

Lincoln Housing Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2018, 7:30 AM
Donaldson Room, 16 Lincoln Road

Members Present: Allen Vander Meulen, Chair; Evan Gorman; and Keith Gilbert

(Members unavailable: Diana Chirita, Vice Chair; Bijoy Misra)

Also present: Elaine Carroll, Adm. Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 AM. Keith Gilbert made a motion to approve the regular minutes from the June 26, 2018 meeting as amended. Evan Gorman seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.

COA – Transitional/Emergency Housing:

Carolyn Bottum, COA Director, came before the members to discuss the need for transitional and emergency housing. She said the COA has some human services available and a committee meets every 2 months. There has been a huge increase in services needed for all across the board in the last 18 months with pantry use, housing and needs for the most vulnerable in housing.

There are three categories of needs:

- 1) People just making it and something happens and cannot pay rent and there are emergency funds from COA and St. Vincent DePaul who can make one payment for them;
- 2) Some people who just cannot make it and the COA or St. Vincent DePaul can give a little several times;
- 3) People getting evicted, elder abuse or domestic violence who need to get out of house and need transitional housing.

There is no funding at present for transitional living. Other towns have hotels that are paid to temporarily house those in need, and Minuteman Senior Services will help out. The COA usually gets \$7,000 to \$8,000 a year in donations and St. Vincent DePaul got a grant from the Ogden Codman Trust which is about to run out.

Last year the COA paid out \$7,000 to 11 clients and before that \$3,000 for 6 clients. Carolyn found out that CPA funds may be able to help with rental assistance and also that The Commons is willing to give \$15,000 and willing to house someone. She went to Tim Higgins who sent her to Colleen Wilkins and now she is waiting to hear from Town Counsel to see if this is possible. She thought that rental assistance seemed to be in the uses for CPA funds.

What she is asking for is \$15,000 for transitional housing and \$7,000 to \$10,000 in rental assistance for people in need. This would relieve the stress the COA has on assistance services.

Allen noted that First Parish has a grant program that gives money each year in support of the capital needs of nonprofits [The Jean Wood Preston Grants], and suggested that aspects of the COA's proposal might qualify.

It would be good in the future to have a unit available for transitional housing but it makes more sense to put people up in hotels since there may be a problem getting them out of a housing unit. The members felt that going for \$30,000 would give the COA a cushion to fall back on: any unused funds would rollover into the next year's budget.

Keith Gilbert made a motion to support the COA going forward to seek CPA funds for transitional and housing assistance. Evan Gorman seconded the motion. The vote to support was unanimous. There should be an application for CPA funds available at the next meeting. Pam Gallup and B-J Scheff have both filled out applications for CPA funds and Keith will contact B-J to get her assistance.

Leadership and Task Assignments for Coming Year:

Since there were only three members today, this will be put off until a future meeting. Current Liaisons or Appointments are as follows: AHT – Diana; Land Use Quarterly Chair Meeting – Allen; HOW Group – Bijoy; Community Preservation Committee – Evan; COA – Diana; and SLPIC – Allen. The expectation is that either Allen or Diana will step down from their current HC leadership position this fall, and one of the other HC members will take that position. Allen does not wish to continue as Chairman for more than one more year.

LIP Agreement with CIVICO:

There may be a need for another meeting to vote on this when it is completed.

AAA Legislation Update:

The Legislation rewrote the DHCD-approved tax exemption by-law after Town Meeting had approved it. The town has pushed back on this with a letter saying that this was not acceptable and that the HC would need to go back to Town Meeting to get the proposed changes approved. Rep. Stanley is trying to work with the powers that be to help them understand why it must be in the form it was originally written. Failure to get Legislative approval for the Property Tax rebate will undermine the entire Affordable Accessory Apartment program.

Review of contract for Pam Gallup:

Pam will need to give us an update on the projects she will be working on in the future. This will be put off until that update has been done.

Tenant Updates:

Elaine reported that the dog at 26 Sunnyside Lane is small and very friendly and does not bark at all. The tenant will be licensing the dog through the Town Clerk's Office.

The work on 75 Tower Road was about \$600 over the estimate for the gravel on the driveway because Gerry asked Evan if it was okay to have the company put in the walkway for the tenant at 75A Tower since it would be a better job. Evan gave him the okay.

Evan pointed out that many emergency or urgent situations are too expensive to be handled within Gerry O'Doherty's \$500 limit; and some method must be found to allow more expensive repairs to be handled in a timely fashion without waiting for the HC to meet and approve the work. The \$800 replacement of a broken refrigerator this summer being an example. At Evan's suggestion, Allen Vander Meulen made a motion to that for the time being, Gerry O'Doherty can continue to spend for work done at up to \$500 without member approval; but then work up to \$1,000 can be done with the approval of any HC member. Any amount over \$1,000 would still need a vote of the HC. Keith Gilbert seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous. The HC will revisit this at a future meeting, when all HC members are present, and refine these new guidelines at that time.

The commission discussed continuing Evan's investigation into an alternative source for service & repair for the Units on Tower Rd which use Natural Gas for heat. Given that the company doing furnace repair for the Oil-Burning units on Sunnyside seems to be competent and competitively priced, it was not resolved on if or how to move forward on this issue.

Meeting Schedule:

The next meeting will be on October 9, 2018 at 7:40 AM. (The time was moved a few minutes later to give members time to get their children off to school.) Future meetings will be discussed when all of the HC members are present.

At 8:45 AM, Evan Gorman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Keith Gilbert seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Submitted by Elaine Carroll and Allen Vander Meulen