

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
St. Johns County, Florida
Regular Meeting**

**January 21, 2026,
Minutes**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) of St. Johns County met at 3:00 pm at the Health & Human Services Center, in the Muscovy Conference room, at 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm by the Chair, Bill Lazar.

Members Present - AHAC:

Greg Burke - Residential home builder
Polly Crabtree – Citizen Rep/Essential service personnel
Orville Dothage – St Johns County resident
Drew Geisel – St. Johns County resident
Bill Lazar – Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing
Alex Mansur – Citizen actively engaged in areas of labor in home building
Michael O’Donnell - HFA Chair/Citizen actively engaged advocate for low-income persons
Judy Spiegel – Citizen actively serving on local planning agency
Ann Taylor – BCC Commissioner

Members Absent - AHAC:

Harry Maxwell – Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing
Tracie Sax – St. Johns County resident

Guests Present:

Joseph Cone – Asst. Director Health and Human Services
Jenny Harvey – Housing & Community Development Manager
Yadelmi Martinez - Economic Justice Advocate, Betty Griffin Center
Vicky Pepper – SJC resident
Tom Torretta – Fundraising Director – Habitat St Johns County

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press was in attendance.

1. **Introduction of AHAC Members and SJC Staff:** Introduction of AHAC Members and SJC Staff: Committee members and County staff were acknowledged, and a quorum was

present.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** A **motion** was made by Orville Dothage to approve minutes of the November meeting; **motion seconded** by Alex Mansur. **The motion passed unanimously.**
3. **Administrators Report:** Jenny Harvey shared that Housing & Community Development received acknowledgement from Michael Chaney with Florida Housing for filing the Annual AHAC report approved by the BCC on December 16, 2025. A draft copy of the Boards & Committees report is provided in the AHAC packet. Please review the document and provide your feedback or recommendations for revisions at our next AHAC meeting February 18th, 2026. The report is due to the Board of County Commissioners, by April 1st, 2026. The submitted AHAC Board and Committees report indicates its activities and accomplishments for the previous calendar year. The report should include the mission statement of the Board/Committee, projections for the current calendar year and any other relevant information. To date the Down Payment Assistance program (DPA) has encumbered funds for three homes and two of which are Habitat for Humanity homes. Housing Counseling department had a Home Buyer Education class on January 17th, 2026, the class was at capacity of six households. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program acknowledged funding for 2025 fiscal year of 1.138 million dollars. The Hastings Library project update for completion is Spring 2026. We had a meeting January 12th with APD Urban Planning and Management on the Housing Assessment report, it should be completed in Spring 2026. Discussions between members regarding the SHIP and CDBG reports listed on the Housing & Community Development web page on the County website. Bill Lazar recommended that members review these reports to understand how Housing allocates funds within a planning year and in previous years, as well as to assess how those funds were spent. Discussions also covered the upcoming Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) 26–29 will be presented to Florida Housing, scheduled for March or April. Ms. Harvey informed the members the LHAP outlines how a local government plans to allocate and use SHIP funds over a specific period (usually three years) to provide affordable housing assistance, such as Down Payment Assistance, Rehabilitation for Homeowners, or Emergency Repairs.
4. **2025 Annual Report – Acknowledge Members Appreciation and Support:** Mr. Lazar, Joseph Cone and Jenny Harvey openly thanked the members for their assistance through the 2025 Annual Report Following the submission of the Public Notice and the opportunity for public comment, **a motion** was made by Harry Maxwell to approve the Final Report with an attachment. The **motion was seconded** by Orville Dothage. **The motion carried unanimously.**
5. **2025 Boards and Committees Annual Report- Committee review:** Addressed by Jenny Harvey to the members; the draft Boards & Committees report is in the AHAC packet. Please review and share feedback at the February 18th meeting. The final report

is due April 1st and should include last year's activities, the mission statement, and projections for this year.

6. **2026 Annual Report Planning & Timeline:** Mr. Lazar spoke about the timeline that the AHAC members are meeting monthly, and this is the planning and timeline for developing the 2026 Annual Report. He mentioned that the members should review the incentives so we can come up with two or three incentives for the next Annual Report. Mr. Lazar is interested in the results of the APD report and spoke to the members that perhaps the data that comes out of that report can assist in choosing an incentive. Judy Spiegel suggested after the APD assessment is presented, the members can choose members for a subcommittee and work towards goals and strategies for this year.

7. **Moving forward – 2026 Goal Setting** - Greg Burke led a discussion on the “Missing Middle” housing concept, highlighting the International Code Council (ICC) hearings on triplex and fourplex proposals and the involvement of the National Association of Home Builders. He informed members about residential building code parameters in other regions and shared that the Florida Housing Coalition, in partnership with the American Institute of Architects (AIA), is working on case studies to support Missing Middle housing strategies. Alex Mansur addressed the members regarding potential incentives and discussed which options would best align with the County's priorities. Polly Crabtree suggested reviewing each incentive individually and ranking them based on the potential benefits they would provide to the County. Members discussed various incentives, their potential impact on the City of St. Augustine, and the effort required to identify the option that would deliver the greatest benefit. These discussions will continue at the next AHAC meeting scheduled for February 18, 2026.

8. **Public Comment:** Vicki Pepper, an SJC resident, asked members about providing aid or direct assistance for seniors struggling to pay rent due to recent increases. The group discussed a potential strategy—currently not in effect—that could allocate 20% of SHIP funds to assist seniors facing rental challenges.

A **motion to adjourn** was made by Bill Lazar and **seconded** by Judy Spiegel. The **motion was carried**. The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 PM.