

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Washington Housing Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 13th, 2023, 5:30

All Meetings are subjected to the approval by the Washington Housing Commission

1. **Call to Order:** Judie called the meeting to order at 5:31

Carrie L will be appointed a regular member since there aren't enough members

Added to the Agenda- Judie Gorra shared a letter written by the Board of Selectmen to be shared before the meeting took place (Letter attached at bottom of meeting minutes)

Members- Judie Gorra, Robert Woodroffe, Carrie Loyd

Public- Chris Charles, Ann Jamieson

Staff- Michelle Gorra

2. **Motion to accept the minutes of the May meeting-** Robert W. would like to change the wording in the previous minutes to reflect that PA 21-29 has made progress but nothing has been settled. Carrie L made a motion to accept the minutes as edited, seconded by Robert W. all in favor.

3. **Old Business**

- a. **Report on Zoning subcommittee re: multifamily housing, PA 21-29-** Judie G. and Robert W. have been working on the sub-committee closing in on a potential update to the regulations. Going to look at a document Janet Hill prepared at the next meeting. The documents will get presented to planning, zoning and it could be adopted.
- b. **Report on marketing partnership between The Housing Commission and the Washington Community Housing Trust-** Oscar and Michelle G. created posters, and some fliers for the Block Party that was cancelled. Saturday Henrietta S. and Judie G. had a table outside of the Market for 3 hours, they met with people and alerted them to what our goal is. Some people were very interested, the downside was that most of the people who came by Saturday morning were not residents in this town. Henrietta S. and Judie G. plan on doing it again, possibly around noon on Friday so we can see more local people who go to the market to purchase lunches. Would like to target the residents. Robert W. suggested reaching out to local clergy. Judie also had an article in the quarterly town newsletter.
- c. **Baldwin Hill Project report;** A work in progress. They still need to figure out how many houses we will be able to make on the land. The Housing Trust has applied for a grant through HTCC for the project.

4. **New Business**

- a. **Habitat for Humanity workshop for homebuyers to be held following this meeting at 6:00 PM-** Hoping to get some more applicants for the homes that are being built on Myfield Road in New Preston.

5. **Visitors-** Chris Charles sent an outline of existing affordable housing in town with square footage. He also reminded the commission of the Habitat Net Zero house built in Hartford that has an annual heating and electric cost of \$150. He also shared an article written about the shortage of electricians in relation to installation of solar and house building.

6. **Motion to Adjourn at 6:00** made by Carrie L, seconded by Robert W. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Reale
Selectmen's Assistant

Recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srAzwqWYEg4>

Recently we've noticed some behavior at a few of our board and commission meetings that we feel is in contrast to the way the town has conducted itself for many years. We, as the Board of Selectmen, felt it was important to address this conduct and to make it clear to everyone what we believe has made Washington a unique place to live.

The Town of Washington believes that residents have the right, and in fact, the responsibility to take part in how the town operates and makes decisions. We have a long history of having one of the highest percentage of residents participating in local, state and federal elections, as well as volunteering to fill positions on our various boards and commissions. Not only do we volunteer for town government, we actively volunteer for our fire department, ambulance association, and the many non-profit groups in town that seek to make Washington a better place.

Participating in these organizations is a privilege and an expectation for those of us living in Washington. It brings joy to those who serve, and it also brings responsibility. One important aspect of participating is remembering that working together is critical to any organization's success.

Whether you're a member of a commission or board, or participating as a member of the public, we expect everyone to act in a manner that respects all people no matter their beliefs. As a town we expect everyone to listen to others without interruption, speak when recognized and respect those who have agreed to take on a leadership role. Especially important is the respect the chair of a committee deserves. Running a meeting is no easy task. We cannot and should not accept behavior that belittles, bullies or threatens others. We believe it is vital to the continued success of our town to accept that our opinions will not always be accepted by the majority, and to agree to disagree in a respectful manner. We may not always get what we want, but we must respect others who have taken the time to participate.

We feel strongly that the same courtesies and respect be extended to all staff and employees. Whether it's Public Works, Land Use, Clerks or elected officials, all of these individuals work tirelessly to serve the residents of our community.

Shepaug High School athletes have long been recognized by their peers as athletes who show the utmost sportsmanship in the Berkshire League. Our sons and daughters win and lose with dignity. Let's all try to live up to their example and treat each other with the same respect we expect people to treat us.

The vast majority of our residents have proven time and again that they meet and indeed exceed the high expectations we have for those of us living in Washington. Let's work together to maintain these high standards.

Respectfull

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James L.Brinton

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