

Approved Minutes  
Housing Committee  
November 21, 2024

The first meeting of the Housing Committee took place at the Town Offices, Harpswell, ME at 4:30 PM.

Present - Sean Ruel, Cheryl Golek, Bob Gaudreau, Steve Normand, Courtenay Snellings, Mark Eyerman (consultant), Matt James (Town Planner), and David Chipman (Select Board member)  
Absent – Kevin Johnson (Select Board Liaison)

Members and staff introduced themselves.

The Mission of the committee was discussed, along with an explanation of attainable vs affordable housing. Cheryl expressed interest in coming closer to the definition of affordable housing in Harpswell.

Elections were held. Sean Ruel will be Chair, Bob Gaudreau Vice-Chair, and Courtenay Snellings Secretary. Snellings volunteered to take regular minutes. Eyerman will compose the Agenda and send it to Ruel for approval before it is posted and distributed.

Possible meeting dates were discussed. A tentative schedule is to meet on Thursdays at 4 PM approximately every two weeks. In January, Golek, a Maine House Representative, will find out what her committee appointments will be, which may necessitate a change to meeting day/time.

The Right to Know Law was explained, as was a draft policy on remote participation that is consistent with state law. It was decided to hold a public hearing on its adoption at the next meeting.

There was discussion on posting items on our website, such as a call for free land or tax-acquired property, as well as a desire to find a possible committee member with grant-writing skills. There was also discussion on the need for the establishment of a Housing Trust or the ability to work with an existing one.

Eyerman explained that the Housing Committee is accountable to the Town and is advisory to the Select Board. No member may represent the Town without prior permission. The committee will have consultant support probably through the end of June and possibly support from the Town Planner after that.

A goal for the next meeting is to come up with a work plan, and it was suggested we look at the final report of the Affordable Housing Working Group to see their recommendations and prioritize the list. Eyerman suggested we begin by considering the establishment of a Housing Trust, the creation of affordability covenants, and the development of possible amendments to current ordinances. Any proposed ordinance amendments need to be ready and presented to

the Planning Board for public hearing and the Select Board by the first week of January in order for consideration at the 2025 March Town Meeting. Chipman notes that there might also be a June Meeting at which ordinance amendments could be considered.

There was discussion on a piece of property on Bailey Island that might be available to the Town and could be explored for attainable housing. David Chipman and Steve Normand presented this possibility, and Chipman and Normand will continue to pursue the opportunity.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

The next meeting will be December 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 PM rather than 4:00 to accommodate committee members.