

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

August 17, 2022
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 3:05 pm by Chair, Steve Ladrado.

Members Present:

Sarah Arnold - Locally elected official (via Zoom)
Jay Braxton - St. Johns County Resident
Greg Burke - Citizen engaged in residential home building industry
Tracy Hayes - Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry
Steve Ladrado - Citizen representing employers within St. Johns County
Bill Lazar - Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider for affordable housing
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
Michael O'Donnell - HFA Chair/Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons
Elvis Pierre - Citizen actively serving on Local Planning Agency
Lindsey Rodea - Essential Services Personnel
Karl Vierck - Citizen actively engaged as Real Estate Professional

Members Absent:

Tracy Hayes - Citizen engaged in banking or mortgage banking industry

Guests Present:

Ashanti Austin - Assistant to Deputy County Administrator
Mary Garcia - Support Staff, Social Services
Michelle Lawlor - Support Staff, Housing & Community Development
Carolina Morrow - Program Manager, Habitat for Humanity
Shawna Novak - Director, Health and Human Services
Roberto Ortiz - Manager, Housing and Community Development

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press was in attendance.

- 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 Greg Burke to approve minutes of July 2022 meeting; motion seconded by Karl Vierck. **Motion passed unanimously.**
- 3) Administrators Report: Roberto Ortiz let the Committee members know that the local government has identified a funding source to complete a new Housing Assessment. The last assessment completed was in the early 2000's. Mr. Ortiz encouraged the Committee to email

him any items of interest or suggestions they would like to see included. Shawna Novak informed the Committee this funding source was in the early stages and there was no timeframe or other information to announce, at this time. As soon as more information becomes available, it will be conveyed to the Committee. The housing staff will send out a copy of the latest Housing Assessment to all members. Mr. Ortiz reported that lack of construction materials is currently an issue at Victoria Crossing. February 2023 is the expected occupancy date for this new development. Mr. Ortiz finished up his report with information regarding San Marcos Heights. Mr. Ortiz reported that a Certificate of Occupancy is approximately two weeks out. Mr. Ortiz also reported there have been multiple complaints about lack of customer service from the leasing office at San Marcos Heights. He will be meeting with the developer in the upcoming week to discuss these updates.

- 4) AHAC Annual Report 2022 Review: Roberto Ortiz started the discussion by thanking the staff of the St. Johns County Growth Management Department for coming and speaking at the July meeting. Mr. Ortiz believes that the discussion on Impact Fees needs to be added to this year's report as a work in progress. Steve Ladrado spoke on the proposed timeline for completion of the report. Mr. Ladrado and Bill Lazar agreed to begin writing the report and asked for all committee members to bring any positive accomplishments they would like to report on to the next meeting. Mr. Lazar will also begin working on the slide show presentation that the AHAC board will present in front of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), upon approval of the annual report, in December. As the discussion of impact fees ensued, Mr. Ortiz told the committee that he will discuss more details with them as they become available with regard to the County's involvement with impact fees and offsetting the cost for non-profit developers.
- 5) Public Housing Authority Discussion: Roberto Ortiz gave a brief synopsis of the Public Housing Authority (PHA) discussion that took place at the August 2nd BCC meeting. The Commissioners opened this topic up for public comment. There were many varying opinions to St. Johns County incorporating a PHA. The BCC directed the Housing department to conduct further research. The primary question being, what would be the monetary funding benefit to a PHA? The BCC directed staff to gather samples from other communities, with a comparable population to St. Johns County, to see what has or has not worked with their PHA. Joe Cone and Mr. Ortiz had a conversation with the Duval County Housing Authority and received a lot of good information. The Housing department will be giving a presentation to the BCC with this information based on additional research they will gather. Bill Lazar asked if anyone had an idea how many vouchers were being utilized in St. Johns County, currently. Mr. Ortiz let the Committee know that he will find out those statistics and pass that information along when he has it. Jay Braxton discussed Commissioner Waldron's concerns with the PHA being at the County level and governed by the Executive Office of the State or being ran locally within the City of St. Augustine, where the Mayor would form the board members. All Committee members agreed there is a negative assumption behind PHA's and the AHAC must change the narrative.
- 6) Member Update: Elvis Pierre was chosen by the Planning and Zoning Agency (PZA) to represent the position of PZA Representative. Mr. Pierre spoke briefly about his background.
- 7) Public Comment: None

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.