

**MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE
HARWICH AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
GRIFFIN ROOM, TOWN HALL
732 MAIN STREET, HARWICH, MA
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2025 - 1:00PM**

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Brendan Lowney, Chair, Claudia Williams and Jeff Handler

MEMBERS NOT PARTICIPATING: Bob Spencer

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Lowney called the meeting of the Harwich Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT) to order on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 1:00PM and conducted a roll call.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Handler noted that the Interim Town Administrator has closed the process of interviewing applicants for the position of a seat on the HAHT as well as being the Chair of the HAHT. The Interim Town Administrator will make his recommendation of that appointment, to the Select Board on Monday, October 27, 2025.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Application from Harwich Fire Association

Bruce Young, President of the Harwich Fire Association gave an update on their project which is 99% completed. Mr. Young asked the HAHT for \$10,000 to help the Fire Association get the lottery started with the management company, Bass River Properties. He stated that the application is with Attorney Crowell.

Mr. Lowney confirmed the next steps to the lottery.

Mr. Handler moved that the HAHT grant and approve in the dollar amount of \$10,000 to the Old Bank Street Firehouse for the purpose of lottery costs. Seconded by Ms. Williams.

Vote: 3:0 in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Young noted that he had received an email from the Harwich Massachusetts Planning Commission which he described and stated that it was a scam.

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B. A request to be heard from Lou Urbano

Lou Urbano read a letter that he had previously presented to the Select Board, regarding the HAHT's vital role in addressing housing challenges. His letter included suggestions and recommendations of the HAHT's role moving forward. Mr. Urbano explained the reasons for his recommendations in detail. Some of his recommendations included requiring the financials of applicants, payback to the HAHT with some investments, a buy down program and private funds for the future of the HAHT. He encouraged members of the HAHT to think of alternatives and consider his suggestions.

Mr. Lowney noted that the HAHT has a joint meeting with the Housing Committee in December and he invited Mr. Urbano to attend and share his thoughts and suggestions.

Mr. Handler agreed with some of Mr. Urbano's comments about the committees and boards. He noted that the Select Board and the HAHT are working to build better communication between boards, committees and employees. He added that the public should be able to give input to the discussions that Mr. Urbano referred to. Mr. Handler suggested some things that the HAHT could do towards doing a better job of understanding, being understood and creating long and short term strategies.

C. RFP for 0 Depot Road

Mr. Lowney noted that Laura Shufelt will be coming in November to discuss three RFPS for the three parcels.

D. Review CPC Application

Mr. Lowney noted a request, that every spring and fall the CPC wants to give an update report. The HAHT had done a report in April. He noted that he had filled in some HAHT information and achievements in the application which had been submitted. Mr. Lowney noted that the HAHT will present to the CPC on November 13th

Mr. Handler offered, as the liaison to the CPC, to stay in communication with the Chair of the CPC with respect to this application.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review/Vote the Minutes from: September 8, 2025

Mr. Handler moved to approve the HAHT Minutes for September 8, 2025. Seconded by Ms. Williams.

Vote: 3:0 in favor. Motion carried.

B. Updates on the question of legal counsel - vote may be taken

Mr. Handler noted that he had a brief conversation with Tony Schiavi, Interim Town Administrator about the question of legal counsel. He stated that the HAHT has the opportunity to secure its own legal counsel. The Trust needs to make the decision on whether or not they want to use town counsel or seek their own independent counsel. Mr. Handler expressed his opinion.

Members discussed specific issues when they would need independent counsel. It was noted that they can still use KP Law and look for someone else for those noted issues.

After discussion, members agreed to continue the discussion and the vote until Mr. Spencer could be part of the conversation.

Mr. Handler also noted that the HAHT can also secure other professionals as needed without town involvement.

Elizabeth Harder of Harwich Center noted that the Charter Committee Assembly of Delegates had the same dilemma regarding independent counsel. She recommended talking to the counsel they had used.

C. Update RFPs for 0 Oak Street and 0 Depot Street

Mr. Lowney noted that this will be discussed when Ms. Shufelt attends the November meeting.

D. Updates on 265 Sisson Road

Mr. Lowney noted that the Jr. Theatre has provided Bob Spencer with the information he requested regarding 265 Sisson Road, including proof of insurance with the HAHT being named as the additional insured and total payments made. Figures regarding capital improvements and what the town has contributed have not yet been received. Mr. Lowney also noted language in the lease that counsel could clarify.

Mr. Handler noted what the Select Board is doing regarding the license/leases that reside in municipal buildings in Harwich.

E. Updates on 456 Queen Anne Road

Mr. Lowney gave an update on what the Pennrose engineers have done on the property and that they have been approved by the Select Board and are gearing up to submit to the ZBA.

F. Updates on ADUs and Affordable Housing

Mr. Handler gave an update on Mr. Carey's project at the School House, noting that Mr. Carey is waiting on the State for the three affordable units.

Mr. Lowney noted that there will be further discussion on the ADU's.

G. Updates on Inclusionary and Incentive Zoning

Mr. Lowney suggested that this discussion be continued until the December meeting.

Ms. Williams noted that she had spoken with Brianna Powell, Housing Advocate, regarding Inclusionary and Incentive Zoning. She will have more information at the next meeting.

H. Continued discussion of Trust Documents and related matters

Mr. Lowney noted various opinions and clarity on issues regarding the Trust Documents. He noted that KP Law had written an outline of an amendment if the HAHT wanted to change the By-law. He stated that everything the HAHT is presently doing is consistent with Mass General Law.

Ms. Williams noted specific questions and concerns regarding the Interim Town Administrator (ITA) or Town Administrator's (TA) role with the HAHT.

Mr. Lowney replied that the ITA, TA or his designee will be the Chair of the HAHT.

Ms. Williams stated that she would like to have further discussion regarding the HAHT's options, what other towns are doing and if they have the same set up.

Mr. Handler agreed that a larger discussion is needed and suggested the HAHT use KP Law to clean up the language prior to Mr. Schiavi leaving his post.

Trust members discussed options and offered opinions regarding the TA's role with the HAHT.

V. NEXT MEETING

Mr. Lowney noted that the next meeting is November 10th at 1:00PM and the December 9th meeting will be at 5:00PM.

Mr. Handler thanked Mr. Lowney for his work as Chair.

VI. ADJOURN

Mr. Handler moved to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Williams.

Vote: 3:0 in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:53PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Moldstad
Board Secretary

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