counseling, moving costs and shelter staffing are not eligible uses for Trust or CPA funds.

Danny offered a motion that the Trust request that the City administration explore all options to be able to implement housing programs determined to be ineligible for Trust and CPA funding such as those described in the memo. The vote was seconded and passed 6-0. It was suggested that staff explore potential for the Trust to seek legal guidance regarding a municipality operating a Housing Trust outside of the state enabling legislation. Specific suggestions for follow-up included: Lawyer’s Clearinghouse, MHP (Shelly Goehring), and Jennifer Goldson.

### **4. New Business**

Timeline for strategic plan

- Heidi noted that the Trust’s strategic vision plan and guidelines were completed in July 2014. It was suggested the Trust hold off for the time being given the possibility that

Somerville could move toward another Trust ordinance, and look toward 2019 for strategic planning efforts.

- Announcements -- Danny announced that the annual Save Our Homes pledge walk would take place on Sunday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. Danny also announced that there will be a joint meeting of the finance committee and the legislative committee on May 16<sup>th</sup> and then a public hearing on May 21<sup>st</sup> about the Clarendon Hill project and a proposed Home Rule petition.

## **5. Adjournment**

At 7:40pm Danny made a motion to adjourn that was seconded by Martin and passed, 6-0.

*Next meeting date – The next meeting date will be June 14, 2018 at 6:15pm.*

Documents distributed:

- Draft April Trust meeting minutes
- Partial list of Trust funded affordable units
- Memo from Heidi Burbidge Re: Clarification of uses considered eligible as Housing Support uses for Trust and CPA funding
- Letter from David P. Shapiro, Assistant City Solicitor to Kathleen Colleary Esq. Re: Housing Support under State Law by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- Email from Patricia F. Hunt, Tax Counsel at the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services, Bureau of Municipal Finance Law to David Shapiro Subject: c. 44, s. 55C Housing Trust Expenditure Questions
- Letter from Sean R. Cronin, Senior Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services to Massachusetts State Representative Stephen Kulik RE: Support of Community Housing under the Community Preservation Act Our File No. 2016-838
- Letter from Kathleen Colleary, Chief of Department of Revenue Division of Local Services, Bureau of Municipal Finance Law to Peter Johnson-Staub, Assistant town Manager of the Town of Falmouth our File No. 2017-78