



CITY OF HELENA
Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board Minutes
Wednesday, March 12, 2025
Recording Available Upon Request

(0:00:00) Call to Order and Roll Call

Members Present-In Person

Chair Michael O'Neil, Vice Chair John Rausch, Stephanie Bull

Members Present-Virtually

Riley Hanson, Sara Shepard

Staff Present

Anne Pichette, Housing Coordinator; April Sparks, Administrative Assistant

Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes from January 2025

(0:05:49) Vice Chair Rausch made the motion to approve the January 2025 meeting minutes. Member Bull seconded. Minutes approved unanimously (5-0).

Regular Items

A. Project Updates

(0:06:10) The board discussed updates to the Twin Creek project. The building project is moving along well. Staff mentioned that on January 27th, the developers did come before the City Commission to request a fee waiver of the building permit fees. While the program is not part of the Trust Fund, it was mentioned since it was for the Twin Creek project. The City Commission approved a waiver of just under \$47,000. These funds get returned to the developer through a separate program that works well in partnership with the Trust Fund. It was mentioned that there is significant City and County support, and it is appreciated.

B. Discussion of Program Guidelines

(0:08:00) The Board began discussion of the program guidelines. The discussion was a continuation of the discussion held at the previous meeting and included a working version of the existing program guidelines. The working version includes possible ideas for ways to keep the program enticing and usable for an entity developing affordable housing within the city limits while balancing the desire to keep the fund sustainable so funds can come back into the trust and facilitate additional projects.



Discussion included comments about intent and language that could be clarified but would also require a change to the resolution from which the language comes. Members mentioned that the original program guidelines were created with the intent of being flexible to a variety of housing options and developers, along with flexibility for the City Commission to entertain specific requests for modifications. A motion was made by Vice Chair Rausch to direct changes be made and recommend the changes be presented as appropriate to the City Commission. Member Bull seconded. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Public Comment

(01:07:07) The meeting was opened for public comment. No members of the public provided comment.

Member Communications / Proposals for next Agenda

Members discussed whether to look at setting a fixed schedule for accepting applications going forward and wanted to discuss at the next meeting. A reminder about the upcoming board training series from the City Clerk's Office was provided

Meetings of Interest / Announcements

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, April 9, 2025.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.