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## **Council on Housing Stability**

March 2025 Meeting

March 3, 2025

Room 468 (DHHS - SOPS Brown Conference Room 468)

129 Pleasant Street

Concord, NH 03301

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM



### **Participants**

Mile Whitner  
Andrew Dorsett  
Nicole Desilet-Bixler  
Katy Easterly Martey  
Katja Fox  
Patte Ardizzoni  
Chris Schleyer  
Nick Taylor  
Sue Fulton  
Senator James Gray

Patricia Tilley  
Drew Holmes  
Rob Dapice  
Melissa Hatfield  
LaTonya Muccioli  
Robert Mack  
Maria Devlin  
Dominique Rust  
Ben Amsden  
Eric Adams

### **1. Welcome**

Associate Commissioner Patricia Tilley welcomed participants to the meeting. Senator Gray & Associate Commissioner Patricia Tilley motioned to accept the meeting minutes from the previous Council meeting. The meeting minutes from the January 2025 Council meeting were unanimously approved.

### **2. Council Insights and Perspectives: A Council-wide Discussion on Navigating the Current Political Landscape** - Patricia M Tilley, Associate Commissioner, Department of Health and Human Services

Associate Commissioner, Trish Tilley initiated a Council-wide discussion on how members are adjusting to the current Federal landscape, seeking to better understand how Council members and their respective organizations are advancing work and thinking about it in a different way – knowing that this is the environment we are navigating over the next few years.

Participants were encouraged to take a few minutes and consider the following:

*What three things are you adjusting in your organization to meet the shifting Federal priorities? What are those strategies? What are you adjusting in your priorities? Where are you making investments?*

- Maria Devlin/Families in Transition noted her organization is shifting priorities to think about funding, which isn't something the organization has had to focus on for a while. This includes considering:
  - Second-level approvals for all responsible levels
  - Reviewing options for housing due to voucher scarcity.
  - Reviewing contracts to ensure awareness of when they start or stop, obtaining clarity of the contracts that could be reduced or terminated in 2025.
- Bob Mack suggested monitoring impact on local community partners.
- Nick Taylor of Housing Action New Hampshire mentioned his organization is prioritizing financial asks. The flexibility is no longer there, so they need to understand the impact of what the implementation tradeoffs are if something is going to be cut. What is the real impact?
- Heather Shank is reviewing scopes for federally funded projects to revise language or remove activities that may no longer be supported.
- LaTonya Muccioli's initiatives are considering alternative options to support programs that may be impacted by HUD cuts (CDBG, Lead, HOME).
- BJ Parker noted they are increasing staff levels to adjust to heightened demand caused by decreases in funding, delaying initiation of new programming ideas; simplifying and trying to prepare leadership for higher spending and higher volume. He also noted that it is particularly challenging for small communities to maintain sustainability for various initiatives and collaboratives because the people who start and lead these also have front line work responsibilities that inhibit their abilities to lead. BJ Parker suggested we should be thinking about providing additional support to communities in this federal climate since much will fall on local communities and their funding.
- Nicole Desilets-Bixler noted they are increasing staff levels to adjust to increase in demand caused by decreases in funding

- Delaying initiation of new programming ideas; simplifying and trying to prepare leadership for higher spending and higher volume
  - We do not know how DOD cuts will affect our staffing national guard wide
  - We do not know if our department will need to cut more from our budget in terms of programs within our division of community Based programs
  - We do not know how cuts within the VA will affect our Veteran Services division
- Veteran Homelessness remains one of our top priorities in our veteran portfolio - it's imperative to have solutions that are collaborative and cross agency. In Nashua they are identifying alternative methods of funding to support cuts and monitoring the impact on local community partners.
- Recognizing the critical nature of housing to the stability of the economy, CDFA is seeking more opportunities for housing through business partnerships and providing technical assistance to other organizations to navigate funding shifts.
- Patti Ardizzoni noted that Gather has very little Federal funding. The greatest impact will be a rise in individuals utilizing the food pantry and mobile markets of decreased/eliminated benefit dollars.
- Dominique Rust stated that staff have continued conversations with funding organizations on the potential continuance of multi-year grant. Housing project continuation is still moving forward but multiple financing conversations continue on the possibility of tax credits or 4% & 9% application processes and how this may change our housing priorities. On-going conversations/panning for the few programs that we have with federal or state funding.

Associate Commissioner Tilley asked participants what the Council should think about as members and organizations are being tactical and most impactful at this moment - especially as the Council embraces the strategic planning process. *What would keep stakeholders coming to this meeting as we start navigating these changes?*

Council members responded as follows:

- The capacity to Identify and address the impacts and the vulnerabilities.
- Obtaining clarity and looking for other partnerships and working more closely with other funders (i.e.: other businesses)
- The opportunity to stay on top of information sharing. How do we share information to gain a pulse on funding and other opportunities?
- The Council needs to continue to be a leader in sharing information. There isn't a lot of communication right now – so, the Council is helpful in disseminating information.
- Focus is changing, and the Council is uniquely formatted to have a discussion. Funding uniquely changes the focus – how does that affect the state and municipalities? The Council can educate ourselves.

- Identifying the “unknown, unknowns”

### 3. Local and Statewide Opportunities

Melissa Hatfield, Bureau Chief Bureau of Homeless Services & Katy Easterly Martey, Executive Director, CDFA

Provided the current state budget allocations, Melissa indicated the Bureau of Homeless Services has adequate shelter funding. It was noted that SB406 provided \$2.5 million to increase rates for shelter beds per bed per night to \$27, which is included in the Governor's budget. The Bureau has \$500K allocated in the prioritized needs request to support the youth homelessness shelter at a level it currently needs supporting right now.

### 4. Legislative Update - Noah Hodgetts, Principal Planner, Office of Planning and Development, Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Regional Leadership & Coordination Workgroup Co-lead & Nick Taylor, Executive Director, Housing Action NH

Nick initiated the legislative discussion, providing Council members with an extensive overview of the current legislative landscape detailed [here](#). Nick Taylor reviewed funding bills related to Section I (Building New Hampshire) of the Council's Policy Framework. Subsequently, Noah concluded the discussion with a comprehensive overview of legislation aligning with the Policy Framework's focus addressing state and local barriers to housing development.

### 5. Strategic Planning Update - Strategic Planning Committee & BSA

Council Member, Rob Dapice reviewed the Council's strategic planning process, including the new Policy Framework addressing New Hampshire's housing crisis.

This initiative was developed by the Policy Framework Workgroup, a 12-member workgroup established in 2024 and facilitated by Housing Action NH to advance the Council's strategic planning efforts and influence the upcoming legislative session with the hopes of guiding the Council's work for the next three years and sustaining its work.

Subsequently, the Council engaged Beth Saunders and Associates, consultants to guide the Council's next strategic planning process. As part of a two-phased approach, [Beth Saunders and Associates completed Phase I](#), an appreciative inquiry to understand the work that has been completed and the future responsibility of the Council.

Rob Dapice introduced Beth Saunders and her colleague co-leading this work, Kate Harris, who guided the Council through their discovery process, understanding what the Council has accomplished to date, its role, structure (*agenda development, membership recruitment and support*) and its work (*what is the future of the Council? Where do we want to go, how are we going to get there?*)

Strategic Planning Committee member Brent Fraser concluded the discussion by reviewing next steps. The Council plans to fold phase I into the next few Council meetings. State and Federal policy and funding clarity will also inform the strategic planning process. Beginning in June, the

Council will initiate the second phase of the strategic planning process, with the goal being to publish the Council's strategic planning priorities in the November report.

Over the next few months, the Council will seek to clarify and focus its direction - hoping to have a better idea of where our attention is best placed by the summer.

The next Council meeting will be held on April 7, 2025, from 9:00 - 10:30.

## **6. Adjourn**