

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
St. Johns County, Florida
Regular Meeting

August 18, 2021
Minutes

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) of St. Johns County met at 3:00 pm at the Health & Human Services Center, in the Kingfisher Conference room, at 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Vice-Chair, Steve Ladrado.

Members Present:

Jay Braxton- St. Johns County Resident
Steven Ladrado- Citizen representing employers within St. Johns County
Bill Lazar- Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing (via Zoom- not counted toward quorum)
Michael O'Donnell- HFA Chair/ Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons
Alex Mansur- Citizen actively engaged in areas of labor in home building
Harry Maxwell- Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing
Brittany Coronado- Citizen representing Essential Services personnel
Henry Dean- Board of County Commissioners
Karl Vierck- Citizen actively engaged as a Real Estate Professional
Dr. William McCormick- Citizen actively serving on Local Planning Agency

Members Absent:

Tracy Hayes- Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry

Guests Present:

Nancy Eisele, Housing System Coordinator, LSF Health Systems
Lindsey Rodea, Community Impact Coordinator, Flagler Hospital
Shannon Nazworth, President & CEO, Ability Housing (via Zoom)
Joe Cone, Assistant Director, Health & Human Services
Roberto Ortiz, Manager, SJC Housing
Michelle Lawlor, Housing Support Staff
Mary Garcia, Social Services Support Staff

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press attended.

- 1) Introduction of AHAC Members and SJC Staff: Committee members and County staff were acknowledged and quorum was present.
- 2) Approval of Minutes: **Motion** made by Harry Maxwell to approve minutes of June, 2021 meeting; motion seconded by Karl Vierck. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 3) Administrators Report: Roberto Ortiz announced that the 2021 SHIP annual report had been approved by the BOCC and will be submitted to the State. Mr. Ortiz also talked about preparations for the 2021 AHAC report and said this report has gone from a triennial obligation to a yearly obligation. Mr. Ortiz advised the Committee that the report timeline was included in their meeting packets. Joe Cone informed the Committee that the Housing Department brought an affordable housing project to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. Mr. Cone said the Housing Department has been working with Ability Housing for three years, in an effort to build 96 units on North Volusia using the County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Mr. Cone stated that this is essentially a match-fund project and this year Ability Housing committed to funding this project more than the \$460,000 requested from the Trust Fund. Mr. Cone stated this is a very competitive process and Ability Housing has not been awarded this funding for the past three years. Mr. Cone said the County is very hopeful that this year will be different and the project will come to fruition. Mr. Cone also said that as more details emerge, he will share them with the Committee.

- 4) Continuum of Care: Nancy Eisele, the Housing Systems Coordinator with Lutheran Services of Florida Health Services, attended the meeting and discussed the correlation between Lutheran Services of Florida (LSFHS) and the Continuum of Care (CoC). Ms. Eisele stated LSFHS is one of seven Managing Entities who work in partnership with the Florida Department of Children and Families to ensure access to evidence-based behavioral health care services for people facing poverty who do not have health insurance. Ms. Eisele went on to say the homeless and the residents at 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) are the largest populations that receive services with this funding. Ms. Eisele said the Continuum of Care (CoC) also serves these populations in St. Johns County and she stated LSFHS and the CoC work together to assist those who are homeless or in fear of becoming homeless. Lindsey Rodea, Community Impact Coordinator at Flagler Hospital, provided the Committee with a presentation and explained that the CoC is comprised of a Lead Agency, Flagler Hospital, a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), an executive board, and a general membership. Brittany Coronado and Lindsey Rodea, on behalf of Flagler Hospital, answered questions from the Committee during the meeting. A variety of issues were presented for discussion, including what the average income is in St Johns County and how that correlates with the ownership of occupied unit's versus vacant units. According to the census report, the main population that the CoC serves in St. Johns County are individuals whose income is 30% or lower than the average median income. Brittany Coronado also stated that in the calendar year 2020, the CoC served 350 people. Bill Lazar expressed that there is a need for more education when talking about income limits and what a family should or is paying for rent based on what the household brings in as a whole. Steve Ladrigo asked how the household income price bans relate to the rest of the state and the rest of the nation. Steve Ladrigo offered to do some research on what amount of county residents are making at least the area median income and what amount are not, and bring back some statistics to share with the Committee for a follow up discussion. Mr. Ladrigo asked that the Committee give some thought to how the CoC and the AHAC can work together in achieving their closely aligned missions. Joe Cone said a presentation given to the Executive Committee of the CoC will be shown at the next AHAC meeting. Mr. Cone also stated that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) recently approved the workforce-housing overlay price increase from \$210,000 to \$240,000, to encourage more moderate pricing of new homes in exchange for extra density and flexibility for the developers.
- 5) AHAC Annual Report 2021: Roberto Ortiz stated that a draft of the report will be provided to the AHAC members in the coming months for their input and comments before it is finalized and prepared for submission to the BCC. Mr. Ortiz said that a final report must be ready to present at the December 21, 2021 BCC meeting and he stated all is on track to meet that goal.
- 6) Current Vacancies and Recommendations: Mary Garcia announced that the BCC approved additional terms for Bill Lazar, Harry Maxwell, and Karl Vierck. Ms. Garcia also said there is currently one vacancy on the AHAC for a "citizen engaged in residential homebuilding" and she said she has been assured by the County Commission office that this vacancy will be posted for an additional 30 days as no applications fitting the statutory description have been received.
- 7) Public Comment: Bill Lazar stated he would like a topic of discussion at the next meeting to be the proposed constitutional amendment that would provide funding for affordable housing projects by establishing funding for state and local housing trust funds. Staff stated they will add this to the agenda for the September 15th AHAC meeting and Steve Ladrigo and Karl Vierck said they would arrange a guest speaker.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55p.m.