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Notes from editor (not for publication):

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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WWHT honors Laura Chapman with Tom Yahn Award

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TEXT BODY:

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Windham & Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) held its annual meeting June 25 at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center to report to its membership, elect new board members, and honor the dedication and impact of Putney community member Laura Chapman.

Roughly 100 staff, supporters, residents, funders, and friends were in attendance at the annual gathering.

11 New members were elected to the board with equal
12 number of seats in three categories: WWHT residents, Public
13 Service, and Community at Large. Newly elected are Adrian
14 Segar, Community at Large; and Resident Member Suzanne
15 Warsaw as well as Ellen Hender, interim executive director at
16 Vital Communities; Caroline Trevarrow, a vocational counselor
17 with HireAbility; and Kaci Viado, the Director of Restorative
18 Justice Programs at Interaction—all public service members.

19 A highlight of the event was the presentation of the Tom
20 Yahn Housing Leadership Award to community organizer Laura
21 Chapman. The award is given out annually to a community
22 member who demonstrates a long-term commitment to the
23 preservation and development of affordable housing and to the
24 lives of those who live in affordable housing.

25 WWHT Executive Director Elizabeth Bridgewater praised
26 Chapman as a longtime champion of affordable housing, and a
27 key proponent in WWHT's newest housing development in
28 Putney.

29 "Throughout each phase of Alice Holway Drive, Laura
30 showed up again and again in support of affordable housing and
31 residents of our properties. And now, new residents are moving
32 in," said In community engagement and outreach we look for
33 trusted messengers and local champions. Laura is a shining
34 example of both of these."

35 The award itself was introduced by State Rep. Mike
36 Mrowicki, D-Putney.

37 "The Tom Yahn Community Award celebrates the spirit of
38 Tom Yahn," Mrowicki said. "Anyone who knew Tom saw his
39 dedication to our community, especially our youth, and the cause
40 of affordable Housing. Tom epitomized that community spirit.
41 That Laura Chapman is this year's recipient is so appropriate, as
42 Laura also epitomizes that community support of giving to and
43 serving others.

44 "From her time serving those Vermonters without
45 housing at Groundworks to serving the food insecure at Putney

46 Food Shelf, then to Families First, serving and celebrating
47 Vermont's disabled community to now working for Southeast
48 Vermont Community Action, Laura's spirit of giving has helped so
49 many, and adds to the quality of life for all of us who live here.

50 "At a time where we have not just a state and local
51 housing crisis but a national crisis, the new development in
52 Putney—which Laura supported from the beginning—will bring
53 housing to 25 new families. As Vermont's population is shrinking,
54 and our workforce is lacking for new workers, Laura had the
55 foresight and courage of her convictions to support and maintain
56 support that helps address one of the more pressing problems of
57 this time."

58 The 2025 WWHT Annual Report can be accessed online
59 at homemattershere.org.

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