

Cumberland Housing Authority Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 15, 2025

A. Call to Order: Chair Bill Hansen called the meeting to order at approximately 4 pm.

B. Roll Call: Bill Hansen - Chair, Connie Bingham, Stacie Daigle, Norman Maze – Vice Chair, Sally Pierce, Chris Bolduc - Housing Authority Director, Matt Sturgis - Town Manager and Christina Silberman, Admin. Asst. **Absent:** Cara Biddings & Bill Stiles.

C. Director's report: Town Manager Matthew Sturgis delivered the Director's Report on behalf of Housing Director Chris Bolduc.

Mr. Sturgis noted that the fence replacement project at Senior Housing has started.

Mr. Sturgis shared that a tenant representative at Village Green Apartments has reported overall satisfaction with property conditions. The heating and mechanical service contracts were transitioned to a new provider with positive results. Past heating and cooling issues have been resolved. Units remain near full occupancy.

The Board inquired about income limits at Village Green. Mr. Sturgis noted that rents appear to follow a sliding-scale based on Area Median Income (AMI).

D. New Business

1. To approve rental rates for new tenants. This item was discussed during new business item 2. Action on new business items 1 and 2 was postponed.

2. To discuss establishing a means test for new tenants. Mr. Sturgis outlined a plan for implementing income-based eligibility criteria for future tenants, including:

- Establishing income thresholds tied to 60%, 80%, and 100% of Area Median Income (AMI) for Portland HMFA.
- Consideration of sliding-scale rent tied to income tiers.
- Adoption of one-time income verification at initial tenancy, rather than recurring annual checks.

Asset testing was discussed and generally not favored due to complexity and inequities between pension vs. savings-based retirees.

A suggestion was made to request three years of tax returns for income verification to reduce manipulation risk.

A consensus of members of the Housing Authority was that housing should prioritize long-term Cumberland residents, particularly middle-income retirees who do not qualify for subsidized housing but cannot afford private senior communities. Lower-income seniors reliant on Social Security should remain protected with the three existing subsidized one-bedroom units retained at 60% AMI or below.

Discussion was had over whether the maximum income threshold should be 80%, 100%, or 120% AMI, with most favoring 100% AMI as a reasonable ceiling.

There was agreement that existing residents should be grandfathered and not subject to any new means testing or rent increases tied to changes in policy.

Stacy Daigle disclosed that she is currently on the senior housing waiting list and expressed openness to recusing herself from participation for this item. Fellow members of the Housing Authority agreed that it is not necessary for Ms. Daigle to recuse herself.

Action for this item was postponed. Mr. Sturgis and staff will prepare a draft policy for formal action at a future meeting.

3. To discuss and revise waiting list procedures for Cumberland Meadows Senior Housing applicants who were residents of Cumberland at time of application but have since moved away from Cumberland. Administrative Assistant Christina Silberman reviewed the current practice that gives Cumberland residents first priority and applicants who move out of town are removed from the first priority list.

The Board discussed whether long-term residents who are forced to move out of Cumberland for medical or assisted living reasons should retain priority status. General consensus was to retain the existing residency-based waiting list procedure.

Mr. Maze moved to keep the existing structure of residents, family then others for the waiting list in place, seconded by Ms. Daigle and **VOTED, 5 yeas, unanimous – motion carries.**

The next meeting of the Cumberland Housing Authority was scheduled for Monday, October 20, 2025.

E. Public Comment: None

F. Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Silberman, Admin. Asst.