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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

An online meeting of the Community Preservation Committee was held via Zoom beginning at 4.00pm on February 11, 2022. Real-time public access was provided by Orleans Channel 18 on the Town website and cable television.

In attendance for the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) were: Chair Walter North, Vice Chair Barry Alper, Clerk Sue Christie, Charles Ellis, Joan Francolini, Stephanie Gaskill, Kevin Galligan and John Lipman. Chet Crabtree was absent.

1. Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 4.00 and asked for the assistance of the vice chair to recognize hands raised during the meeting.
2. Public Comment: There was no public comment.
3. Continued review of applications for FY23 for the Annual Town Meeting.
Mr. North asked Affordable Housing Trust Board chair Mr. McClennen to provide an update regarding the grant application from HAC for \$1,000,000 for the project at 107 Main Street. Mr. McClennen said he had consulted with representatives from HAC and Mr. Galligan and determined that HAC needed the CPC's approval of a bond request for \$1,000,000 to enable them to progress to the next necessary steps to achieve state financing. The recommendation of a bond by CPC would satisfy the Massachusetts Community-Scale Housing Initiative's (CSHI) need for a commitment to the project by the Town of Orleans. Mr. McClennen said that if funds were received from ARPA for the project before the Town Meeting, the bond request could be withdrawn. Alternatively, if the ARPA funds were received after the bond was approved by Town Meeting, it could be rescinded if it were unneeded for the project.

The committee discussed the change in request from cash to a bond and the implications to future CPC budgets due to debt servicing. A concern was expressed that the CPC would be liable for the bond's debt service if the bond passed at Town Meeting but might not be needed. Mr. Galligan clarified that authorizing the bond did not equal liability, only the potential for liability in the event the bond was drawn down. Charles Ellis noted that the potential for liability was a contingent liability and best practice for accounting would require that be stated. Barry Alper agreed with this statement. There was further consideration of options discussed at the February 10, 2022 meeting and why giving funds to AHTB would not adequately meet the needs of HAC with state grant bodies. Ms. Francolini observed the HAC grant was well-developed and respectfully and professionally presented. Other committee members concurred saying that the project already had involved different Town committees and departments.

The below-mentioned motion was put forward and discussion continued before the final vote. Mr. Ellis asked the committee carefully consider the matter of reserve funds. He detailed his concerns about supporting bonding because of forecasted debt. Mr. Galligan

updated the committee on the current financial needs of the Town and the desire to avoid upward pressure on levies. Charles Ellis stated that he believed that the responsibility of the Committee was to allocate money in very specific ways as directed by the CPA legislation vs functioning as a fiscal reserve for the town.

Mr. North moved to approve the bond request for \$1,000,000 by HAC for the 107 Main Street project. Mr. Galligan seconded the motion. Vote by roll call. Mr. Ellis voted NO. Ms. Gaskill abstained. Mr. Alper, Ms. Francolini, Mr. Lipman, Mr. Galligan, Ms. Christie, and Mr. North voted AYE. The motion passed 6-1-1.

Mr. North asked if committee members were ready to consider the grant application by AHTB.

Mr. Alper moved to approve the grant request for \$500,000 by AHTB. Mr. Galligan seconded the motion. Vote was by roll call with all present voting AYE. The motion passed: 8-0-0.

Several committee members expressed dissatisfaction with the nature of the application process and the tenor of discussions for some of the affordable housing projects. A climate of urgency, condescension, pressure, and misinformation or unclear information, created an unpleasant environment for objective assessment and decision-making. The demand on CPC to meet the burgeoning needs of affordable housing were acknowledged as stressful. Mr. Lipman said he felt the Town needed to “do something big” to address affordable housing. Mr. Alper said he felt the issue could be addressed regionally instead of committee by committee within the Town of Orleans. There was a general sentiment that a less stressful and combative atmosphere was a goal for future meetings.

There was a request by some members for much more detailed and updated presentation for the Firehouse project since there had been so many changes in the presentations over time that had become confusing. In addition, Charles Ellis asked that in the updated presentations that there be specificity on the funds to be spent on this project since it was no longer very clear which expenses related to rehabilitation expenses for this project vs non-rehabilitation expenses.

4. Review process for draft Warrant Articles. The process for reviewing draft warrant articles was discussed. A draft will be circulated with a copy of the minuted vote for the committee to consider.
5. Consideration of next actions: Mr. McClennen advised the CPC that he expected the final plans for the rehabilitation of the old Firehouse to be available for either a March 3 or March 10, 2022 CPC meeting.

The committee agreed it would like, from the Finance Department, a spreadsheet of forecasted debt service considering the \$1million bond for HAC and a possible bond of \$2million for the old Firehouse project. A clearer breakdown of costs is needed from the

applicant and information about the threat to the building if the bond does not advance.

6. Adjourn

Mr. Lipman moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Francolini seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of adjournment. Motion passed: 8-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 5.12pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Fountain*

