

SALISBURY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

JULY14, 2022 – 5:30PM (VIA ZOOM)

The meeting was called to Order at 5:32pm. Present: Jennifer Kronholm Clark, Lee Sullivan and Katie White. Jon Higgins joined later in the meeting.

In Attendance: Pat Hackett and Abeth Slotnick.

Interview Candidates for Communications Consultant to the SAHC

Jennifer Kronholm Clark gave a brief history and introduction of the SAHC to each candidate. Katie White explained the scope of the work and the timeline: working within a 5 month timeline, the job is for a strategic consultant to develop and implement a communications strategy for the next 12 months. Each candidate was given 20-25 minutes for their interview. The 4 candidates were all asked the same set of questions, which were provided in advance:

- Where are you located? Introduce yourself.
- What is your experience with Affordable Housing (AH), in general, and the Salisbury community in particular?
- What excites you about our project?
- On a similar project, what succeeded? What would you change?
- What challenges do you foresee in developing and implementing a communications strategy for us?
- How do you work best and what can the Commission do to support you?
- Do you have any questions for us? Wrap up?

J. Kronholm Clark explained what the timeline would be for making a decision and recommendation to the SAHC and Board of Selectmen.

- 1) Felicia B. Jones – Talked about her experience doing similar types of projects. She has a lot of experience with AH in Falls Village and towns across the region, including attending AH conferences. She can write grants and knows about fund-raising. She likes start-ups, collaborating and has a sense of urgency about housing needs now. She does communications and marketing for the Falls Village Housing Trust. She can manage websites and social media.
- 2) Griffin Cooper – (Disclosure: J. Kronholm Clark knows Griffin through work.) He mentioned writing an article for Main Street magazine about AH in Salisbury, working with Leo Gafney, Salisbury Housing Trust. He talked about a seminar being held in late August, which will include some speakers from Salisbury, to extend the AH concept. He talked about working on a marketing campaign project for Noble Horizons and the challenge to get into the sphere of

senior housing. He noted that perception is an obstacle that can be overcome with a community mindset. He would establish a framework for what content is desired for the next 6 months, edit & evaluate and determine which platforms and social media to use.

- 3) Hannah Pouler – (Disclosure: Hannah is Abeth Slotnick’s daughter.) She currently lives and works in New York City; she is from Lakeville and comes back to visit once a month. Her Mother introduced her to AH. Last year her cousin wrote a petition in support of the Holley Place project and she did the marketing on social media. She feels that AH is the right thing to do; she is concerned about the vitality of the town and friends who can’t afford to live here – if more people knew, they would understand. She did a project with the CT Dept. of Environmental protection, which is now used as a shared resource with other departments. She wants to have a strong plan to consider various communication platforms. She would find a way to flip the narrative and make it more positive. She wants to get the word out about AH so more people understand what has been done and what is being done now. She also sees the challenge of making this project work for all of the Housing groups in town, beyond a single strategy. She would like a lot of information from the start, before she goes off on her own. She asked what the plan is for after the first 6 months; K. White answered that it is not certain yet, just short-term now.
- 4) Avice Meehan – Lives in the NW corner full-time. Her special interest is homelessness. She is very interested in AH, how to keep communities alive and not wither. She has been doing research about Salisbury and noted that a lot is happening here which needs to be made clear. There is a lot of potential for good. She has conducted a lot of public meetings and knows there is a lot of repetition of the message. She understands that there will always be people with narrow objections; be respectful of voices. She knows everybody can’t be satisfied; make a good faith effort and move forward. It’s just a lot of hard work. She wants to understand the nuanced information and noted that it’s challenging to pull all the pieces together.

The SAHC will hold a Special Meeting on July 20, 2022 at 6pm to discuss the candidates they have interviewed. A **Motion to Adjourn** was made by L. Sullivan, seconded by K. White and unanimously **Approved**.