

Affordable Housing Advisory Board

2501 Homestead Rd - Room D

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Minutes of the January 9, 2018 Meeting

Members Present: N.V. Parlikad, Mae McLendon, Noah Oswald, Keith Cook, Jenn Sykes, Cain Twyman, Tammy Jacobs, Allision Mahaley

Excused Absence: Doug Boemker

Unexcused Absence: Joshua Brown, Adrian Moreno, Kolby Herndon, Alex Nickodem

Staff Present: Sherrill Hampton, Director; Angela Rockett, Administrative Assistant and Renee Holmes, Housing Program Coordinator

Welcome/Introduction

(Board members asked Mr. Cook to serve as Acting Chair and moderate the meeting.)

Keith Cook called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. AHAB members introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the November 21, 2017 minutes, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Board Member Recap of the 2017 Landlord Meeting

Allison Mahaley provided a recap of the Landlord Meeting held on November 20, 2017. The meeting was sponsored by the Orange County Housing Authority. She stated that the Housing and Community Development Department put together a wonderful event and it was incredibly informative. Ms. Mahaley felt that the questions that were asked and answered from attendees were relevant and pertinent.

The Housing staff explained step by step what is involved in getting a Section 8 Voucher and how the different sections work together to make sure there are no gaps. The Inspectors/Rehabilitation Specialists provided an inspection check list and other important information for HCV participants. HUD allocated the Housing Authority 623 vouchers and 559 are leased up. Ms. Mahaley thought it was an excellent event and she hopes that the department will continue to offer these types of events.

Keith Cook wanted to know if there were any complaints from landlords. Ms. Mahaley expressed that she didn't get the sense that they were complaining. There was confusion on their part why there might

have been a gap between when they thought someone with a voucher was going to move in and how much of the rent was going to be covered and that was explained very clearly. The inspection can't be requested until they have met everything on the requirement list. She felt it was helpful for the landlord to know the order of how things have to be.

Ellie Kinnaird expressed that she heard it takes a while for the Inspectors to come back to the property after a failed inspection. Sherrill Hampton stated that the Housing Authority had received several complaints prior to the meeting about inspections and that was one of the reasons they wanted to re-engage with the landlords to make sure they understood what HUD requirements were in regards to lease up, payments; etc. There are three (3) inspections that are required, excluding inspections based on complaints from HCV participants. One is at the initial time that a person receives their voucher. The landlord needs to turn on water and electricity in order to do a full inspection. In some recent cases, landlords have passed this cost to the Voucher holder and they should not do that. If the landlords want their unit on the program, they have to make utilities available for the inspections. Ms. Hampton plans to have a conversation with local utility companies to build or enhance the relationship so we can alert them that affordable housing is a priority in the County and as one of our community partners here are some things they can do to facilitate affordable housing opportunities.

The next inspection takes place four (4) months before the HCV participant's annual recertification. As required by HUD, quality assurance inspections are conducted to review a random sample of the failed inspections occurring throughout the year. There are two (2) types of findings from inspections. One is things that are considered life threatening and go to the heart of living in a rental unit, i.e. heat, lights, etc. The landlord has 24 hours to fix life threatening issues and 30 days for any other items. The meeting was for them to understand and be a part of the process.

There will be quarterly briefings for potential landlords interested in leasing their property. Twice a year there will be a larger meeting that will be a landlord symposium where all the landlords come together. Another challenge that the landlords have is damage beyond the security deposit. The Housing Choice Voucher Program does not pay a security deposit. We look to the community partners, DSS, Interfaith Council and CEF to help applicable participants defray that cost.

The BOCC approved funding for a demonstration program that will help mitigate when tenants are in a unit and damage it beyond the security deposit. This will help that landlord pay a portion of that repair cost. There is a very limited amount of funds. The landlords will be asked to bring their repair people to the next briefing so the inspectors can work with them. We will have workshops for Voucher participants on housekeeping, financial management and budgeting. Also, information was shared with the landlords about the VASH Program for veterans.

Mr. Cook spoke about the challenges for clients being able to find someone that would take their voucher. Ms. Mahaley explained that there are not a lot of empty units and that there is a waiting list of people who qualify for a voucher, but there is no list of empty units. Noah Oswald stated that having meetings with the landlords is a good idea.

There was discussion about Greenfield Place and the challenges trying to make contact with management. Applicants, if approved have to pay a \$200 reservation fee. The conversations for outreach and marketing should occur at the beginning for assistance with the project. Ms. Hampton plan to facilitate conversations between developers who are in the process of building and those who have sought assistance from the County. Conversation should be with the owner on the front end and a midpoint conversation when they have entered into an agreement with property management.

Recap of the 2017 Section 8/HCVF Participants' Engagement Activities

Ms. Hampton provided a recap on the two (2) engagement activities held in December 2017 for HCV participants. IN the future, the Housing Authority hopes to hold quarterly meetings to enhance and help build self-sufficiency of HCV participants. Future topics will include personal money management, budgeting and housekeeping, etc. Ms. Hampton would like to do something for grandparents who are caregivers of school age children and youth. Furthermore, Ms. Hampton hopes to have activities for the youth who live in Section 8 households for the upcoming Spring Break.

Ms. Kinnaird inquired about money the BOCC approved for a new position that would help people find or locate available rental housing. Ms. Hampton indicated that there are two (2) new positions. One is an additional Inspector and the other position, initially called a Housing Resource Specialist, has not been finalized to date. She assessed the needs of the department and that position will do more than serve as a housing locator. Based on the needs of the department, HUD compliance requirements and other competing priorities from the BOCC, that position is going to be expanded. Ms. Hampton stated that we want to work with the landlords to make sure they provide safe and sanitary units.

Tammy Jacobs stated that we need to educate all applicable parties in the process and not just the landlords. Noah Oswald said that the Board has had this conversation every year and that Ms. Hampton has more things in place to exchange information than they had before. Mr. Cook feels that the goal should be to make it easier for individuals and provide one stop for a person to be able to use our services. Ms. Kinnaird thinks that the pilot project is terrific and we need to really pull that together. Ms. Kinnaird asked why just pay a percentage of the damage. Ms. Hampton stated that it is a start and there is only a nominal amount of money available.

Election of Officers

Ellie Kinnaird nominated Keith Cook for Chair by acclamation. The motion was seconded by Allison Mahaley and approved unanimously.

Mae McLendon made a motion to nominate Tammy Jacobs for Vice-Chair, the motion was seconded by Jenn Sykes and approved unanimously.

Departmental/County Report

Ms. Hampton announced that the name of the department has changed from Housing, Human Rights and Community Development to Housing and Community Development. Human Rights is now a separate department with a new director.

Update on County's Mobile Home Park Initiative

The Working Group for the Mobile Home Parks Initiative will have a meeting on January 16, 2018. There was a newspaper article about the potential for a mobile home park off of Weaver Dairy Road to redevelop. This is about 40 units and it is a coordinated jurisdictional effort between Chapel Hill, Carrboro and the County. The BOCC has asked that County staff come up with a rapid response protocol. The developer came before the Affordable Housing Advisory Board of Chapel Hill in early January. On January 24, 2018, the developer will present their proposed concept plan to the Chapel Hill Town Council.

Update on the NCHFA Grants (Urgent Repair and Essential Rehab)

Renee Holmes gave update on applications received for Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation. There were 26 applications received. The Rehab Specialist looked at all the properties and identified five (5) properties that were eligible and four (4) alternates; seventeen (17) were ineligible. Additional local funds from the County may have to be leveraged in order to bring the houses up to code.

The Urgent Repair Program received thirty-two (32) applications. There were six (6) properties deemed eligible with two (2) alternates and twenty-four (24) were ineligible. Jenn Sykes asked if there are any restrictions on the owners being able to sell the home after work has been done. Ms. Holmes specified that it is a Promissory Note and not a Deed of Trust for urgent repair activities. There is a Deed of Trust for the Essential Rehab.

Ms. Holmes stated that the Urgent Repair Program funded by the County have thirty (30) people on the waiting list. There are three (3) people who are being assisted at the present time.

Update on Local Urgent Repair and Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Activities

Ms. Holmes shared that there is money that has been provided to the sub recipients. Also, there is HOME money for rehab that we need to use. Right now we are using the grant money that was received from NCHFA. Mr. Cook asked about priorities for seniors and veterans. The guidelines are in terms of age and 50% of area median income for the Urgent Repair Program and 80% of area median income for the Essential Single Family Rehab, 62, disabled or have a child six (6) and under.

The HOME program applications are due on February 6, 2018. Ms. Holmes attended a question and answer session for the non-profits that was interested in applying for HOME, CDBG and Human Services funding.

Ms. Hampton shared a handout from Triangle J Council of Government titled "Effective Ways to Talk about Housing". The Orange County Affordable Housing Coalition Summit tentative reschedule date is set for February 23, 2018.

Other Business

Ms. Hampton addressed a request from the Board about bringing all the advisory boards around affordable housing together in one meeting maybe once a year.

The Orange County Local Government Affordable Housing Collaborative, formerly the Home Review Committee, will meet on January 11, 2018. They will be looking at the HOME program and begin to discuss the County's broader issues on affordable housing.

The Assembly of Governments meeting is proposed for January 30, 2018 in Hillsborough at 7 p.m.

Ms. Hampton asked the Board to send her information for the Advisory Boards and Commissions Annual Report/Work Plan for the County Commissioners. She would like to have everyone's information by Friday, January 12, 2018.

Mr. Cook would do his presentation on the NC Housing Coalition Workshop that he attended at the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Angela Rockett, Administrative Assistant
Housing and Community Development