

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, April 12, 2017**

**6:30 PM - GREAT BARRINGTON TOWN HALL, 334 MAIN STREET**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** JOHN KATZ; SAMANTHA HOMEYER; CARA DAVIS; FRED CLARK; BRUCE MARZOTTO; and BILL COOKE

**OTHERS PRESENT:** CHRIS REMBOLD, Town Planner; SHEP EVANS, Administrator; JONATHAN HANKIN, Planning Board

**CALL TO ORDER**

Bill Cooke called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with introductions around the meeting room table.

Bill Cooke and Chris Rembold introduced and explained the Great Barrington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Bylaw. During a discussion of the Bylaw, Fred Clark raised a question about a possible or inconsistency between Bylaw Section 3, which says that the Trust has the power to buy, sell, hold, receive, transfer or convey personal, mixed or real property, and Section 11, which says that “neither the Trustees nor any agent or officer of the Trust shall have the authority to bind the Town”. It was explained that the Trust will raise its own money and secure its own grants from time to time operating according to its own budget independent from the Town budget.

Chris Rembold introduced the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust **Operations Manual** prepared by the Mass Housing Partnership and distributed copies of the document. Members of the Mass Housing Partnership staff will be coming to Great Barrington to provide training on the operations of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund on Tuesday , April 25<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

As with other Commissions and Boards, Trust Board business meetings will be conducted according to Roberts’ Rules of Order and a quorum will be required to conduct business. A full board of seven Trustees will require a quorum of at least four members to conduct business. All Trustees must complete Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest training and paperwork supplied by the Town Clerk. Notices of meetings including agendas will be posted with the Town Clerk at least 5 business days before each meeting. Agenda Notes will be posted within 24 hours.

Bill Cooke proposed that the Trustees proceed to elect officers for the coming year. John Katz nominated Bill Cooke for Chairman. Bill Cooke accepted, and the vote was unanimous in favor, 5-0. For Vice-Chairman, Bill Cooke nominated Fred Clark, who accepted, and the vote was unanimous in favor, 5-0. Finally, Bill Cooke nominated Bruce Marzotto for Clerk. Mr. Marzotto accepted and the vote was again unanimous in favor, 5-0. It was also unanimously agreed that the next election of officers would be at the first meeting of the Board of Trustees in April, 2018.

Chairman Cooke opined that to help the officers and other Board members understand the terms of various parts of the Fund's Declaration of Trust, it might initially be necessary to get outside legal assistance.

Looking at the year ahead, Chairman Cooke suggested establishing a regular meeting schedule for the Board. After a general discussion of various days and weeks of each month, it was unanimously agreed that the Board would meet on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM at Town Hall.

The board then proceeded into a brainstorming type of discussion where issues were raised and questions posed – more to stimulate thinking than to reach immediate solid answers. There was general agreement that the Board needed to discuss what direction they should go, what goals they should set, what the Board means by “affordable” housing, and whether they should focus on rental housing or affordable home ownership. The thought was offered that, since this group is new to these subjects, perhaps they should “stay open to whatever comes along” rather than narrow their focus too much.

To the question of what resources would be available to the Board initially, it was acknowledged that the Town was expected to vote at Town Meeting to contribute \$15,000 and to approve CPA funding of \$50,000 as seed money for the Affordable Housing Trust. It was suggested that the Board consider collaborating with existing not-for-profit affordable housing entities, rather than competing for the same real estate or the same tenants or purchasers.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully,  
Shep Evans