

Somerville Affordable Housing Trust – Trustee position description

The purpose of the Trust is to administer funding to create and preserve affordable homes in Somerville for the benefit of renters and prospective owners with low and moderate incomes. Through a public process, Trustees evaluate project and program proposals and approve allocations of funds used to increase the supply of affordable housing. The Trust is composed of nine Trustees: three designated by the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, and Somerville Housing Authority, respectively; two Somerville residents (one who is a tenant whose household is eligible for federal or state housing programs), two representatives of nonprofit organizations, one professional in real estate or housing, and another in banking or finance.

At monthly meetings of the Trust, Trustees engage in the following activities:

- Review of Trust budget presentations from staff including income, expenditures and budget projections.
- Providing input and feedback when staff present draft Trust documents including reports to outside stakeholders and Requests for Proposals.
- Provide input and feedback on requests or issues related to affordable housing and the work of the Trust.
- Voting on decisions related to commitments of Trust funds.
- Voting when Trustees consider the approval of Trust documents and meeting minutes.
- Providing input and feedback on strategic planning related to the Trust's priorities for the allocation of Trust funds.

Outside of monthly meetings, Trustees engage in the following activities:

- Review of meeting materials that are sent to them in advance by staff in preparation for discussion at the meeting.
- Representing the Trust at occasional external meetings.

The Trustee position requires the ability to attend monthly meetings, to communicate effectively with other Trustees, to provide critical and constructive feedback related to affordable housing proposals, to understand principles and general mechanics of the implementation of affordable housing policies and programs, and to represent the Trust in an objective and even-handed manner, including when participating in activities that relate to controversial issues.

Monthly Trust meeting last an hour and 15 minutes, from 6:15pm to 7:30pm on the second Thursday of each month. Each Trustee is also expected to commit at least 1-2 hours per month to participate in activities that include individual meeting preparation and, rarely, attendance at outside meetings.

Trustees are required to comply with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law and Open Meeting Law. More information is available at these websites.

Conflict of Interest Law (General Laws chapter 268A,) <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/state-ethics-commission>

Open Meeting Law <https://www.mass.gov/the-open-meeting-law>