



## BROWARD HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER:** A regular meeting of the Broward Housing Council was held on Friday, April 26, 2013, commencing at 10:10a.m., at the African American Research Library and Cultural Center (AARLCC), located at 2650 Sistrunk Boulevard, Seminar Room 2, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

**ROLL CALL:** Roll call was conducted by Ms. Elizabeth Kersting.

### **Council Members Present:**

Lois Wexler, Chair	Caryl Hattan
Monica Navarro, Vice Chair	Richard Lemack
Robert Baldwin	Mercedes Nunez
Richard Barkett	Dr. Rosalind Osgood
George Castrataro	Frank Schnidman
Innocent Chinweze	Henry Sniezek
Paul Figg	Lisa Vecchi

### **Council Members Absent:**

Ann Deibert  
Frances Esposito  
Marcia Barry-Smith

### **Broward County Staff:**

Angela Chin	Angela Wallace on behalf of Patrice Eichen
Rosemarie Fallon	Michael Wright
Suzanne Fejes	
Elizabeth Kersting	

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Wexler introduced and welcomed newly appointed Council Member Mr. Henry Sniezek, Director of Planning & Environmental Regulations Division. Mr. Sniezek replaced Council Member, Ms. Cynthia Chambers as County Administrator designee.

Chair Wexler informed Council Members that Ordinance 2013-17, which will provide for additional excused absences, was enacted by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on Tuesday, March 12, 2013. The amendment to the Code clarifies the definition of "immediate family member" to include a stepparent, and provides additional excused absences, including when a member is summoned to jury duty and issued a subpoena by a court of competent jurisdiction. She stated that these additions are consistent with the recent amendments to Section 1-233 of the Broward County Code of Ordinance.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Suzanne Fejes, Assistant Director, Housing Finance and Community Development Division (HFCDD) provided a status update on the Request for Proposal (RFP) Evaluation of Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Activities of Banks in Broward County on behalf of Mr. Ralph Stone who was not in attendance. She stated that as part of the Housing Council's Work

Program for 2013, a budget allocation of \$25,000 was provided for this initiative. She explained that the purpose of this proposal is to meet with banks and/or lenders to determine how they are addressing their community investment requirements and do an analysis of the banks' involvement in affordable housing. She further stated that under the County's Procurement Policy, the Director of Purchasing has the authority to enter into this agreement. She informed Council Members of an RFP being advertised to the public with a deadline date of May 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Fejes provided a time line in terms of procurement opening date, evaluation, negotiation and project contract award. Ms. Rosemarie Fallon with the HFCDD has been assigned the Project Manager for this initiative. Ms. Fejes concluded by stating the start date is anticipated to begin this summer and be completed prior to the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2013. Ms. Caryl Hattan and Mr. George Castrataro entered the meeting at 10:15am respectively.

## **APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 14, 2012, MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION:** *It was moved by Ms. Lisa Vecchi and seconded by Ms. Monica Navarro to approve the Minutes of the Broward Housing Council meeting of December 14, 2012, as submitted. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

Chair Wexler referred to the presentation by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) which was held at the Central Broward Regional Park on Friday, February 7, 2013, and requested that the summary notes be accepted as the minutes of that meeting. Chair requested legal advice from Ms. Angela Wallace whether the summary notes from the presentation can be supplemented as meeting minutes. The legal response was yes.

**MOTION:** *It was moved by Mr. Richard Lemack and seconded by Ms. Caryl Hattan to approve the summary notes of the presentation by the National Alliance to End Homelessness of February 7, 2013, as submitted. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

Mr. Paul Figg entered the meeting at 10:20a.m. Chair Wexler stated at the February 12, 2013 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) meeting, several Council Members were reappointed to serve another two-year term: George Castrataro, Monica Navarro, Mercedes Nunez, and Lisa Vecchi. She further stated that the Broward County Charter mandates the Council hold no less than six (6) meetings per year and two vacancies still exist, one in the category of Florida Association of Mortgage Brokers, and the owner of a business that employs at least fifty (50) employees. She mentioned this category has been vacant since the Council was created in 2008. She requested help from Council Members in reference to filling these two vacancies. Chair indicated that a request was made to the County Attorney who has agreed to submit to the Council a resolution which will be put on the ballot of the primary election for August 2014 asking the public to respond to the question, Whether the Housing Council Could be removed from under the County Charter and operate under the BOCC advisory boards? She stated that if this is achieved, there would be more flexibility when decisions are made for changes to the Housing Council.

## OLD BUSINESS

Chair Wexler spoke briefly about the Homelessness Area of Emphasis Item on the Work Program. She reiterated that Homelessness is also a responsibility of the Council as approved by the Broward County Charter. *Mr. Innocent Chinweze entered the meeting at 10:30am.* She informed Council Members Ms. Navarro announced her resignation as her appointee to the HIP Advisory Board (“Board”) and further stated that Ms. Navarro served as the liaison for the Housing Council too. Chair inquired if any Council Member was interested in serving as her new appointee/liaison to the Board. Chair deferred to Ms. Navarro for an update on homelessness.

Ms. Navarro spoke about her transition from the Urban League of Broward County to Kids in Distress and the accomplishment these two organizations achieved jointly. They received, through a grant application, \$5 million dollars from the Department of Health and Human Services to deploy a supportive permanent housing program for families in the child welfare system who are also homeless. She provided information on the series of recommendations that were made by the NAEH presentation on February 7, 2013 with an emphasis on rapid re-housing, best practices models, inadequate supply of affordable housing in the county, and a need to prioritize permanent housing solutions for individual that are chronically homeless. She referenced a comment in the study that stated, as a community, more resources are allocated to families, but not prioritizing single individuals with substance abuse and mental illness who experience chronic homelessness conditions. She spoke about the week long charrette process to solicit input from the community as a means to revise the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. Ms. Navarro stated the role of the HIP Advisory Board’s ultimate task is to try and end homelessness. She asked the Council, What are the conditions in affordable housing that the council need in order to support their goal? Ms. Navarro stated that as a Council, we need to make sure that the goals we create are not duplicated to what is tasked by the Board. Ms. Navarro referred to the two page report that was included in the meeting package which talks about the Areas of Emphasis for Homelessness that are being recommended as part of the work program.

### **(WORK PROGRAM) ITEM # 1. EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY**

- F. To actively engage with Broward County and municipal governments to establish a minimum set aside requirement for new affordable housing construction and to include specific provisions for units designated for rapid re-housing and permanent housing of persons experiencing homelessness.
- G. Actively engage with Broward County and municipal governments to increase the supply of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals. Strategies include but are not limited to creating a designated funding stream for increasing the supply of affordable housing and establishing a minimum set aside requirement for supportive housing units.

Chair Wexler asked Mr. Henry Sniezek to provide some background information on the County’s policy addressing minimum set aside requirements for new affordable housing construction. Mr. Sniezek stated that the countywide Comprehensive Land Use Plan Policy requires municipalities to address affordable housing if they are making a proposal to the County Commission to add more than one hundred (100) dwelling units. Mr. Sniezek

recommended that the Council review the County's policy to see if this proposal will coincide. He also stated that this would take some coordination with the municipalities as well as some resistance.

Mr. Richard Lemack indicated that the Town of Davie is held accountable to justify their set aside requirements. He stated that Davie issued a moratorium because they believe they have a large inventory of affordable housing. Chair mentioned as a requirement of the Broward County Land Use Plan Policy, an Affordable Housing Needs Assessment Study must show that an adequate supply of affordable housing is within a city to receive the waiver. There was a lengthy discussion amongst Council Members on the minimum set aside requirements for new affordable housing.

Chair Wexler informed Council Members the City of Fort Lauderdale Affordable Housing Advisory Committee proposed recommendation to implement an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance is still pending.

Mr. Schnidman inquired about the financial risk and adequate financial resources available after making a rapid re-housing unit available to a homeless person(s), and the length of time the rental payments will be made under rapid re-housing. Ms. Navarro deferred the discussion on how the HIP is funding rapid re-housing.

Mr. Wright stated that the county received over \$4 million dollars in stimulus monies from the federal government for rapid re-housing. He spoke about the three groups of homeless, people who are situational homeless meaning they have hit hard times and are now on the street, people who are not yet classified as chronic homeless, and people that have long term chronic homelessness. He stated that an individual can receive rapid re-housing rental assistance up to six months or as long as two years. He informed the Council that case management assists homeless individuals into units, the housing placement specialist(s) work with landlords and are essential, and the landlords that the Board partners with, are the key to the success of the homeless prevention and rapid re-housing program.

Ms. Vecchi stated as the CEO of the Broward Housing Solutions (BHS) they work with the Board. She stated BHS own and operates a total of eighteen properties, but they have rehabilitated and acquired a total of thirty-six properties since inception of February 1993. Ms. Vecchi stated that permanent housing is the key to success; however, you cannot just give a chronically homeless (four episodes of homelessness within 3 years) and mentally ill person an affordable rental apartment and expect them to succeed. Wrap around services (i.e. Case management) are vital to their recovery, stabilization and reintegration into the community. BHS currently houses thirty chronically homeless residents within their federally funded program. BHS continues to work with various Broward landlords in housing low-income and mentally ill, high risk tenants. Many landlords have agreed to house their residents, while a handful has declined claiming liability. Many are unaware that homeless people cost tax payers the most due to overutilization of emergency rooms at an average of \$500/day or incarceration at \$118/day. It costs BHS a fraction or only \$38 dollars a day to house their low-income and mentally ill residents or \$11,962 per year. A recent survey of their tenants yielded some alarming statistics: By simply providing a safe, permanent and affordable home in which to live, BHS saved Broward County approximately \$762,200 last year compared to hospitalizations and \$354,350 vs. incarceration. Affordability is defined and regulated by HUD where the tenant pays

on 30% of their gross monthly income toward rent and BHS raises funds to cover the remaining 70% needed to maintain the apartment complexes BHC both own and operate in Broward County.

## **(WORK PROGRAM) ITEM # V. HOMELESSNESS: RAPID RE-HOUSING/SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

E. Establish a Landlord Database to implement a robust rapid re-housing program.

Ms. Navarro reiterated the three previous recommendations to be added to the work program and stated that one of the program goals from the Work Program has been met, to implement web-based application software that would be used for data collection for the HIP administration.

There was some concern about establishing and populating a landlord database. Chair clarified the position of creating the database by stating it is only informational and available for all to use as a source of information. She reiterated that the Council is in a supportive role and this was one of the recommendations established in the NAEH report. "A database of landlords with affordable units who are willing or have already leased to rapid re-housing program participants in the past would be very helpful for housing specialists or locators and would aid greatly in the expansion of rapid re-housing across Broward County." This landlord database will be for those landlords willing to rent to the homeless.

There still seemed to be some concern regarding the two proposed recommendations. Chair requested that Council members craft suggested language. She indicated that the two proposed recommendations (F) and (G) could be collapsed and not to use the words set aside or requirement. She requested that Council Members forward their suggestions to Ms. Chin prior to the next meeting. Chair asked if Council Members were in agreement with establishing a landlord database as a role and responsibility under Rapid Re-Housing on the Work Program.

***MOTION:*** *It was moved by Ms. Monica Navarro and seconded by Mr. Innocent Chinweze to approve adding to the 2012-2013 Work Program Areas of Emphasis Item V. E. Establish a Landlord Database. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Election of Officers: Chair and Vice Chair**

***MOTION:*** *It was moved by Ms. Carly Hattan and seconded by Mr. Richard Lemack to approve the nomination of Ms. Monica Navarro to serve for a one-year term as Chair to the Housing Council. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

***MOTION:*** *It was moved by Ms. Mercedes Nunez and seconded by Mr. Innocent Chinweze to approve the nomination of Ms. Lisa Vecchi to serve for a one-year term as Vice Chair to the Housing Council. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*



## **Proposed FY 2011-2012 Broward Housing Council Annual Report**

**MOTION:** *It was moved by Mr. Frank Schnidman and seconded by Dr. Rosalind Osgood to authorize staff to submit FY 2011-2012 Broward Housing Council Annual Report for acceptance by the Board of County Commission at their Commission meeting. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

## **Status Update on the “A Way Home” Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness Charrette**

In an effort to update the “A Way Home” Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness (the “Plan”), Mr. Wright stated that the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) facilitated a week long charrette at the Urban League of Broward County, and at the Holiday Park Social Center. There were nine (9) recommendations identified and a final report will become available in approximately two weeks. He stated that the results from the charrette will be consolidated with the Plan. The Plan will then be submitted to the BOCC prior to it becoming available to the public. He informed the Council of the need for a Council Member to be appointed as a representative on the HIP Advisory Board. He spoke about the Point-In-Time (PIT) count that was conducted in January 2013, and stated that there will be some restructuring of the homeless shelters to halfway houses in terms of supporting rapid re-housing. He indicated that the total number of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in Broward County decreased by 12 percent, from 3,183 to 2,810; and the number of unsheltered persons decreased by 35 percent from 1,268 to 829, based on HUD’s biennial PIT count and survey as compared to the same county done in January 2011-2012.

Chair Wexler expressed the need to replace Ms. Navarro as Chair to the HIP Advisory Board. Ms. Navarro provided information in regards to meeting dates, time and location for the upcoming Board Meetings. Housing Council Member Ms. Caryl Hattan volunteered to be the Housing Council’s representative on the HIP Advisory Board.

## **Vena Paylo, status update on the Housing Council’s website**

Ms. Paylo provided an update on the Housing Council’s website. She informed members that Broward County residents now have access to link to the website for resources and information via Facebook and Twitter. Chair Wexler encouraged Council members to contact Ms. Paylo or Ms. Chin regarding upcoming events or available resources to be incorporated into the quarterly newsletter as well as the website.

## **Next Council Meeting**

Friday, June 28, 2013, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
AARLCC – Seminar Room 2

## **Adjournment**

There being no other business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 11:45AM

**Disclosure:** The above captioned Minutes are transcribed in a summary format. To hear the full meeting, a compact disk of the meeting (#DR 13-SC-25.) can be provided after 24 hour notice to the Document Control and Minutes Section at 954-357-4900.