

Affordable Housing Commission

via zoom

Meeting minutes

7/22/25

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Casey Banks called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM.

Roll Call

Fe Bates conducted the roll call:

- Casey Banks (Chair): Present
- Megan Markel (Vice Chair): Present
- Samantha Cooley: Present (Joined Later)
- Randy Rickert: Present
- Brady Fale-Debusk: Present
- Judy Brown: Present (Left Early)

Staff Present: Leanne Wagener (Associate Planner, Community Development), Fe Bates (Administrative Assistant, Community Development)

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval Of Minutes

Chair Banks questioned whether it mattered that the meeting date was not included in the minutes themselves, although it was in the file name. Fe Bates confirmed that the date could be added to the minutes before being posted online.

Chair Banks asked for a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.

Commissioner Megan Markel motioned to approve the minutes from the April 22, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Judy Brown seconded the motion.

The commission conducted a verbal vote, with all members voting in favor. The meeting minutes were approved as corrected.

STATUS OF FY 2024-2025 CONSTRUCTION EXCISE TAX FUND AWARD ALLOCATION

Associate Planner Leanne Wagener provided an update on the Construction Excise Tax (CET) award allocation. She reported that after the Affordable Housing Commission's recommendations were presented to City Council, the Council decided to award \$380,615 to Newberg Area Habitat for Humanity to cover the gap in their project costs. The remaining funds from the \$1 million allocation

Affordable Housing Commission

via zoom

were awarded to the Spark project, pending legal review and confirmation of their nonprofit application status.

Wagener noted that she had reached out to the Spark representative prior to the meeting but received no updates about their nonprofit application status. She had also contacted the legal team but had not heard back yet. She mentioned that subsequent to the City Council meeting, there had been comments and a newspaper article written in the Newberg newspaper regarding the decision. At the previous night's City Council meeting, there was a strongly worded public comment reflecting concerns similar to what the Commission had previously discussed regarding the eligibility of the Spark program's application.

Wagener explained that staff had noticed discrepancies between what the Spark applicants presented at the City Council meeting and what was in their original application. She reported that the Spark team intended to use the fund monies to purchase property, which differed from the scoring criteria that looked for projects with land already secured.

The Commission engaged in an extensive discussion about their concerns regarding the Spark project and City Council's decision. These concerns included:

1. The project not meeting the minimum threshold criteria established in the scoring rubric
2. Questions about Spark's nonprofit status, which was still pending
3. The financial model that might depend on participants who don't complete the program
4. Lack of clarity about what happens if the program fails to launch or dissolves before the required 60-year affordable housing period
5. Potential spiritual formation requirements as part of the program
6. Uncertainty about the program's financial sustainability

After lengthy deliberation, the Commission decided to schedule a special work session on August 11, 2025, at 3:30 PM to draft a statement to present to City Council regarding their concerns. They discussed potentially requesting that City Council reconsider their decision or, at minimum, adding specific conditions to the grant agreement.

MOTION: Commissioner Samantha Cooley motioned to have an additional work session on August 11, 2025 at 3:30 PM to discuss a statement to make to City Council. Commissioner Brady Fale-Debusk seconded the motion.

The commission conducted a verbal vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Staff Updates

DLCD Housing Planning Assistance Grant for Newberg Housing Capacity Analysis

Leanne Wagener reported that the City Council had approved the resolution for the DLCD Housing Planning Assistance Grant application at the previous night's meeting. She explained that this grant would fund a housing capacity analysis (HCA) to assess available resources to support additional

Affordable Housing Commission

via zoom

housing in Newberg. The application is due on August 4, and Newberg is high on DLCD's priority list to receive assistance.

Wagener noted that following the HCA, there would be work on a housing production strategy that would outline what will be built and how. These are state requirements, and the grant funding would provide valuable data about housing in Newberg, including deficiencies and potential solutions. This work will help inform future housing initiatives and will include affordability aspects.

Items From Commissioners

Commissioner Randy Rickert inquired about Catholic Charities, who had submitted an application in the previous round but never responded to follow-up communications. Wagener confirmed that City Manager Will had eventually made contact and learned that the group effort had dissolved, despite their robust application reflecting years of work on the concept.

Commissioners expressed disappointment that such a promising project would not move forward and hoped that someone might revive the plans in the future.

Commissioner Megan Markel suggested that commissioners hold the August 18, 2025, City Council meeting on their calendars to attend in person if available.

Work Session Meeting – August 11, 2025

The Work Session meeting was confirmed for August 11, 2025, at 3:30 PM via Zoom.

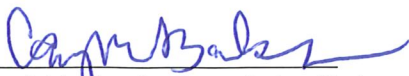
Next Standing Meeting – October 28, 2025

The next meeting was confirmed for October 28, 2025, at 4:00 PM via Zoom.

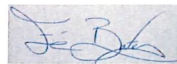
Adjournment

Chair Casey Banks adjourned the meeting at 5:58 PM.

Approved by the Newberg Affordable Housing Commission this 28 day of October 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Casey Banks".

Affordable Housing Commission Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fé Bates".

Fé Bates

Fé Bates, Recording Secretary