

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

**March 18, 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 3:01 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
Harry Maxwell – Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing
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:

Tracie Sax –St. Johns County resident

Guests Present:

Samantha DeGrasse – SJC resident
Jenny Harvey – Housing & Community Development Manager
Laura Lavelle – SJC Support Staff
Vicky Pepper – SJC resident
Amy Ring – Project Manager, Growth Management Services
Evan Walsnovich – Planner, Growth Management

Notice: Meeting notices 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 Drew Geisel to approve minutes of the January meeting; **motion seconded** by Orville Dothage. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Administrators Report:** Jenny Harvey the Financial Literacy class was given by HHS on February 11, 2026, having 110% participation. The class was taught by Social Services Staff. On March 14, 2026, our Housing Counselor Santra Pickee facilitated the Home Buyer Education class (HBE). There is a link to the full calendar of HBE classes on the Housing and Financial Counseling Program web page. Update on Hastings Library looking at Summer 2026 for completion. Legislative updates given by Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC), on March 13th. Full SHIP and SAIL have been agreed by both, there is reconvening mid-April on funding differences. Item impacting us directly the mobile homes 20% cap is lifted. The Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) draft is underway to be submitted soon. We may see as an agenda item in April barring any major edits. New tool developed for CRA members to help with relevant data and programs to launch in the coming days. CDBG public meetings for those interested in NOFA opportunity began yesterday and continue through APRIL. Also asked to share the Funding Community Needs Assessment Survey QR code for the community input.

The Villages of New Augustine, Housing has requested an update for occupancy and opening. We will share any new information as we obtain it.

4. **2025 Boards & Committees Annual Report:** A **motion** was made by Alex Mansur to approve the 2025 Board & Committees Annual Report: **motion seconded** by Drew Geisel. **The motion passed unanimously.**

5. **2026 Goal Setting:** Member, Judy Spiegel discussed a bi-partisan bill “The Road to Affordable Housing”, a piece of legislation passed at the Senate and is currently moving through the house. Ms. Spiegel stated she will provide the major bullet points of the bill to members through the Staff Support for anyone who wishes to review it. The bill focuses on increasing the supply of affordable housing in the United States. A discussion followed among members. Bill Lazar asked the group to consider goals and objectives for the 2026 AHAC Annual Report. Mr. Lazar spoke to the group regarding SHIP funds in the amount of 2.3 million dollars, CDBG funding and Community Priorities Needs Assessment, as well as opportunity zones and commercial development for multifamily housing. Commissioner Ann Taylor updated the group on the Comprehensive Plan, noting it was previously rejected and resubmitted without changes. Alex Mansur raised a topic of establishing clearer definitions for Affordable vs. Workforce housing. Mr. Lazar also discussed Habitat homes, the DPA Program, serving households under 80% AMI, and meeting SHIP set-asides through DPA assistance. Ms. Harvey informed members that Housing Counseling and DPA funds have supported numerous Habitat homebuyers, and that Housing Counselors maintain a strong partnership with Habitat, that is helping the Housing Department meet SHIP set-aside requirements. She noted that thirteen of the last 40-plus DPA purchases were Habitat homes. Ms. Spiegel asked the group to consider

forming a subcommittee to focus on developing a specific incentive to present to AHAC for approval. Mr. Lazar explained the process for establishing a subcommittee, including advertising the group, making a motion, and confirming member participation. Ms. Spiegel and Mr. Lazar suggested meeting on April 8th and May 13th at 3:00 PM for one hour in a conference room. Ms. Spiegel moved to establish the subcommittee. Mr. Lazar then requested that Staff Support send an email invitation to all AHAC members with the proposed meeting dates and times. Alex Mansur and Greg Burke both stated they would participate.

6. **Public Comment:** Vicky Pepper, a St. Johns County resident, asked the AHAC members about YIGBY and noted that it has passed in legislation. She inquired whether it will be included in the LHAP. Ms. Harvey explained that the YIGBY strategy is not related to the LHAP. Ms. Pepper also asked about SAIL funding and was informed by Ms. Harvey that St. Johns County does not qualify for SAIL funding due to population demographics.

Adjournment:

Harry Maxwell **moved to adjourn** the meeting; Orville Dothage **seconded the motion**. The **motion passed**, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.