



State Representative: Chaz Sexton-Diranian (2022)

Chairman: Laura E. Shifrin (2021)

Clerk: Natalie Call (2024)

Vice Chairman: Courtney Borelli (2023)

Tenant Seat: Vacancy (2024)

MINUTES

Wednesday April 28, 2021

Via ZOOM 2:30PM

THIS IS AN OPEN MEETING AND ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND
TOWNSEND HOUSING AUTHORITY
JOINT MEETING WITH
TOWNSEND AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

Join Zoom Meeting

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Preliminaries:

1.1 Meeting called to order at 2:39PM.

1.2 Roll Call showed Affordable Housing Trust Fund Chair, Joan Savoy (JS), Board of Selectmen Trust Fund Liaison, Veronica Kell (VK), Housing Trust member Gary Shepherd (GS), and Housing Trust member Mike Virostko (MK). At the time, the Housing Authority did not have a quorum. Present members Chairman Laura Shifrin (LS), and State Rep Chaz Sexton-Diranian (CSD)



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Work Session:

2.1 Joint meeting with the Townsend Affordable Housing Trust Fund DISCUSSION-Rental Assistance Program from the state. Jacqueline Alvarez (JA) from the

Central Mass Housing Alliance (CMHA) explained ERAP (Emergency Rental Assistance Program)-A program for renters who have been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic; eligible applicants may be helped with back rent up to 12 months. In addition to 12 months of rental arrears, which may be combined with CvRF (Covid Relief Fund) money. ERAP Funds are only available to renters and must certify that their housing situation was due to COVID.

JS said that there is the option of covering first/last and security deposits with ERAP. JA clarified that people without a housing subsidy in place are eligible for first/last/security and people with a housing subsidy in place are only eligible for security deposit.

At 2:52PM The Housing Authority Clerk Natalie Call (NC) joined the meeting. LS called the Housing Authority meeting to order.

VK moved to grant permission to anyone in Townsend who has maxed out or applied to the Covid Cares relief Fund to reapply to CMHA for ERAP benefits. GS seconded. Roll call vote unanimous.

VK moved to permit CMHA to combine Covid funds with ERAP funds for renters as they see fit. GS seconded. Roll call vote unanimous.

VK moved to allow CMHA to pay first, last, security and two months rental stipends for people that have no rental subsidy and security deposits for people that do have rental subsidies. GS seconded. VK asked if this was a redundant vote given the last two motions. JS explained that CMHA asked specifically to get permission for them to give first/last/security. VK asked what was being done otherwise; JS said paying rent not first/last/ security. GS expressed concern paying security and first and last as that would indicate a tenant not already in place. JS said that the money was for people who have been displaced (due to Covid). LS said that there are varying reasons why people are displaced that have nothing to do with affordability. Further discussed that there are qualifying processes in place that would require financials to be approved for the housing option.

Roll call vote unanimous.

GS moved to adjourn at 3:05PM. VK seconded. Roll call vote unanimous.



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Mission: “To promote, maintain and provide housing opportunities for income groups who could not otherwise afford to live here.”