

1 **Approved February 1, 2023**

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3 **THE SOUTHBOROUGH HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**
4 **(SHOPC)**
5 **MEETING MINUTES**

6 **Tuesday, January 10, 2023 7PM**

7 **VIRTUAL MEETING/REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

8
9 Members present: Doriann Jasinski, Tom Bhisitkul, John Wood, Andrew Dennington, Jesse
10 Stein, and Douglas Manz. Members absent: Alex Frisch Also present: Sarah Hoecker, Consultant
11 and/prior Business Administrator I

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13 **CALL TO ORDER:**

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15 The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

16
17 **Consent Agenda:**

18 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION** by Mr. Wood to approve the Meeting Minutes from
19 December 5, 2022. **Seconded** by Mr. Stein. **ROLL CALL: Dennington-Yes, Bhisitkul-Yes, Stein-**
20 **Yes, Wood-Yes, Manz-Yes, Jasinski-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes-6, No-0, Absent-1 Frisch**

21
22 **Affordable Housing Trust – 5-Year Plan:**

23 Ms. Jasinski indicated she sent the final draft document out to all members before the meeting.
24 Mr. Wood and Mr. Bhisitkul noted they had not had time to review. Mr. Bhisitkul asked Ms.
25 Jasinski why the members listed on the document did not reflect the current board. Ms. Jasinski
26 stated since the document is in its final draft it reflects the board composition at the time it was
27 written. Mr. Dennington asked for a brief overview of the document and why it was created.
28 Ms. Jasinski explained the document was created to strategically implement the Housing
29 Production Plan. If we follow what is in the new 5-Year Strategic Plan we should be able to
30 create additional affordable housing effectively. Mr. Bhisitkul added this is part of the issue
31 we've been trying to address to get housing money from the Community Preservation
32 Committee (PCP) to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF). This is the road map to release
33 those funds.

34
35 **Warrant Article Preparation:**

36 Ms. Jasinski noted there are is still \$471,945.09 dollars of housing money in the CPC housing
37 bucket. Those funds also need to be transferred into the AHTF. Ms. Jasinski indicated SHOPC
38 only has one warrant article placeholder for the annual transfer of funds, but had given up a
39 second placeholder for the transfer of existing funds. She stressed the necessity to transfer
40 Community Preservation Act (CPA) housing monies approved at Annual Town Meeting (ATM)
41 into the AHTF immediately upon approval. Mr. Wood asked if the two ideas could be combined
42 under one warrant article. Ms. Jasinski said we could however she thought it was really a
43 separate topic for another warrant article. Ms. Jasinski noted Attorney Tallerman had attended
44 the June 27, 2022 SHOPC meeting and gave comment on the warrant article language at that
45 time. She asked Ms. Hoecker to pull up the minutes from that date. Ms. Jasinski then read

46 selected text from the minutes starting on line 68 ending on line 73. She additionally read from
47 line 78, 79, 82, 86, 87, and 99 of the minutes. Most notably she highlighted the CPA warrant
48 article can be amended at ATM on the floor if CPC is not in favor of the changes. Ms. Jasinski
49 indicated the new language was sent to Attorney Tallerman for written opinion. She stated she
50 hoped the opinion would have been completed for the meeting, however we are still awaiting
51 response. Mr. Bhisitkul stated he thought monies had been transferred into the AHTF. Ms.
52 Jasinski clarified the \$196K dollars was transferred but that only represented monies from
53 2009, 2011, and 2012. Mr. Bhisitkul asked why did we only request the transfer of housing
54 monies from those specific years. Ms. Jasinski stated because those were the earliest monies.
55 Mr. Bhisitkul asked if it was possible to just request the release of the additional funds from
56 CPC. Ms. Jasinski noted it was very hard to get the monies from CPC in the first round. Mr.
57 Bhisitkul asked again if SHOPC needed two warrant articles for the request to release the
58 additional funds and the ongoing allocation of approved monies to the AHTF. Ms. Jasinski
59 cautioned that combined the two separate ideas may make it harder for the warrant article to
60 pass at ATM. She then confirmed with Mr. Dennington the warrant had been closed by vote of
61 the Select Board (SB). Mr. Dennington took a look back at the warrant to confirm there is a
62 warrant article placeholder to transfer the previously approved CPA monies. Ms. Jasinski again
63 spoke about how the current antiquated system is hindering the development of affordable
64 housing. Mr. Wood agreed stating he could think of at least six opportunities SHOPC missed out
65 on in the past three years due to the current process. Mr. Wood asked if there was a way to
66 write the warrant article to indicated the release of monies past and present if there is only one
67 placeholder. Discussion ensued regarding the current processes. Ms. Jasinski said she would
68 send an email to CPC to see if they would release the previous funding. Mr. Bhisitkul indicated
69 the process is long and cumbersome but can be over come with buying contingency. Mr. Wood
70 said in the past we were up against buyers who offered cash with no contingency. Mr. Stein
71 reminded everyone to spend funds under the preview of CPC requires a vote at ATM. Ms.
72 Hoecker clarified the expenditure of money is governed differently depending on where is it
73 coming from. Mr. Stein also acknowledged money has been spent in this way for a very long
74 time in town. He cautioned the group to be aware of potential opposition from residents who
75 may feel like this process is removing a perceived safeguard against unlawful spending. Mr.
76 Wood encouraged a grassroots campaign to educate residents about why the change is being
77 proposed and how it will benefit the town. Mr. Dennington found the placeholder which
78 currently states 'transfer of affordable housing funds from CPC' but does not indicate if that is a
79 one-time transfer or an ongoing annual transfer. Mr. Stein asked about the terms for the
80 Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee (AHTFC) made up of all SB members as well as two
81 additional members. Mr. Stein noted the AHTFC would have to approve the expenditure of
82 funds. He sated he supported this warrant article as the right policy moving forward. Mr. Wood
83 encouraged Ms. Jasinski to email CPC to request the release of the previously approved funds.
84 He said he would support Ms. Jasinski in her efforts in drafting and sending an article.

85 **SHOPC Subcommittee Update**

86 Mr. Bhisitkul stated to use a movie analogy, all the scenes have been shot, everything just
87 needs to be edited together, which he anticipated will be done by this time next month Mr.
88 Stein thanked Mr. Bhisitkul for his work as chair of the Subcommittee. He also noted there was
89 a large portion of the 5-Year Strategic report noted problems with the current MRD (Major
90 Residential Development) process within the town. Ms. Jasinski and Mr. Bhisitkul both noted a
91 need to address crafting an updated bylaw amendment to make the process more effective.

92 Mr. Stein and Mr. Wood noted the Planning Board would be the likely sponsor for a bylaw
93 update. Ms. Jasinski stated she would invite the Planning Board to a SHOPC meeting. Mr.
94 Bhisitkul acknowledged it is a well written bylaw that just needs to be updated to take away
95 some of the roadblocks existing in the language. Ms. Jasinski would like to discuss the MRD at
96 the next SHOPC meeting to prepare for a potential meeting with the Planning Board.

97

98 **MBTA Communities:**

99 Ms. Jasinski gave a summary about the draft document that was edited by SHOPC and
100 submitted to the Planning Board for review. Mr. Stein acknowledged Ms. Luttrell (Planning
101 Board Chair) and Colleen (Planning Staff) for their work on completing the MBTA Communities
102 Action Plan. He recalled from last night's Planning Board meeting that the group was awaiting
103 comment from the SB for submission. Ms. Jasinski offered support from SHOPC.

104 **Special Municipal Employee Designation:**

105 Ms. Jasinski noted she was still awaiting a vote from the SB for official designation. She
106 reminded everyone Mr. Wood SME status with other boards in town did not cover him for
107 SHOPC. She asked Mr. Dennington to reach out to the SB chair to try to expedite the process.
108 Mr. Dennington stated he did not know if there was a specific time the SB looked at all SME
109 designation requests.

110 **Grant Opportunities:**

111 Ms. Hoecker briefly outlined potential grant opportunities including Community Development
112 Economic Assistance Corporation planning grants and Housing Choice Designation. She
113 indicated many of the communities around Southborough already have that designation. Mr.
114 Wood added the Economic Development Committee is promoting a warrant article to promote
115 a full-time employee position who would work half-time for the EDC and half-time as a general
116 grant writer for the town to be used by all boards and committees in town. He said most other
117 communities in the area have grant writers on staff.

118 **NEXT MEETING:**

119 The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 7PM.

120

121 **ADJOURN: MOTION** by Mr. Stein to adjourn at 8:03 PM. **Seconded by** Mr. Wood. **ROLL CALL:**
122 **Bhisitkul-Yes, Dennington-Yes, Manz-Yes, Wood-Yes, Stein-Yes, Jasinski-Yes. VOTE to**
123 **Approve: Yes-6, No-0, Absent-0**

124

125 **Documents Used:**

- 126 • Minutes from SHOPC Meeting June 27, 2022

127

128 Respectfully Submitted,

129

130 Doriann Jasinski

131 SHOPC Chair