

**Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2023**

A meeting of the Salem Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board was held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, at a Remote Zoom meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Members present: Acting Mayor Robert McCarthy, James Willis, Vice Chair Chris Malstrom, Lynda Fairbanks-Atkins, Council President Megan Stott, Councilor Jeff Cohen

Members absent: John Boris, Councilor Caroline Watson-Felt, Mickey Northcutt

Members arriving late: Becky Curran arrived at 6:45 pm and Chair Filipe Zamborlini arrived at 6:59 pm

Staff present: Senior Planner Cassie Moskos and DPCD Deputy Director Amanda Chiancola

Vice Chair Chris Malstrom called the meeting to order with a roll call at 6:39 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Trust Funds

Ms. Moskos started the conversation by introducing the projects that were awarded ARPA money by the City previously. She also reminded the Board of their long term goals, the first two being creation of affordable housing the stabilization of affordable housing. She reminded the board that due to the nature of the ARPA funds, the focus of the spending should be on those two first two goals. Mr. Malstrom indicated he was inclined to support Staff's recommendation to support shovel ready projects but asked how much to allocate to each project. Ms. Chiancola responded it would be up to the Board to determine as part of their criteria. Councilor Cohen requested that some money be kept aside to be able to purchase apartments with the City's right of first refusal program and condo conversion ordinance. Ms. Curran indicated that the Board needed to develop criteria, an RFP, and some method for evaluating projects that are submitted. Councilor Stott asked if Staff had the time to this work. Ms. Moskos and Ms. Chiancola responded that it will also take some time commitment from the Board in addition to Staff's time to get it ready.

Acting Mayor McCarthy followed up that for projects, the money cannot be sent on soft costs such as design, the money must be spent hard construction costs. The federal government has indicated that if the money is not allocated or spent in time it would need to be returned and Salem has no intention of sending any of the money back.

Mr. Zamborlini indicated that he felt the Board should not consider rehab projects.

Councilor Cohen volunteered to work on a subcommittee to look at application criteria and process. Ms. Fairbanks-Atkins asked if the money could be divided between different types of projects, first time homebuyer, rehab, new construction, etc., and volunteered to serve on the working group.

Councilor Stott asked about what shovel ready meant. Ms. Moskos responded that it means that

they will be able to spend any awarded money by the end of 2026. The permitting process can be lengthy from the local and state perspective, so you would want to make sure that the money is going to be able to be utilized.

Councilor Cohen made a motion to form a working group to discuss sample applications and priorities, seconded by Ms. Fairbanks-Atkins. A roll call vote was taken the motion passed unanimously.

B. Inclusionary Zoning

Ms. Moskos introduced the topic and informed the Board that information about the TAP award had not been disclosed by MAPC. She encouraged the Board to have some patience. She understood this topic is very important to the Board, but the MAPC path is the fastest path forward to moving the ordinance forward.

Mr. Zamborlini asked about passing the IZ ordinance while carving out downtown to avoid being out of compliance with the MBTA Housing Choice Law. Ms. Chiancola responded that we currently have an Inclusionary Zoning Planning Board policy, but developers are not getting bonuses and the City is not getting fractional payments. Mr. Zamborlini asked if the policy was in conflict with MBTA requirements. Ms. Chiancola responded no since it's a discussion point between the Planning Board and the developer. The Board again reiterated their desire to move forward.

Councilor Stott asked if the primary stall at the moment was TAP funding, and if funding could come from somewhere else. Ms. Chiancola responded, yes, we are waiting, and we can solicit prices. Councilor Stott also asked what happens if the current IZ ordinance is approved. Ms. Chiancola indicated that the City would not be in compliance with 3A and ineligible for state funding for at minimum streets, parks, and other one stop funding grants.

The Board expressed a desire to try to fund the study through either their ARPA funds or City Council and chose to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Rental Registry

Ms. Moskos introduced the item and explained the benefits of utilizing the certificate of fitness. Councilor Cohen mentioned that many landlords do not participate, but that Lori Stewart, the Housing Stability Coordinator is putting together a landlord forum. He encouraged members to attend to promote this and the condo conversion ordinance.

Mr. Malstrom and Councilor Stott agreed the Certificate of Fitness program is a great start. Mr. Zamborlini added Health departments across the state are underfunded and suggested using ARPA to fund 2 temporary positions to get the program running more robustly. Mr. Zamborlini asked about making a motion to fund up to 2 staff members. Ms. Chiancola stated it would be helpful to know how much that would cost and to check with the Department of Health on their capacity and needs.

B. Future Items

None were introduced.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council President Stott motioned to approve the minutes from March 7, 2023, seconded by Mr. Malstrom. A roll call vote was taken with the following responses:

Councilor Jeff Cohen	Yes
Acting Mayor Robert McCarthy	Yes
Council President Megan Stott	Yes
James Willis	Yes
Chris Malstrom	Yes
Filipe Zamborlini	Yes
Lynda Fairbanks-Atkins	Yes

The motion passed, 7-0

STAFF UPDATES

A. Condo Conversion Ordinance

Ms. Moskos informed the Board that the Home Rule petition had not advanced since the last meeting. She also informed Council President Stott that she would be reaching out to schedule a Committee of the Whole Meeting to follow up on the COW's discussion in November. Councilor Cohen stated he had a meeting scheduled with both Senator Lovely and Representative Cruz to discuss the bill.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Acting Mayor McCarthy, seconded by Ms. Fairbanks-Atkins. A roll call vote was taken the motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Approved by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board on x/x/2023.

Respectively submitted,
Cassie Moskos, AICP
Senior Planner