

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

January 18, 2023  
Minutes

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 pm by Vice Chair, Bill Lazar.

**Members Present:**

Roy Alaimo - Locally elected official  
Steve Ladrado - Citizen representing employers within St. Johns County  
Bill Lazar - Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of 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 the Local Planning Agency  
Lindsey Rodea - Essential Services Personnel

**Members Absent:**

Jay Braxton - St. Johns County Resident  
Tracy Hayes - Citizen engaged in the banking or mortgage banking industry  
Karl Vierck - Citizen actively engaged as Real Estate Professional

**Guests Present:**

Greg Burke - Citizen, St. Johns County  
Joe Cone - Assistant Director, Health and Human Services  
Anita Daniel - Grant Manager and Continuum of Care Lead, Flagler Hospital  
Mary Garcia - Support Staff, Social Services  
Yadelmi Martinez Hernandez - Economic Justice Advocate, Betty Griffin Center  
Michelle Lawlor - Support Staff, Housing & Community Development  
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 a quorum was present.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** **Motion** made by Harry Maxwell to approve minutes of the November 2022 meeting; motion seconded by Elvis Pierre. **The motion passed unanimously.**
3. **Administrators Report:** Roberto Ortiz started his administrator report by thanking the Committee members for all their work and dedication to the AHAC. Mr. Ortiz discussed the ability housing project in West Augustine, and that the project was moving forward

with the benefit of the new impact fee deferral program. Mr. Ortiz also discussed the Oaks of St Johns rehabilitation project of their existing units. There were a few delays in this project concerning the tax credits and the State; however, the project is set for closing within the first quarter of 2023. At the request of the Committee, Mr. Ortiz gave a list of the top five employment positions held by residents at the San Marcos Heights apartment complex: St Johns County School Board, restaurant workers, Health Care workers, trade workers, and retail workers. The Committee was interested in knowing what jobs define our affordable housing clientele. Bill Lazar joined the discussion in explaining what affordable housing is, and how we define that. Harry Maxwell asked what Area Median Income percentage the residents were income qualified at. Mr. Ortiz will bring this information to the February meeting. Mr. Ortiz also discussed the FY 21/22 SHIP allocation that St. Johns County received from the state, approximately 1.7 million dollars. Joe Cone also told the Committee that some of these SHIP dollars will be allocated for the Impact Fee Deferral Program to help assist with non-profit developers within St. Johns County, currently the Habitat for Humanity project in West Augustine. A discussion issued about some of the terms of this agreement, Mr. Ortiz told the Committee that this item will be proposed to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in February. Mr. Ortiz will also be sharing some information regarding the number of applications pending approval, how many units are occupied, and what the waiting list looks like for San Marcos Heights. A St Johns County Commissioner has asked that staff reach out to the developer of this property and answer some questions regarding the negative feedback that has been discussed on social media. County staff is aware of this and can assure the Committee that we are working diligently with the property management staff. Mr. Ortiz let the Committee know that an offer letter has been sent to one of the applicants for the Housing Finance Authority (HFA) Executive Director position. Mrs. Howard has the offer letter and the HFA is anticipating her agreement with the contract very soon. Mr. Ortiz introduced Commissioner Alaimo who will now represent the AHAC board as the elected official. Commissioner Alaimo said a few words and thanked the Committee for their warm welcome. Mike O'Donnell asked what the outcome was of the Public Housing discussion (PHA), Joe Cone informed the board that the BOCC took a vote and they have voted against continuing the discussion, surrounding a PHA, in St. Johns County.

4. **AHAC Annual Report:** Mr. Ortiz reminded the Committee that now was the time to start discussing what incentives, they would like to focus on in the upcoming meetings. A conversation ensued amongst the Committee members regarding what they would like to accomplish this year. Bill Lazar asked if there was a new contact from Developmental Services that they could invite to the upcoming meetings, Mr. Ortiz will provide that information in the February meeting. Ashon Nesbitt, CEO of Florida Housing Coalition, will be the guest speaker for the February meeting.
5. **Officer Elections:** Mary Garcia let the Committee know that we currently have two positions available; Citizen engaged in the banking or mortgage banking industry and Citizen engaged in the residential home building industry. Ms. Garcia also explained to the Committee that if one of these positions were difficult to fill, they could elect a new member to represent an additional St Johns County resident position, because we have filled our eight position requirements. A **motion** was made by Elvis Pierre and seconded by Steve Ladrado, to nominate Greg Burke for the Citizen engaged in the banking or mortgage banking industry. **The motion passed unanimously.** A **motion** was made by Steve Ladrado and seconded by Harry Maxwell, to nominate Orville Dothage, for the St.

Johns County Resident position. **The motion passed unanimously.** These nominations will go in front of the BCC in February. Commissioner Alaimo asked what districts were represented, currently on the AHAC. Ms. Garcia reported that we have five positions in District 3, four positions in District 2, and three positions in District 5.

6. **Public Comment:** Alex Mansur and Lindsey Rodea thanked Bill Lazar and Steve Ladrido for speaking in front of the BCC at the December meeting. Commissioner Alaimo thanked the committee for their welcome. He expressed that he sees the concerns of the committee regarding affordable housing. He was raised in St. Johns County and is looking forward to the many discussions and being a part of the AHAC.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.