



## OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

### **MARBLEHEAD HOUSING COMMITTEE - 8/19/25**

Hybrid Meeting- Recorded

LWVM Observer- Julie Matuschak

Attendees: Kurt James, Alex Eitler, Debra Larkin, Deacon John Whipple, Nisha Austin, Ramon Garcia, Mimi Hollister, Brendan Callahan.

The meeting began at 3:31pm

The first order of business was to appoint a Chair of the Committee. Brendan Callahan was appointed chair by unanimous vote.

Minutes from the meeting of 6/17/25 were approved.

Discussion of outcome of vote on Section 3A of the state's zoning laws:

On behalf of the Select Board, Dan Fox and Thatcher Kezer submitted a letter to the Governor and the EOHLC, requesting an exemption from 3A zoning requirements. That letter is still circulating, and a response is anticipated.

The town is now non-compliant and has until December 30 to become compliant. The town is now **ineligible** for discretionary grants. The grant previously awarded for Rev 250 has been rescinded. Prior to becoming non-compliant, three grants were under contract with the state, however, there has been no award or announcement of status on these grants. The town had previously applied for ten grants which are on the ineligible list. Decisions on these grants are due in October.

A question was asked as to whether there was any movement for the town to become compliant. Chair Callahan replied that decisions moving forward would be made after receiving notice from the state regarding exemption.

In response to a question about another special election, Alex Eitler replied that the process could be used again but timing would be an issue.

Deacon Joe Whipple inquired whether a zoning amendment could be redrafted by the Planning Board by the end of the year, but the strategy the town will choose to take won't be decided until the outcome of the exemption request. Redrafting a zoning amendment would require obtaining data which would take time. Kurt James wondered if a new plan might be met with less resistance, stating that the Pleasant Street zone might be the main concern.

Chair Callahan stated that if the exemption is not granted, the Community Development Department would seek to ask for assistance from the state.

Chair Callahan tabled further discussion about this issue until a response was received from the state.

New business:

Kurt James asked if there was any additional information on the Coffin School property. The Select Board is hoping to come up with future use options within the next few months. Options available include housing of various kinds or municipal reuse. A potential grant for consulting would most likely **not** be awarded, so internal discussion by the Select Board will continue.

Chair Callahan reported that there was \$39,000 of Home Consortium Funding available. These funds have not been spent mainly due to strict federal regulations. There are also funds in the Affordable Housing Trust. It was suggested that inviting representatives from other towns or cities to discuss how they are using these funds might be helpful.

Next meeting will be on September 9 at 3:30pm.

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