

**Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC) Meeting**  
**Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**Virtual via WebEx and**  
**Facebook Live on Frederick County Boards and Commissions Facebook page**

**Minutes of Meeting:**

Call to Order: Mark Long call the meeting to order at 2:32. He stated: Public comments will be accepted on the AHC live portal located at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Commissions](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Commissions), or by calling toll-free 855-925-2801, entering meeting code 9813, and leaving a voicemail comment to be played back to the board or entering into a queue to give live public comment. Written comments and transcribed voice messages will be included in the AHC record and minutes. Please note that personnel matters are confidential and cannot be received through this kind of forum. He asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Attendance:

**Members Present:** Bruce Zavos, Diane Bill, Hugh Gordon, Jason Wiley, Kandy Alexander, Mark Long, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Tiffany Fossett

**Members Absent:** Angie Liddiard, Kimberly Ashkenazi, Malcolm Furgol, Patricia Galloway

**Public Officials/Staff Liaisons:** Jessica Fitzwater, FC Councilperson; Susan Brown, Acting Director DHCD; Christine Kay, Director Citizen Services; Ryan Trout, DHCD; Emily, FC staff; Ruth Waxter, Assistant Director C of F Housing Services; Monica Bearden, FC Deputy CAO

**Guests/Visitors:** Assan Sosseh, Habitat for Humanity; Maggie Galloway, United Way; Jodie Ostoich, CEO IHA

Agenda: Mark made one change to the agenda as presented. He added discussion about future meeting format. Hugh made a motion to approve the presented agenda with the change suggested by Mark. Kandy seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Minutes of May 11, 2021 Meeting: Kandy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Tiffany seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Future Meetings: Mark started discussion about the format of AHC's future meetings. Previously he surveyed the council members as to how they preferred to meet when Covid-19 restrictions are eased. The survey showed about 50/50 support for in person and virtual meetings. Discussion ensued regarding the convenience of virtual meetings, outdoor meetings, and alternating between in person and virtual meetings. Monica suggested that at this point, county buildings are not open to the public and that they will gradually reopen over the summer. It was decided to continue to meet virtually and revisit the decision later in the summer.

Committee Updates:

**Nominating-** Diane presented council members to be reappointed for another two-year term. The members are Angie Liddiard, Jason Wiley, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Patricia Galloway, Kandy

Alexander, and Bruce Zavos. Hugh made a motion to approve the reappointments. Bruce seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Diane also presented candidates Mark Long and Hugh Gordon to be re-elected for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson respectively. She stated that there is not a candidate for Secretary at this time. Mark reviewed election bylaws and tabled the secretary vote. Mary Ellen made a motion to elect Mark as Chairperson and Hugh as Vice-Chairperson. Diane seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Discussion about the secretary vacancy followed. Tiffany offered to act as secretary if she could be offered back up for missed meetings and/or the ability to take the minutes from the official recording. Hugh made a motion to elect Tiffany Fossett as Secretary. Mary Ellen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Mark asked for a motion for a closed session, per MD Annotated Code General Provisions Article 3-305(b), at the end of regular business to discuss applicants for appointment to the AHC. Mary Ellen made the motion. Diane seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Messaging:** Hugh talked about engaging with other non-profits and collaborating on educating the public. Mary Ellen gave a presentation regarding the AHC's presence on Facebook. The AHC has increased its "likes" on its page. She encouraged everyone present to engage with, like and recommend the AHC page on Facebook. She reviewed instructions to how to do this. Also, it was mentioned that other organization are welcome to share information on the AHC page.

**Policy:** Mark stated they are watching the proposed ADU legislation in the City of Frederick. It is going before the planning commission 6/14. He has written a letter of support on behalf of the AHC to the planning commission.

#### Staff Liaisons/Public Officials Updates:

**Susan Brown:** Continuing to work on hiring for open positions of Housing Program and Rehab Coordinators. The rental programs are still working with The Religious Coalition to disperse emergency rental assistance monies. She noted that there are still funds left for assistance with rent, utilities and internet.

**Christine Kay:** Starting interviews next week for the DCHD Housing Director.

**Ruth Waxter:** Introduced herself as the new Assistant Director of Housing for the City of Frederick. It is a new department that will be reaching out the community.

**Councilperson Jessica Fitzwater:** Appreciated the update on the rental assistance program and encouraged people to promote the program. She also discussed that AHC might focus discussion on and define what affordable rent is in Frederick County.

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this time

Council member Comment: Mary Ellen shared that Housing Frederick is launching a new website which includes a blog. She invited council members and interested persons to contribute to this blog by writing a 500 to 600-word piece to share on the blog regarding housing. Mark informed us that Linda Duckett had resigned from the council a few months ago. Diane shared her sentiments regarding serving on the AHC. Mark updated us with information regarding his wife's health.

Closed Session: In addition to the council members present, Assan Sosseh and Susan Brown attended the closed session. The nominating committee previously reviewed the application of and virtually interviewed Assan Sosseh regarding appointment to the AHC. The committee recommends Assan to become an Affordable Housing Council member. During the session, Assan spoke a few words and members were given a chance to ask him questions. Assan left the session. Bruce made a motion to accept Assan's nomination. Hugh seconded this motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Assan's membership will be official after the County Executive and County Council appoint him in the coming weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42

The next meeting will be July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021