



BROWARD HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Broward Housing Council was held on Friday, April 24, 2015, commencing at 10:03 a.m. in the African American Research Library & Cultural Center (AARLCC), Seminar Room 2, located at 2650 Sistrunk Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311.

ROLL CALL: Roll call was conducted by Mr. Albert Cummings.

Council Members Present:

Robert Baldwin
Richard Barkett
Councilmember Caryl Hattan
Commissioner Dale V.C. Holness
Gino Moro
Monica Navarro, Chair
Mercedes Nunez
Frank Schnidman
Ralph Stone
Randall Vitale

Council Members Absent:

Ann Deibert
Frances Esposito
Richard Lemack
John Peters
Lisa Vecchi, Vice Chair

Staff:

Angela Chin
Albert Cummings
Mark Journey
Vena Paylo
Henry Snizek
Michael Wright

Guests:

Lars Gilberts, Statewide ALICE Director, United Way of Broward County
Del Alexis, Financial Analyst, Sunshine Health
Nancy Merolla, CRA Officer, Florida Community Bank
Dave Wallace, Director of Public Policy Advocacy, United Way of Broward County

I. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 27, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION:

It was moved by Councilmember Caryl Hattan and seconded by Mr. Randall Vitale to approve the Minutes of the Broward Housing Council Meeting of February 27, 2015. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

II. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Navarro congratulated Ann Deibert on her reappointment to the Housing Council by the Board of Commissioners of the Broward County Housing Authority. She also stated that she will continue to serve in the capacity as a Council member, but will decline the nomination for reappointment as Chair. In addition, the Chair informed Council members that she invited an observer, Del Alexis, a Financial Analyst for Sunshine Health formally with Citrix Systems, to attend the meeting. She indicated the

importance of exposing young professionals in our respective work places to take an interest in what we do as professionals.

The Chair proceeded by introducing a guest speaker, Nancy Merolla with Florida Community Bank to provide positive feedback on behalf of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Lenders Forum. The Chair then stated that the agenda does not include a Public Comments section; however, Randall Vitale spoke with staff to include on future agendas moving forward. The Chair indicated she will allow Ms. Merolla 2 minutes during the Chair's report.

Ms. Merolla spoke briefly about the restructuring of the Broward CRA Lenders Forum. She indicated that as a result of the January 2015 CRA Workshop, the lenders forum agreed there is a lack of affordable housing and lending programs available for Broward County residents. She mentioned as bankers they agree with the snap shot data in the report that was released in April 2015; however, some of the information, she indicated, is outdated going back to 2011. Ms. Merolla stated that as bankers they also realize their responsibilities under the CRA regulations. She indicated that their data on the Public Comments file is current and that all banks are required to share this information. The data is also available on the Federal Financial Institute Examiners Council (FFIEC) national website. Ms. Merolla stated that banks have to report annually their commercial and community development lending which include loans over a million dollars for affordable housing units. She indicated that banks have to include all of their CRA investments that support first time home buyers programs, sponsorships to fundraising events, and all the hours they provided during home buyer workshops and fairs. Ms. Merolla concluded by saying they support the creation of a permanent Community and Banking Council and volunteer to serve on that capacity as needed.

III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Henry Sniezek provided a brief status update on the Potential Broward County Affordable Housing Linkage Fee for Non-Residential Development. He indicated that a public workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. at the Broward County Governmental Center and inquired if all Council members received the save-the-date notification that was sent via email. Mr. Sniezek indicated that this linkage fee would be a fee assessed on new non-residential development in Broward County for affordable housing. He mentioned that the next steps following the workshop will be staff meeting with County Administration for consideration and direction on the proposed recommendation before presenting the proposal before the Board of County Commissioners. (*Commissioner Holness joined the meeting at 10:14 a.m.*)

Mr. Sniezek then asked Ms. Vena Paylo, Website Specialist, to provide an update on the Housing Council's web site. Ms. Paylo indicated that the number of visits has increased within last two years by at least 600 percent. Two years ago, Ms. Paylo indicated, there were approximately 2,500 visits to the web site. As of March 2015, the number has risen to over 21,000. She further stated that the quarterly newsletter request increased by 130 percent. Mr. Richard Barkett asked what web pages are visited the most. Ms. Paylo replied, the Affordable Rental Housing, Affordable Senior Housing, the Housing Authorities, and Income and Rental Limits web pages.

IV. HOMELESS INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP (HIP) ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) BOARD REPORT

Mr. Michael Wright informed Council members that he and his staff are finalizing the 2015 Homeless Point-In-Time (PIT) Count. He indicated that more shelters reported data this year than last year through the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program. He stated that the PIT count is comprised of two data sets, homeless sheltered and unsheltered. Through this data, he implied, staff

needed to report how many individuals, families, veterans, youth and unaccompanied children under 18 are sheltered or unsheltered. Within these populations, staff also had to report how many are chronic and what type of behavioral health issues they may have, such as mental health, substance abuse, etc. Mr. Wright indicated that the total number of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in Broward County has decreased. He stated that last year's total count was 2,766 of which 879 were unsheltered. He stated they expect the unsheltered count to decrease a bit and the sheltered to increase. The overall count, he indicated, may be higher but the unsheltered count has decreased. This data will be released within a couple of weeks.

Mr. Wright proceeded by stating they expect to apply for approximately \$10.2 million through the 2015 HUD CoC competition. He stated that the state legislature is finalizing their budget and there may be two new opportunities for them to apply for money through the State Challenge Grant and the Local Coalition Funding. Mr. Wright spoke about a Bill that has moved through the House and Senate to make the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) records exempt from public records request. This would provide, he indicated, consumers and agencies a higher level of data security.

Mr. Wright further mentioned that the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) have been asking for an increased response to homelessness in the community and what would this increased response cost. At the February Budget Workshop held at the Anne Kolb Nature Center, staff presented to the BOCC a brief report outlining staff recommendations. This included \$180K to provide targeted mobile outreach to people in the community for triage and to engage them in services; and \$274K to purchase thirty new emergency low demand shelter beds within the central core of Broward County. Mr. Wright stated that the Board approved both requests for \$454K. In addition, the Board asked staff what they would need in terms of current housing. Mr. Wright indicated that the COC board proposed at the workshop \$11.8M to reduce the County's homeless population. He stated that staff made a request for \$1.8M to be used for rapid rehousing programs and \$10M to be used for supportive services. Mr. Wright indicated that he was advised that homelessness is a countywide issue and as such need to engage the municipalities in this issue. Mr. Wright indicated that the CoC Board recommends the money be split proportionately among the thirty-one municipalities based on their population as compared to the overall County's population. He said it was proposed that the County fund \$6M and that other municipalities fund \$5.9M, and that each city pays a portion of the \$6M based on their population. Mr. Wright provided a hand-out showing what the municipal targeted dollar amount could be for the cities portion of the \$5.9M based on their population.

The Chair requested clarification regarding funds going towards expanding existing projects and asked if it is limited to projects that are currently being funded by the CoC or does it include projects such as the Heart Alliance Program that secured federal dollars for best practices demonstration on how to intervene with families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness or the foster care system. Mr. Wright explained limitation of the homeless funding system by explaining the four categories of homelessness; literally homeless and homeless in emergency or transitional shelter, at-risk of homelessness, homeless under other federal definition, and domestic violations. The funding only can serve literally homeless and homeless in emergency or transitional shelter, and domestic violence.

The Chair then inquired about the status of the HMIS implementation process and feedback on how the CoC Board is moving forward based on its new composition. Mr. Wright explained that the HMIS implementation is going very well; all data is submitted timely and approved by HUD. Three years ago, the Continuum had five separate HMIS applications in the community and now all homeless providers are using the same Service Point System and are in compliance with the HEARTH Act Amendment to the McKinney-Vento Act funding which came into law in August 2012, and requires every CoC had to have at least one HMIS application. In addition, Mr. Wright stated that the CoC Board have 27 voting members, excellent participation from municipalities, and other entities as well.

Commissioner Holness asked what it would take to get to “Functional Zero” and inquired about the possibility of using a penny sales tax to help cover the cost. Mr. Wright responded by stating that the County contributes approximately \$10.2M annually from the General Fund utilizing the gas tax and went on to explain what taxes cannot be used based on the way the law is written. He also stated that some discussion was mentioned about the possibility of an increase in the mileage rate for this purpose. Mr. Wright shared that getting to “Functional Zero” for chronic and family homelessness would be within reach if the additional \$11.8 million were approved, in addition to the current \$10.2M General Fund and \$10.2M HUD CoC Program funds. Commissioner Holness suggest having a discussion about how to approach this issue moving forward.

Mr. Schnidman asked if the municipal target amounts are for general purposes for local governments, and Mr. Wright implied yes.

Mr. Richard Lemack commented that this is a broad-based issue which does not target enough revenue to be able to satisfy the two main issues of homelessness and affordable housing. He continued stating there should be an initiative to educate the public on half percent for transportation and half percent for affordable housing. He stated the only way to solve this issue is to build it into a penny sales tax.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Status update on Carras Community Investment, Inc. recommendations presented at the February 27, 2015 Housing Council Meeting, and Chair’s correspondence to the Mayor of Broward County.

The Chair mentioned the correspondence forwarded to the Mayor of Broward County which included the recommendations from the January 2015 Lenders Forum Workshop and the CRA Study. She indicated that the recommendations were received favorably even though Council members did not take a position to support or not support Mr. Carras’ recommendations instead voted to transmit them to the County Commission for consideration.

Mr. Sniezek followed up by mentioning a non-agenda item discussion with the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). He stated that the consensus was to inform Mr. Carras that the BOCC indicated that he can move forward with his stated recommendations.

B. 2015 Work Program

Mr. Sniezek provided a brief update on the current status of the Work Program. He indicated that staff followed up on the Community Reinvestment Act activities and stated that staff has completed all Action Items.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Officers: Chair and Vice Chair

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Holness and seconded by Mr. Richard Lemack to approve the nomination of Mr. Randall Vitale 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 Commissioner Holness and seconded by Mr. Richard Lemack to approve the nomination of Councilmember Caryl Hattan to serve for a one-year term as Vice Chair to the Housing Council. The Motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

B. Presentation on the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Report

Mr. Lars Gilberts, Statewide ALICE Director, provided an overview on the ALICE report which he stated refers to the population of communities that are Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. He indicated that ALICE population represents those among us who are working, but due to child care costs, transportation challenges, and high cost of living are living paycheck to paycheck. Mr. Gilberts addressed the issue of a large percentage of households in the state of Florida approximately 45 percent are struggling to afford the basic necessities of housing, child care, food, health care and transportation. He indicated that the Report shows that Florida has 1.1M households with income below the Federal Poverty Level (PFL) but also has 2.1M ALICE households, which have income above the FPL but below the ALICE threshold. He stated that the cost of basic households expenses in Florida is more than most jobs can support. He further stated that the economic conditions worsened for ALICE households during the recession from 2007 to 2012 but improved slightly moving forward. He concluded his presentation by stating that income opportunities such as increase in wages and more job opportunities would enable ALICE households to afford the basic necessities and become financially independent.

Mr. Ralph Stone spoke about the Schimberg study report that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation uses to do some of their policy and resource decision makings that was recently was released regarding the rental market in our metropolitan area. He stated that since 2007, rental household in the metro area increased by 23 percent; homeownership rates for the cohort age 34 and below fell from 42 percent to 28 percent; the median income for all renters in the metro area fell from \$36K to \$32K; and, finally concluded by stating that low income households below 60 percent who are cost burden, spend over 50 percent of their income on housing increased from 36 percent to 72 percent.

VII. INFORMATIONAL ONLY

A. A legal opinion regarding the U.S. Supreme Court Case Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs vs. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc.

Mr. Mark Journey gave a brief legal opinion regarding a recent case from the U.S. Supreme Court in Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs vs. The Inclusive Communities Project, Inc. The case presented the issue of whether disparate impact claims are perceivable under the Fair Housing Act. He stated that the U.S. Supreme Court expects an opinion on the case by mid-June or early July 2015.

Mr. Frank Schnidman indicated that he believes it to be problematic when it is looked upon as discriminatory to use federal money to improve the lives of poor people living in a minority neighborhood and build new housing.

B. Chair correspondence to the Governor and the Broward Legislative Delegation

The former Chair Monica Navarro referenced a letter forwarded to Governor Rick Scott and Senator Ring regarding Senate Bill 586 being fixed without harming Amendment 1. She stated that various outreach efforts proved favorable since the Florida Legislature found ways to implement Amendment 1 without changing the distribution of doc stamps into the state and local trust funds.

VIII. NEXT HOUSING COUNCIL MEETING

Friday, June 26, 2015

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

AARLCC – Seminar Room 2

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Disclosure: The above captioned Minutes are transcribed in a summary format. To hear the full meeting, a compact disk of the meeting (*#DR 15-SC-51*) can be provided after 24 hour notice to the Document Control and Minutes Section at 954-357-6634.