

## **A.H.A.C. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **ROLE**

The Affordable Housing Action Committee (AHAC) is a committee of citizens endorsed by City and County Councils for its expertise on housing and homelessness issues. Through active community participation, AHAC will advise and advocate:

1. for the ongoing availability of affordable, accessible, appropriate and well-maintained housing;
2. for the community supports and services necessary to ensure housing security;
3. for effective policy on affordable housing supply and services at all levels of government.

### **AHAC MISSION**

To facilitate within our greater community the creation of more affordable housing options for people who are precariously or insecurely housed or homeless using a variety of approaches including collaborative networking, housing policy development, capacity building, and advocacy.

### **VALUES**

AHAC believes everyone has a right to safe, secure, affordable housing and that a “housing-first” approach which recognizes that housing stability is a precondition to enhancing the successful outcomes of other interventions.

We believe that safe decent and affordable housing is a key social determinant of health.

We believe that the provision of safe decent and affordable housing is the responsibility of all levels of government.

## **ACTIVITIES OF AHAC**

AHAC will accomplish its role through the following activities:

By identifying emerging needs around affordable housing (supply, policy, resource development) and to sort and assign these needs ( "clearinghouse" function);

By monitoring the trends, evaluating initiatives and making recommendations to maintain and enhance access to housing and related services.

By using communication and consultation strategies for better awareness of and commitment to affordable housing supply and services.

By influencing and advocating for policy development at all levels of government supporting affordable housing.

## **PRINCIPLES**

### **Participatory**

Knowing that each individual and organization has something of value to offer, we believe in creative and innovative solutions and leveraging new "non-traditional" resources. Consequently, AHAC will encourage, through active community participation, the ongoing availability of affordable, accessible, appropriate and well-maintained housing in order to eliminate homelessness and housing insecurity in Peterborough City and County.

### **Advisory**

AHAC will advise City and County Councils, as well as the general public on the full spectrum of housing affordability issues.

### **Accountable**

AHAC will demonstrate accountability to the community and to City and County Councils. This will be accomplished through the Council appointees to the Committee and also by way of periodic reports through normal Council processes or by other modes of communication appropriate to the issue.

### **Consultative**

Believing urban, remote and rural areas require unique approaches and are of equal importance, we will encourage community development approaches that are capacity-enhancing and build on existing assets and solutions that are working well. Consequently, AHAC and its sub-committees will provide opportunities for dialogue and consultation with the community in order to fulfill its role.

### **Advocacy**

AHAC will conduct advocacy activities when it is deemed necessary and appropriate.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP ON ALL AHAC COMMITTEES:**

Candidates for membership must indicate that they subscribe to and support AHAC's principles and values,

Members will reside in the City or County of Peterborough.

## **COMPOSITION OF AHAC**

AHAC shall be comprised of a Governance Committee (main table) and three subcommittees, Services, Supply and Community Education.

## **COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The normal complement of voting members shall be thirteen comprising:

Two Council members – one appointed by City Council, one appointed by County Council.

Six sub-committee members – three shall be the Chairs of each sub-committee, three shall be one sub-committee member appointed/elected to the main table by each sub-committee

Five members-at-large drawn from applications received from the broader community.

One member each from the Housing Division and Social Services who sit ex officio and may participate fully in discussions and deliberations.

## **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The Chair of AHAC's Governance Committee will be elected in June by the Governance Committee and will not be a Council appointee.

Sub Committee Chairs and main table representatives will be elected by Sub-Committee members.

## **VOTING**

A voting member on the Governance Committee must fill one of the categories outlined above (Sub-Committee member, Member-at-large, Council appointee).

City Staff act as a resource to AHAC and do not have a vote.

## **QUORUM**

In order to achieve quorum, a minimum of 50% of the voting members of the Governance Committee must be present. In the case that insufficient members are present, items requiring discussion and decision will be deferred to the next meeting. The division will be rounded down to the next whole number.

A simple majority of voting members on the Governance Committee at a meeting where quorum is achieved will be required in order to carry a motion. The Chair will vote only to resolve a tie vote.

Members who cannot attend scheduled meetings shall, whenever possible, submit their regrets to the Chair or staff prior to the scheduled meeting date.

## **TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP FOR ALL COMMITTEES**

Membership shall be renewed in June of each year.

Three consecutive absences (without regrets) may be cause for AHAC to reconsider the member's continued membership.

### **Sub-Committee Mandates:**

The mandate of the **Services Sub-Committee** is to monitor trends, evaluate initiatives and make recommendations following active community input and participation to maintain and enhance housing-related services in the community.

The mandate of the **Supply Sub-Committee** is to monitor trends, evaluate initiatives and make recommendations following active community input and participation to maintain and increase the supply of affordable housing within the continuum of such housing.

The mandate of the **Community Education Sub-Committee** is to educate the community on housing related issues in the City and County. CE Sub-Committee is responsible for the periodic "Housing is Fundamental" report to the community, and for assisting in organizing public forums on Affordable Housing.

### **Membership on Sub-Committee/Working Groups:**

Subcommittee/working group membership is open to volunteers from the community and should concentrate on representation from individuals, agencies and organizations with a stake in the mandate of the subcommittee/working group.

## **Ad Hoc Working Groups:**

From time to time the governance committee of AHAC may establish a Working Group to be chaired by a voting member of the governance committee to deal with time-limited tasks. Working Groups are established by a motion to set out the task and time frame and any further details required to assist the Working Group in its assignment.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Composition of the Nominating Committee will be one member of each sub-committee, selected by sub-committee, and the Chair of the Governance Committee. A Nominating Committee shall be struck annually (usually in April) to recruit members for vacancies. This Nominating Committee shall also annually canvass sitting members to ascertain their continued membership. Candidates nominated for vacant positions will be presented by the Nominating Committee for approval usually at the June meeting. The Nominating Committee shall develop a Recruitment Policy to fill in the gaps or vacancies as required.

## **Recruitment Policy**

Members of the subcommittees will be recruited from persons involved in the interests of the subcommittee or from community agencies or organizations involved in similar interests.

Members at large will be recruited from persons expressing an interest in committee work. Preference will be given to persons who have previous AHAC experience, or have worked in sectors directly involved with affordable housing. At least one member at large should be from a client group. Attention should be paid to attempting to have a gender balance on the committee and to have representation from youth, aboriginal, disabled, and immigrant communities.

## **AHAC MEETING SCHEDULE**

The AHAC year will be from September to June. There will be no meetings in July and August. The January meeting will be called at the discretion of the Chair.

Meetings will be held in the following months:

Block 1: September, October, November, December

Block 2: February, March, April, May, June

The December meeting will include a social event.

The May meeting will include a celebration of the year's achievements.

In preparation for an annual report to Joint Services, the June meeting will:

- outline and approve actions of the year
- confirm budget expenditures
- approve the budget and action plan for the next year
- confirm AHAC membership
- welcome new AHAC members

## **DEFINITIONS**

Affordable housing is a safe, secure, stable, accessible, living environment that allows a person to live within their income level, and maintain a healthy quality of life.

Living within the income level implies that the household has sufficient funds remaining after paying for housing and associated utilities to provide for adequate necessities such as food, clothing, etc. With low and moderate income households housing expense should be no more than 30% of gross household income. With households at minimum income levels (i.e. minimum wage or less) affordable housing will require direct assistance.

Homelessness is being without: a safe, secure, stable, accessible living environment and having to live on the street, in a vehicle, in a shelter, in a barn, in an abandoned building or sleep on someone's couch.

'Precariously Housed' or "housing insecurity" is to be in a state of uncertainty around your living environment due to low wages, high rents, high utility costs and/or substandard living conditions.