



# CITY OF WATERTOWN

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

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### Minutes of Watertown Affordable Housing Trust Meeting September 10, 2025 6:00 PM

#### **Attendance**

Members present: Cliff Cook, David Leon, and Jill Hyde. Members absent: George Proakis, Helen Oliver, and Zoe Weinrobe. Member present for part of meeting: Leo Patterson. Non-members present in person or remotely: Larry Field (staff), Alisa Gardner-Todres, Jenna Bancroft, Jacky van Leeuwen, and Anthony Palomba.

Note: Due to technical problems, there was a quorum only between 6:21 and 6:29 PM. The meeting minutes, however, cover the time between 6:20 and 6:47 PM. Between 6 and 6:20 PM, the Chair waited to identify and resolve connectivity issues relating to Trustee Leo Patterson, and there was no discussion.

#### **I. Minutes of July 15, 2025 meeting**

There being no quorum, no action was taken on the Minutes of the July 15, 2025 meeting. Between 6:20 and 6:21 PM, the meeting was called to order for Jenna Bancroft, the new Human Services Director, to introduce herself with the understanding that there would be no substantive remarks.

#### **II. Introduction of Jenna Bancroft, Human Services Director**

Between 6:21 and 6:29 PM, while Patterson was in the meeting, she briefly discussed the Human Services Need Assessment and described the various responsibilities of the new department. One aspect of the work is partnering with Wayside Youth. She said that housing is central to all of Wayside's cases, even if the individual/household did not initially come to Wayside because of a housing problem. She looks forward to partnering with the Trust as well.

Cliff asked a two-part question: 1) what recent trends has she seen relating to housing and 2) what does she want to do on housing issues? Jenna said that a continuing trend has been housing cost increases and increasing problems in finding and staying in housing. Jenna noted that she is still getting to know the community and has been talking with many people and organizations. On what the Department might do, Jenna said that she and her staff will continue to learn, and a key goal is getting resources out to residents so that they know more about how to get help.

At that point, Leo dropped from the meeting. Cliff thanked Jenna for coming and said the Trust would be happy to work with her and have her back at any time.

### **III. Housing Plan 2026-2030**

Given the lack of quorum, the meeting paused to determine if Leo would be rejoining the meeting and then there was discussion about how to proceed on the various agenda items. With respect to the housing plan, Larry ultimately said:

- the new iteration of the goals and strategies section would be on the October 21 meeting agenda.
- Since sections II and III of the Housing Plan are updates of background information, Larry suggested that trustees and/or members of the public could email comments. In any event, the full plan would be before the Trust at some point for discussion and an adoption vote.

### **IV. Fair Housing Trainings in Fall 2025**

This item consisted of a summary of publicly posted events, with no discussion. Larry said there will be trainings on October 23, 2025 and November 12, 2025, jointly sponsored by the Trust and Human Rights Commission. The first will be for tenants and members of the public. The second will be for owners, property managers and licensed real estate agents. Emily Cortez of the Suffolk University Law School Fair Housing Center will do both. The first will be hybrid, in the Council Chamber at 6:30 PM. The second will be remote only at 5 PM.

### **V. Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **VI. Executive Session**

No executive session was necessary. The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:47 PM.