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Town of Dennis Meeting Minutes

Dennis Affordable Housing Trust meeting of Monday, February 9, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. in the Prue Room at the Dennis Town Hall 685 Route 134, South Dennis, MA 02660.

Members Present: Kayla Hilts (Co-Chair), Robert Samoluk (Co-Chair), Joshua Mason (Vice Chair), David Winther (Treasurer), Noreen Browne, Kate Byron, PJ Rainwater

Absent: None

Others Present: James Plath (Select Board)

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. **Public Comment:**

There was no public comment tonight.

2. **Discussion – Housing Coordinator Opening:**

Bob Samoluk reported that the Housing Coordinator, Maggie Spade-Aguilar, has resigned from the position. The Trust expressed appreciation for Maggie's knowledge and passion for affordable housing and wished her well. It was thought that the Town Planner, Paul Foley, may be checking her emails; Samoluk will follow-up.

The job opening has been posted with at least one promising application. However, HR indicated the posting must remain open for two weeks per town policies before the interview process can begin. Paul Foley will serve as the hiring manager for the position.

The members discussed confusion about the job description, particularly regarding who the Housing Coordinator reports to. The description indicated the Dennis Housing Authority, but the Trust believed this was incorrect as the previous Coordinator reported to the Town Planner. Members also questioned the mention of Senior Center responsibilities, noting that the position is funded through CPC funds which should restrict work to housing-related duties. Samoluk will follow up with HR regarding the interview process and clarify reporting structure issues.

3. **Review and Consider Support of DHA Rental Subsidy Program:**

Samoluk explained the Dennis Housing Authority's Rental Subsidy Program which provides \$350 monthly subsidies for three years to eligible residents, along with life skills coaching. The program, originally funded by CPC, had not filled all available slots (27±) and encountered issues with extended timelines. CPC had decided to cut off unused funding, effectively ending the program for new participants.

Samoluk described a specific case of a family who needed housing assistance that had been referred to the program by Mary Waygan (who manages the Yarmouth Ready Renter List and lotteries). However, they were unable to access the program due to the funding cutoff. He contacted Chris Lambton who is researching

other funding that might be used. He also spoke with David Winther on whether the Trust could use funds from their accounts, that don't have to go through CPC, to support this family and potentially other slots in the program. Winther said that as of September 30, 2025, there was approximately \$64,000 in the House account managed by the Dennis Housing Authority, plus approximately \$160,000 in town-held funds. To fund one slot, the cost would be \$12,600; the cost to fund seven slots would be \$88,200. After further discussion, the Trust decided at this time to fund one slot in the Rental Subsidy Program.

David Winther made a motion to transfer \$12,600 from the Trust's House account with the Dennis Housing Authority to support one slot in the Rental Subsidy Program. Kayla Hilts seconded. Discussion: Members briefly discussed the possibility of reviewing the subsidy amount in the future, as some felt \$350 might not be sufficient given current housing costs. Samoluk clarified that this is not the Trust's program; we are trying to help. All voted in favor; motion approved unanimously.

4. **Treasurer's Report:**

David Winther reported that they have not received updated numbers from the Housing Authority regarding the rent houses since September. He noted there are two charges against their town-held funds that should be reversed: \$4,200 for an appraisal from Shepherd Associates for 157 Depot Street, and \$10,000 for Campanelli 626 Main Street lottery costs; both should be coming from CPC funds. Winther has contacted the town about these errors and is waiting for resolution. Once corrected, the town-held funds would increase from approximately \$161,000 to \$175,000.

5. **Co-Chairs Update:**

Bob Samoluk reported that he met with Ryan Christenberry from Tighe & Bond. She will be the Project Manager for preparing a detailed project plan for Bob Crowell Road that we can share with the Select Board and the community. She will attend next month's meeting to discuss five key areas that need to be defined:

- Determining the project team and organizational structure
- Identifying objectives
- Defining the redevelopment scope
- Creating task descriptions, responsibilities, and schedules
- Developing a concept-level budget

The agreement includes provisions for public meetings and Select Board input before finalizing. The initial planning work will cost under \$10,000; no RFP is required.

Regarding Depot Street, the developer is now working with Rockland Trust for financing. The state had responded with questions about the Regulatory Agreement before Maggie left.

Samoluk also expressed concern about Paul's proposed changes to 4.9 Zoning, noting that the requirement for 75% affordability might make projects financially unviable for developers, and that allowing short-term rentals in the remaining 25% could conflict with town goals. Members agreed to discuss these concerns with Paul individually (without a quorum) rather than dedicating an entire meeting to reviewing the proposal.

6. **Discussion – Funding Sources for Trusts:**

Noreen Browne shared research on how other towns fund their Housing Trusts. She noted that some towns designate a certain amount of CPC funds each round to their Affordable Housing Trust, which allows the Trust to offer gap funding between CPC rounds. Some towns also allocate a portion of short-term rental tax revenue to Housing (while Dennis currently uses all of this revenue for wastewater, per Bob Samoluk).

The Trust discussed how other towns, including Falmouth and Orleans, have more substantial funding for their Trusts, with money coming from CPC, free cash, and other sources. Several towns have different organizational structures with more direct connections to town administration, such as having a Select Board

member or Town Manager sit on the Trust. Members suggested exploring these options further and possibly meeting with the attorney to discuss potential organizational structures.

7. **Minutes Approval (October 2025, November 2025, and January 2026):**

The November and January meeting minutes were reviewed; the following corrections were needed:

November Minutes:

- A blank under the Treasurer's Report should be filled with "Chris Foley"
- The Vice Chair should be listed as "Frank Dahlstrom"

David Winther made a motion to approve the November minutes pending the identified corrections. Bob Samoluk seconded. Samoluk/Hilts/Mason/Winther/Browne voted in favor; Byron abstained; motion approved 5-0-1.

January Minutes:

- A name needed to be filled in as " Christenberry"
- A blank in a paragraph about state-certified requirements needed to be completed
- Remove the "s" from David Winther's last name

Bob Samoluk made a motion to approve the January minutes pending the identified corrections. David Winther seconded. All voted in favor; motion approved unanimously.

Members also discussed the possibility of including a recap section in future minutes that lists all motions made during that meeting.

8. **Additional Items Not Anticipated by the Chair:**

Samoluk mentioned that he would follow up regarding the Trust's website, which had been put on hold.

James Plath (Select Board Member) raised concerns about the SHI (Subsidized Housing Inventory) list process, noting frustration with the seemingly never-ending work to get units properly listed. He asked who is responsible for making sure the SHI list is done. Samoluk explained that maintaining the SHI list was part of the Housing Coordinator's responsibilities. He noted that many older units don't meet current state requirements and won't qualify for the list despite being affordable. The Trust discussed the possibility of hiring help, possibly through Barrett Planning (which provides technical assistance to the county), to resolve the SHI list issues once and for all.

9. **Next Meeting – February 9, 2026:**

The next meeting was scheduled for March 9, 2026. It was inadvertently listed as February on the agenda.

It was announced that Joshua Mason will be stepping down from the Trust after the March meeting, having served for 8 years.

10. **Adjourn:**

Bob Samoluk made a motion to adjourn. David Winther seconded. All voted in favor; motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Rich
Minutes Clerk