



**Watertown City Council
Committee on Human Services
Monday, July 21, 2025**

Members Present: Councilor Tony Palomba, Chair; Councilor Caroline Bays, Vice Chair; and Councilor John Gannon, Secretary

The Committee on Human Services held a public meeting on July 21, 2025, at 6:00pm to consider reappointments of trustees of the Watertown Affordable Housing Trust.

1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Palomba called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and introduced the other committee members present: Caroline Bays, Vice Chair; and John Gannon, Secretary. Also present during the course of the meeting were Leo Patterson, David Leon and Jill Hyde.

2. Interview of Leo Patterson on Confirmation of His Re-Appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a Term to Expire on June 30, 2027.

Leo Patterson has a background in the design and construction of affordable housing. Going back over a period of twenty years, he has worked on the development of numerous affordable housing developments, including in Jersey City, NJ; Cambridge, Lowell and Edgartown on Martha's Vineyard. His firm is also proficient in quality design and in developing elderly housing, including inter-generational housing opportunities. He has also served on the Watertown School Building Committee. He expressed his appreciation for his service on the Trust as enlightening him on the challenges of funding affordable housing. He sees the Trust as ramping up in its efforts. He praised the talents of his fellow trustees and how they have been meeting to perform due diligence on the development potential of numerous parcels in town. In terms of generating more affordable housing opportunities in Watertown, he sees the potential of land trusts to ensure that properties remain affordable. He sees the Trust as a fiduciary of affordable housing funds, as well as a developer of affordable housing units. He sees the potential of developing accessory dwelling units into affordable housing units.

Councilor Bays moved that the Committee recommend that Leo Patterson be re-appointed to the Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027. Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The vote to approve the re-appointment was 3-0.

3. Interview of David Leon on Confirmation of His Re-Appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a Term to Expire on June 30, 2027.

David Leon has an extensive background in real estate finance and development, specializing in the development of affordable housing. He brings a broad range of expertise. He had served on the Watertown Housing Partnership for over twenty-three years. In his service as a Trustee, he believes that the Affordable Housing Trust allows the city to be both a funder of affordable housing projects, as well as a developer of such projects. He praised the depth of experience in affordable housing of his fellow Trustees. He states that the Trustees have been performing due diligence and reaching out to developers regarding a number of properties in Watertown that have the potential for the creation of affordable housing units. He acknowledged the difficulty that the Trustees face in competing against for-profit developers regarding such properties. He stated that the Trust's contribution of \$400,000 to develop affordable housing units at the Willow Park project was a great use of the Trust's funds. He also sees the potential of creating new affordable housing units through the building of accessory housing units. He looks forward to participating in moving the new zoning ordinance on ADU's forward. Councilor Palomba stated that he is interested in the Trust's present development of a five-year housing plan.

Councilor Bays moved that the Committee recommend that David Leon be re-appointed to the Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027. Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The vote to approve the re-appointment was 3-0.

4. Interview of Jill Hyde on Confirmation of Her Re-Appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a Term to Expire on June 30, 2027.

Jill Hyde serves as a lawyer and has an extensive background in real estate development, servicing, management, finance, and title issues. She has worked on numerous affordable housing development projects and has been involved in all aspects of real estate transactions. She has focused on the development of transit-oriented housing projects. In her service as a Trustee, she stated that the Trust has made great strides in developing an inventory of potential sites for the building of affordable housing units. She also stated that the Trust is also working on a new

five-year housing plan. Councilor Palomba acknowledged that he wished the work of the Trust did not involve as many meetings held in executive session to discuss potential site acquisitions for affordable housing. He is interested in knowing more about the work of the Trust. He looks forward to seeing the release of executive session meeting minutes when the subjects of the meetings may be discussed in a public setting.

Councilor Bays moved that the Committee recommend that Jill Hyde be re-appointed to the Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027. Councilor Gannon seconded the motion. The vote to approve the nomination was 3-0.

In addition, the Committee requests that the City Council vote on the following action items:

Action Item 1. Confirmation of Leo Patterson for re-appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027.

Action Item 2. Confirmation of David Leon for re-appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027.

Action Item 3. Confirmation of Jill Hyde for re-appointment to the Affordable Housing Trust for a term to expire on June 30, 2027.

Councilor Gannon made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Bays. The vote was 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
John Gannon, Secretary

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Anthony Palomba,
Chair

Caroline Bays,
Vice Chair

John G. Gannon,
Secretary

