



# CITY OF APPLETON

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** 2/25/2026

**To:** Safety & Licensing Committee

**From:** Eric Maggio, City Sealer of Weights & Measures

**Subject:** February 23, 2026 Meeting with Helping Homes

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### Meeting Summary

On Monday, February 23, 2026 at 2:00 PM, a meeting was held in the 5th floor conference room regarding the summary suspension of Helping Homes' Commercial Solicitor License.

Present at the meeting were:

- Lance Murdoch, Corporate Representative, Helping Homes
- Tyler Brabandt, Helping Homes
- City Clerk Molitor
- Deputy Clerk Dewhurst
- Police Lieutenant Goodin
- Eric Maggio, Sealer of Weights and Measures

Lance and Tyler were professional in demeanor. During the discussion, however, Helping Homes did not accept responsibility for the complaints that led to the suspension.

They stated that seven complaints out of thousands of homes visited did not, in their view, constitute a threat to Appleton residents.

They also indicated that Helping Homes internally decided to remove their City issued Commercial Solicitor identification cards from use because they believed that doing so would reduce complaints. Following that decision, additional complaints were received.

When presented with information that Helping Homes is the only licensed commercial solicitor to generate complaints in the past five years, that fact did not appear to change their position regarding the seriousness of the issue.

### Observations

The City's concern is not based solely on the number of complaints. It is based on the nature and consistency of the allegations, which include:

- Misrepresentation of affiliation with the City of Appleton
- Failure to display required City issued identification

- Refusal to leave private property when requested

The February 19, 2026 incident reflects behavior that directly implicates resident safety and public trust.

The fact that complaints continued after direct intervention and prior corrective discussions demonstrates a breakdown in internal controls or messaging within Helping Homes.

It is not the responsibility of Appleton residents or City staff to identify and correct a company's internal communication or sales practices. The burden rests with the license holder to ensure that representatives are compliant with City ordinance and that their messaging is clear, accurate, and not misleading.

### **Required Corrective Actions**

If Helping Homes seeks to regain licensure in the future, the following steps would be expected at minimum:

**1. Update License Application Contact Information**

The company must formally update its designated primary point of contact on all applications through the City Clerk's Office to ensure accountability and direct communication.

**2. Internal Review of Sales Script and Field Practices**

The company must identify where the disconnect exists between its stated script and what Appleton residents are reporting. This includes reviewing:

- Sales language
- Representations regarding City affiliation
- Identification display practices
- Field supervision and oversight

**3. Clear Identification Protocol**

Representatives must display City issued Commercial Solicitation identification at all times while engaged in door to door activity, as required by ordinance.

**4. Demonstrated Accountability Measures**

The company must outline how it will monitor compliance and prevent recurrence of the conduct described in the complaint history.

### **Conclusion**

The suspension was issued to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Appleton residents and to preserve public trust in the City's licensing process.

The pattern of complaints, combined with the lack of acknowledgment of responsibility and the decision to remove City issued identification, reinforces the appropriateness of that action.