

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
St. Johns County, Florida
August 19, 2026**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Sub-Committee 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 3:02 pm by the Vice Chair, Drew Geisel.

Members Present - AHAC:

Polly Crabtree – Citizen Rep/Essential Service Personnel
Drew Geisel – St. Johns County resident
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 – Vice Chair, Commissioner
Mark Turner - St. Johns County resident

Members Absent - AHAC:

Greg Burke - Residential Home Builder
Orville Dothage – St Johns County resident
Bill Lazar – Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing
Tracey Sax - St Johns County resident

Guests Present:

Susan Clulow – St Johns County resident
Joseph Cone, Asst. Director of HHS
Jenny Harvey- Housing & Community Development Manager
Laura Lavelle - St Johns County Support Staff
Yadelmi Martinez – Justice Advocate, Betty Griffin Center
Vicki Pepper - St Johns County resident
Beth Tate - St Johns County resident
Tom Torretta – Habitat for Humanity, Fundraising Director
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 – July 2026:**

A **motion** was made by Mark Turner to approve minutes of the July 15, 2026, regular meeting; **motion seconded** by Polly Crabtree. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3) **Administrators Report:**

Jenny Harvey, Housing & Community Development Manager reported the Down Payment Assistance Program has closed on three homes this fiscal year start July 01. Last fiscal year closed on June 30th with twenty-nine home closings. CDBG Consolidated plan was approved by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) on August 4th, 2026. Projects approved include Operation Lifeline training center buildout whereby construction training is delivered, as well as the Kids Safe Zone (KSZ) programming for public service. The Hastings Library, opening ceremony is scheduled for September 25th, 2026. The Villages of New Augustine had a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 18th, with a Housing & Community Development monitoring to follow. The FL Housing Audit Exit Interview took place today and had minimal concerns. The Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) had mandatory strategies added and was accepted by FL Housing without comment. The plan will go before the BCC on September 1st, 2026. The Financial Literacy class was held on August 8th and had five participants attend. The next Home Buyer Education class is scheduled for September 19, 2026. The newly hired Housing Counselor, Rory Evans has taken the HUD certification test and passed, the Housing Counseling program now have two HUD-Certified Housing Counselors on staff.

4) **Initiate draft of the AHAC 2026 Incentive Review and Recommendation Annual Report:**

Drew Geisel started the meeting with discussion regarding the draft copy of the incentive review and recommendation report. Joseph Cone addressed the members regarding the draft document. He recommended that they focus on the incentives they wish to pursue, submit their selections to the BCC for approval, and later on, return to the board for further guidance on implementing priorities and allocating resources. Judy Spiegel and Polly Crabtree discussed the incentives and the importance for the committee to choose one or two incentives that were selected by the sub-committee on the May meeting.

Discussions between members ensued and they selected the following incentives:

1. The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.
2. The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.

Conversations ensued between members regarding ADU's, Habitat homes, and discussion on developing practical solutions for the two selected incentives. Mark Turner requested if Joe Cone could set up a meeting or presentation with the Utilities department for a future AHAC meeting. Mr. Cone will contact Utilities Department head and try to get something set up.

5) **Public Comment:**

Susan Clulow, St. Johns County resident, spoke about flexible densities, infill duplexes and four-unit dwellings, workforce townhomes, cottages, and a possible new mobile home park, that will complement the West Augustine area. She stated "every little bit

helps.” Vicki Pepper, St. Johns County resident spoke regarding the “big developments”, incentivize local builders that may be willing to do more of “infill” affordable homes.

Adjournment:

Harry Maxwell **moved to adjourn** the meeting; Polly Crabtree **seconded the motion**.

The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:03 PM.