Merrimac Affordable Housing Board of Trustees
Minutes
July 23, 2026 Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chair Sandra Venner.
Present: Board members Sandra Venner, Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Phil Parry, Dawne Young and alternate Forrest Lennhoff.
Approval of Minutes for June 4, 2026: With a motion by Phil Parry and a second by Treasurer Dawne Young, Board members approved the minutes for the June 4, 2026 meeting with corrected dates noted in the Treasurer's April 23, 2026 Budget and Expenditure report that was included as part of the June 4, 2026 minute.

I. **Establishing the Rental Assistance Program:**
   a. **Review Contract with Community Action, Inc. and vote:** Board members reviewed the draft contract with Community Action, Inc. In a motion by Board member Phil Parry and second by Treasurer Dawne Young, board members voted to accept the language of the contract as currently written subject Town Counsel approval.. All members present voted to support the motion. The draft contract will be sent to Town Counsel for review.
   b. **List of Potential Landlords and Outreach Letter:** Board members reviewed a list of multi-family landlords that had been prepared by the Board of Assessors. Board members reviewed the list and discussed contact information that could be used for an outreach letter to local landlords informing them of the new program. Board member Phil Parry said that he will further review the list of multi-family landlords and gather contact information. Chair Venner said she will draft language for the outreach letter.

II. **Other Housing Assistance Ideas:** Once the new rental assistance program is established, board members will continue to gather and consider other Housing Assistance ideas such as the Town of Georgetown's Real Estate Tax Support Program, the Habitat for Humanity's home repair program in North Andover and the town of Norfolk's Retire in Place Assistance Program.

III. **Budget/Expenditure Report:**
   a. Treasurer Young said she met with Town Accountant Annie Jim to discuss the process for preparing warrants to issue checks to landlords participating in the new rental assistance program, and any reporting that the state may require. Chair Venner and Treasurer Young said there are no state reporting requirements with the rental assistance program. A report on the program will be included in the Town's Annual Report. The Town Accountant will need to receive an original contract with Community Action and W-9 forms for Community Action and each landlord participating in the program. Once the contract has been reviewed and approved by counsel, the AHBT will ask Community Action, Inc. to provide a W-9 form to Town Accountant. Checks to participating landlords will be included every other week on the Bills Payable Warrant. Town Accountant said board members can vote by email to issue a check to a landlord if receipt of the proposed payment is out of the Bills Payable schedule. If board members make a decision to approve a check to a landlord by email, the board must email the Town Accountant and then record the action in the board's meeting minutes following the email decision.
   b. Treasurer Young said that Town Accountant Annie Jim reported a balance of $689,309.47 in the AHBT account as of Feb. 28, 2026. As of March 31, 2026, the account had a loss of $12,327.88 due to a decline in interest rates. As of May 31, 2026, the AHBT account has a balance of $682,172. 52 including interest credits of $1,609.11 posted on April 30, 2026 and interest credits of $3,581.82 posted on May 31, 2026.

IV. **Select Board appointments for FY 27:** The Select Board recently reappointed Chair Venner, Clerk Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello and Board member Philip Parry to three-year terms. The Select Board appointed Forrest Lenhoff as an alternate to the board and named Select Board member Gwen Lay Sabbagh as their member to the AHBT.

V. **Schedule Next Meeting and Adjournment.** The board is scheduled to meet on Thursday Aug. 20, 2026, 7 p.m. With a motion by Board member Philip Parry and a second by Treasurer Dawne Young, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Secretary, August 2 2026