

**TOWN OF BLUFFTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE**  
Electronic Meeting  
**Thursday, February 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

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Present: Chairman, Councilman Fred Hamilton; Councilman Dan Wood; Meg James; Gwen Chambers; LeDeen Hangen; Denolis Polite; and, Jon Nickel

Staff: Victoria Smalls, Community Development Coordinator; Heather Colin, Director of Growth Management; Kevin Icard, Planning and Community Development Director; Darby McLain, Growth Management Coordinator; Charlotte Moore, Principal Planner; and, Terry Finger, Town Attorney

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Hamilton called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

All were present. Denolis Polite joined at 10:08 a.m. Jon Nickel joined at 10:09 a.m.

**III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Director of Growth Management Director Colin requested that the agenda be amended to add an item under Executive Session relative to negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements for the construction of affordable housing.

James made a motion to add the Executive Session; Hangen seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

James made a motion to adopt the February 4, 2021, Affordable Housing Committee Agenda, including the addition of the Executive Session. Chambers made a motion to approve; James seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES – January 7, 2021**

Councilman Wood made a motion to adopt the January 7, 2021, Affordable Housing Committee meeting minutes. Chambers seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no Public Comments.

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Neighborhood Assistance Program Budget Update**

Staff Smalls provided a status report, including the available program budget and amount spent as of January 28. She stated that two applicants were waiting on work estimates, and that work was underway for two homeowners. Smalls mentioned that she delivered applications to Bluffton Self Help to distribute to residents who may need help. There were no questions about the budget.

Chairman Hamilton asked Smalls to tell the Commission about 170 Goethe Road later in the meeting.

### **2. Request for Additional Funds for Current Home Repair Project**

Staff Smalls presented a request for additional funds, \$2,160, in excess of the \$5,000 cap for safe and dry repairs. A resolution passed by Town Council in 2017 allows the Affordable Housing Committee the ability to approve up to \$5,000 in additional funding if the program guidelines can be met.

Chairman Hamilton asked if the Town inspected the home. Smalls stated that the Town's Building Official conducted the review and photos from the inspection were shared.

Polite asked about the timeframe from when Staff first knew about the problem to today's request. She also asked if there was a way to move forward to help homeowners sooner given the repairs needed. Chairman Hamilton mentioned that income qualification must be completed. Staff Icard responded that Staff received income verification approval this week, agenda was amended to include this request. He mentioned that a special meeting could also be held in emergency situations to allow repairs to be undertaken sooner.

James asked why there were two quotes for the same household. Smalls explained that one quote was for the roof and the other was for interior safe and dry repairs.

Nickel made a motion to approve. Hangen seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no Public Comments.

## **IX. DISCUSSION**

Staff Smalls discussed the progress on the repairs for 170 Goethe Road. She indicated that additional funding from other agencies was obtained to assist the homeowner. Chairman Hamilton expressed his appreciation for Smalls' work on the project. He also acknowledged other partners, including Serve Pro, Bluffton 501C3, EEOC, Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority, A Call to Action and Barbara Johnson from Lowcountry Council of Governments.

Nickel mentioned the Humanities Foundation, an affordable housing organization out of Charleston. He mentioned the Foundation operated rental properties in several states that provided on-site social services, adding that this might be a potential partnership for the Town. Chairman Hamilton said he was familiar with it and that Staff could look into it. Chairman Hamilton suggested that Nickel discuss further with the Director of Growth Management.

## **X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Town Attorney Terry Finger mentioned that the Executive Session was for the purpose of giving the Affordable Housing Committee an update on the contractual arrangement with a private developer relating to the development of affordable housing.

Nickel made a motion to enter Executive Session. The motion was seconded by James. All were in favor and the motion passed. The Committee went to into Executive Session at 10:33 a.m.

Nickel made a motion to end the Executive Session, which was seconded by James. All were in favor and the Executive Session ended at 10:46 a.m. Chairman Hamilton stated that no votes were made in Executive Session.

## **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Hamilton adjourned the February 4, 2021 Affordable Housing Committee Meeting at 10:48 a.m.