

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SOMERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND**

*JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR*

Mary Cassesso, Managing Trustee

Trustees

Lisa Davidson
Michael Feloney
Donna Haynes
Daniel LeBlanc
Beth Munroe-Howe
Mark Niedergang
Andrea Shapiro

Minutes

July 20, 2016 Meeting – 3:30 PM
City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room
93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143

Trustees Present: Mary, Lisa, Michael, Donna, Danny, Beth, and Andrea

Clerk to Trust: Kelly Donato and Heidi Burbidge, City of Somerville Housing Division

Guests Present: Antwan Steed, Wayside Youth and Family Support Network; Betsy Reid, Wayside Youth and Family Support Network; Robert Michael Henderson, resident; Mark Alston – Follansbee, Somerville Homeless Coalition; Michael Libby, Somerville Homeless Coalition

The meeting began at 3:45 p.m. with Mary Cassesso serving as chair. There was a round of introductions.

New Business

1. Presentation by Wayside of CPA Request

Antwan Steed described Wayside's target population, which is homeless youth aged 18-22. At 116-118 North Street, Wayside provides them with transitional housing, educational and life skills, and employment search assistance. Nine clients stay on average for a year, and get help transitioning to a permanent living situation. Wayside still works with clients for up to six months after their transition to permanent housing. They offer life skills groups, including their 10-week Street Smart program which is focused on HIV prevention and peer support. HUD funding supports some leasing costs for their building, but not all. Clients pay a small portion towards rent, but there is still a gap. A few years ago, Wayside relocated their ShortStop Program to 116-118 North Street and it took Wayside a year to find a new building, but their rent is going up every year. They had a 5 year lease, then got it extended to a 10 year lease. Questions: Did Wayside come to Trust for this before? No. What is rent increase? 5%/year. What happened with losing HOME funds? Their new site is situated as a group home as opposed to 9 SRO units like at previous site so after a HUD audit they were determined no longer qualified for TBRA. The Trust members gave feedback that they would be willing to meet to discuss permanent solutions and other alternatives in the future, instead of considering funding from this source annually. Antwan and Betsy left the meeting at 3:56p.m.

2. Reading and Approval of June 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes

A motion was introduced by Andrea Shapiro with a second by Danny LeBlanc and PASSED 7-0 to approve the June 9, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

Mike Libby and Mark Alston-Follansbee joined the meeting at 4:00p.m. and Lisa Davidson left the meeting at 4:00 p.m. to recuse herself for the next agenda item.

3. Somerville Homeless Coalition – Passages Program

Since 1997 Somerville Homeless Coalition has been providing case management services. In the 2015 HUD Competition, HUD eliminated their funding of \$240,000 for their Passages and Passages Expansion Programs, which included 3.5 FTE and rent at 1 Davis Square. This funding cut was announced this past Spring. SHC had already forward funded the Program in the amount of \$100,000 while waiting for HUD's 2015 funding announcement. These funds that SHC forward funded cannot be reimbursed by HUD. The Passages Program provided a housing search and case management for those who are homeless, and there is no other program to serve this population within the City. Community Action Agency has some limited capacity to assist some households facing an eviction. These housing services and case management are very important in preventing and ending homelessness. SHC approached the City for assistance and has met with City staff regarding the Program. The program was serving 321 people/year with strong outcomes, housing 62. Mark noted that the City made clear in the meetings that any funding assistance would be in the form of a bridge grant, and that the City could not sustain this Program on an ongoing basis and had suggested a two year grant, with more funding in year one than year two. Assistance would provide SHC time to seek out alternative sources of funding, if available. The City also recommended seeking out a regional approach to these services with other housing agencies. If additional funding is not available in year two, the understanding is that SHC would use the time to wind down and end the program with the existing clients. With Trusty funding, the program could stabilize more existing housing and serve more people at-risk of homelessness, not just homeless or two weeks away from homelessness (which are HUD restrictions). Mike Libby and Mark Alston-Follansbee left the meeting at 4:05p.m. Lisa Davidson rejoined the meeting.

4. NOFA

It was noted that Just-a-Start, Heading Home, Welcome Project and Haitian Coalition did not apply. Trustees prefer that agencies work together with other agencies when possible. There was a comment that in cases of duplication of services, that members believe there is a value to funding where services are provided in other languages spoken by clients.

Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers

MAPS helps with Giving Tuesday fundraising and attend monthly Welfare Coalition. They have an office in Somerville, but this work is out of their Cambridge office. Their hours of service are 9:00a.m.-5:00p.m., which don't actually seem convenient for clients who work, but could be scheduled to coordinate with other agencies like SHA. There was a comment that likely other agencies have similar hours and that they probably have staff who work overtime.

Greater Boston Legal Service

Coordination with other agencies? Noted Susan co-chairs CoC and is active in the CoC. They are active with housing appeals. They are working with Somerville Housing Authority now on the transition to smoke-free buildings. When the Passages HUD grant was cancelled, GBLS had \$25,000 subcontract for services. They help lower-income clients, who are more likely to be renters.

Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services

They are considered the go-to resource when households are facing foreclosure; SCC collaborates with them when doing financial counseling.

Wayside

Support staff and counseling for the ShortStop Program (transitional housing for young adults up to age 22). They attend monthly CoC meetings and have been co-chair in the past. They are a partner in the statewide effort for unaccompanied homeless youth count for past two years. Only one in nine of their youth are from Somerville because of the referral system for the catchment area—once in Somerville, they become a Somerville resident.

Respond

A great, active agency. Active with the Chamber of Commerce. SHA is seeing more apps from victims of domestic violence, and Respond staff calls SHA staff to coordinate, which makes processing more smooth. Respond is the only DV program based here. Children are also served. Agency has a level of trust with those served.

Community Action Agency of Somerville

Trustee Donna Haynes serves on the Board of CAAS. No discussion on this proposal with Donna present..

Walnut Street

This program is a little different because they are working with a disabled population. The Trust doesn't often have opportunity to serve special populations. This is a new application that could have a big impact where the Trust would be part of a start-up investment. It doesn't seem like it is set up to be an ongoing annual request. We would want to make a point to request Somerville data: How many Somerville people housed. Will they find households in Somerville to house them? A reporting measure needs to track this.

At 4:32p.m. Danny LeBlanc, Donna Haynes and Lisa Davidson left the room to recuse themselves from the next agenda item. There were four trustees left: Mary Cassesso, Beth Munroe-Howe, Mike Feloney, and Andrea Shapiro.

It was suggested that the Trust fully fund Wayside, GBLS, SHC, SCC and that CNAHS be added. It was suggested that Walnut be funded at \$10,000, MAPS up to \$4,000, Respond at \$10,500 (Respond should be reminded to keep their proposal current), and CAAS at \$11,000 since they have done a good job turning the agency around. It was suggested that the next NOFA include a program budget template modelled after the budget submitted by Respond, which is perhaps the Associated Grant Maker's format. The clerks will update the NOFA language to reflect this budget presentation and if necessary, include a sample budget so respondents will understand the budget format. Respondents will present request, program budget and agency budget side-by-side.

Andrea Shapiro motioned to allocate the NOFA budget of \$91,000 with the following breakdown (see below). Mike Feloney seconded the motion and the motion PASSED 4-0.

Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers	\$4,000
Somerville Community Corporation	\$15,000
Somerville Homeless Coalition	\$15,000
Greater Boston Legal Services	\$8,500
Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services	\$7,000
Wayside Youth and Family Support Network	\$10,000
Respond	\$10,500
Community Action Agency of Somerville	\$11,000
Walnut Street Center	\$10,000

At 4:45p.m. Donna Haynes, Danny LeBlanc and Lisa Davidson re-joined the meeting.

5. Financial Review

Kelly Donato presented three months of financial reports: November, 2015; December, 2015; and January, 2016. She mentioned that all new revenues received have also been recorded (on the report under monthly revenue and monthly expenses) to provide an idea of how much money is currently available. We are anticipating a past overdraft of \$28,802.06 to be redeposited in July, 2016. Reminded Trustees that October's report was revised.

Danny LeBlanc moved to accept the changes as discussed; Andrea Shapiro seconded and the motion PASSED, 7-0.

6. Update on Vacancy

Martin Anthony Polignone submitted letter of interest in the vacant Trust position. He's been in the city of Somerville since 1998. Housing staff met with him on July 12 to discuss his interest. He is trained in Alternative Dispute Resolution, and he has done significant volunteer work at the Somerville Mediation Program and the

Attorney General's Elder Hotline. His supervisor at the AG called him dependable, tenacious and fair, and said he would be an asset. In discussion, trust members agreed that they welcome more diversity and interest.

Danny LeBlanc made a motion to recommend that the Mayor consider Martin Polignone for the position of Trustee of the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust. Donna Haynes seconded. The motion PASSED 7-0.

There was discussion that the group should re-visit increasing the number of Trustees in the Fall as was recommended in the most recent Strategic Vision.

7. CPA Requests

A question was asked about Wayside's proposal: why CPA and not NOFA? This is purely operational gap (not services). The Trust values their program. Some are not supportive of plugging operational gaps annually, and would prefer to assist with a more permanent solution. Rental assistance is an eligible activity for CPA funds. Trustees would like to conduct strategic planning at a future meeting to establish parameters, and to set policy to cap what a rental assistance program could provide for rent levels.

Lisa Davidson left the room at 5:10p.m. to recuse herself from the next proposals being considered.

There was discussion of \$78,592 gap between CPA program requests and CPA funds currently available to commit. Danny LeBlanc suggested that the Trust consider reducing the \$1.2 million SCC 100 Homes commitment for FY17. This commitment could be replenished also from FY17 funds or City surcharge associated with FY16 but provided in FY17.

Danny LeBlanc left the room to recuse himself at 5:17p.m.

Mary Cassesso made a motion to reduce SCC commitment by \$200,000 for CPA program requests with the intention to replenish. Andrea Shapiro seconded the motion and it was PASSED 6-0.

Danny LeBlanc re-entered the room at 5:20p.m.

The meeting returned to the discussion on 3 CPA Program Requests. Since the SHC CPA request was being considered, discussion turned to all SHC Program Requests. These include Passages (\$275,000), PASS Program (\$15,000) –both from Trust Funds. Also PASS 2 (\$89,250) and Leasing Differential (\$56,868) –both from CPA Funds. The Trust supports the premise of the leasing differential program. Roll out one year PASS Program.

Danny LeBlanc made a motion to move forward with the execution of an agreement from last year's commitment as already approved, and to hold on the year 2 request and to keep funding at what was committed from last year in the amount of \$89,250. Donna Haynes seconded the motion. The motion PASSED, 6-0.

SHC Leasing Differential was discussed.

Danny Le Blanc made a motion to fund the SHC Leasing Differential at \$56,868. Andrea Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion PASSED, 6-0.

Wayside Leasing Differential was discussed.

Andrea Shapiro made a motion to fund the Wayside Leasing Differential at \$26,107. Donna Haynes seconded the motion. The motion PASSED, 6-0.

8. Tenancy Stabilization Program

Somerville Homeless Coalition was the only agency to respond for \$60,000. Trust members would like to receive information on what happened to households after they were assisted.

Andrea Shapiro made a motion to approve funding for the Somerville Homeless Coalition to be awarded \$60,000 to operate a Tenancy Stabilization Program in Somerville. The motion was seconded and it PASSED, 6-0.

9. Somerville Homeless Coalition -- Passages

The Trust decided to table the discussion regarding the funding for this program. SHC is trying to raise funding privately as well. The Trust members want to have SHC at the August meeting. Trust members commit to developing questions to send SHC over email in advance of the meeting.

August meeting will include 30 minutes for the Trust and then 45 minutes each for SHA and SHC. Meeting date will be August 10th, 6:15p.m.-7:30p.m., with Clerk to confirm meeting space (subsequently confirmed for 3rd floor Conference Room, Somerville City Hall by Clerk on July 22). Beth Munroe-Howe will be on vacation.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m. with a motion from Donna and a second from Andrea.

Documents Reviewed:

- CPA Program Requests – SHC Leasing Differential, SHC Pass 2, Wayside Leasing Differential
- NOFA Program Applications – MAPS, SCC, SHC, GBLS, CNAHS, Wayside, Respond, CAAS, and Walnut Street
- Excel sheet summary of FY2017 NOFA Applications received
- TSP Proposal – SHC
- SHC Passages Program Funding Request
- FY16 CPA funds commitment tracking sheet
- November and December 2015 and January 2016 Financial Report
- Draft June 2016 Minutes