

FLAGLER COUNTY
AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Sandra Shank, Denise Santa Maria, Rick Belhumeur, Nealon Joseph, Diana Seydlorsky, Trish Giaccone*

MEMBERS ABSENT:

EXCUSED ABSENT: *Commissioner Charles Erickson, Dorothy Sperber*
STAFF PRESENT: *Heidi Petito, Devrie Paradowski*

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: *Bernice Jones, Pastor Daisy Henry*

1 1. **Call to order.** Sandra Shank called the meeting to order at 8:37 am.

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3 2. **Roll Call**

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5 3. **Pledge of Allegiance.**

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7 4. **Additions and Corrections to Agenda:** None

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9 5. **Approval of Minutes:**

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11 A Motion was made by Nealon to approve the August 11th Minutes and seconded by
12 Denise. All voted in favor of approval.

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15 6. **SHIP Staff Report**

16 a. Devrie explained that the by-laws are in county admin approval, and that the legal
17 review is part of that process. She noted that the ordinance reflects previous
18 statutes, but that all county ordinances will defer to Florida Statute

19 b. Devrie noted that the SHIP annual report is available at the office and will be
20 presented to the board for certification for the September 9th meeting, and AHAC
21 requested the report be emailed.

22 c. Devrie mentioned the Housing Work Group had been presented by staff to the
23 B.O.C.C noting that AHAC members were present. Sandra reiterated that the
24 presentation was fairly generalized to get the conversation started, and that AHAC
25 had requested a housing retreat and that this housing work group is a great Segway
26 to it. It would contain planning, social services, legal, and other needs.

27 d. Heidi noted the possibility of having the board set up an ad hoc committee for this
28 and Rick mentioned the AHAC Vacancy for the real estate position, and that John
29 Horan had put together some multi-family projects and who might provide good input
30 for AHAC and the housing work group. Sandra noted that the input should involve
31 someone who is familiar with affordable housing.

32 e. Sandra noted that AHAC had recommended the Housing Retreat to provide a
33 similar goal as the housing work group, and she voiced encouragement for this
34 housing work group's direction, explaining the importance of psychological flexibility
35 in achieving the end goal. She says people need the education before the

36 development, and that the AHAC's role is extremely critical.

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38 **7. Legislative Update**

- 39 a. Sandra noted that the eviction moratorium was set to expire on October 1st, and she
40 said that each jurisdiction could extend some eviction restriction without the
41 Governor's declaration.
- 42 b. She says citizens are facing unexpected moves requiring significant resources.
- 43 c. Devrie explained that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation had funding that is
44 distributing through jurisdictions. Sandra asked about incomes as there are citizens
45 who fall into the gap, and asked how the word is getting out.
- 46 d. Trish asked how to get information number of people moving and noted that many
47 people do not know that there are systematic forms of assistance available. Sandra
48 said looking at homestead exemptions. Rick said of his 14 rentals, most have not
49 falling too far behind. Some have received stimulus and used that to keep up with
50 rent. He said it was a matter of people not knowing.
- 51 e. Devrie said that landlords do call and it is a way for people to find out about programs
52 for assistance. Landlords have been calling asking where the help was for them, and
53 she explained that the assistance often goes to the landlords via application by the
54 tenant. Nealon says there's no way to avoid duplication of benefits when applying
55 assistance to landlords when tenants can also apply for assistance. Rick said the
56 county wrote a check to him. And Trish asked for clarification. It was clarified that
57 this assistance was through General Revenue Human Services Program.
- 58 f. Sandra asked if it was possible for the county partner with Flagler Cares, and Nealon
59 explained that there are stipulations with the FDEM Cares Act funds which prevent
60 certain ways of disbursement. Sandra asked if funds can be used for Down Payment
61 Assistance.
- 62 g. Diana said the Cares Act money, in her experience in consulting with it, people apply
63 for assistance and the check is issued to the vendors. She said you can't use
64 CARES act but SHIP funding you can. Devrie noted that the CARES act funding
65 through Florida Housing Finance would have some flexibility and would operate in
66 the fashion described by Diana.
- 67 h. Heidi explained how the Cares Act funding was working through the Department of
68 Social Services with different allotments being divvied out in chunks. She said
69 Economic Development already went through all of the applications and went
70 through about \$7 million. She asked how to get the word out, and Sandra noted a
71 previous conversation regarding the importance of social media and the need to
72 have the process be demonstrated with people in videos reflecting the diversity of
73 the community. Trish said the county needs to go into the community rather than
74 waiting for the community to come to them. She said there were a lot of types of
75 assistance that can be very confusing to the citizens and that it needs to made very
76 clear to the average citizen. Sandra explained more people are using platforms such
77 as Zoom and webex to get into the communities now.
- 78 i. Devrie noted that Osceola County consolidates multiple funding forms such as SHIP,
79 Low Income Home Energy Assistance, and Community Services Block Grant, and
80 provides an online orientation video via their website. Denise noted that the county
81 website shows the county is showing applications have been closed. Sandra
82 confirmed that this conversation shows how confusing information may be, to Trish's
83 point, for the average citizen. She confirmed that Trish's suggestion for boots on the
84 ground may in fact be the most effective way to reduce this confusion. She said this
85 group of people is a targeted group without always the means to get involved with

86 the technology, to which Rick suggested that COVID-19 may have a more broad
87 impact.

- 88 j. Trish asked Devrie about Osceola, about what the application process was and how
89 did it compare to Flagler County. Devrie said that Ocala County appeared to have
90 multiple programs via one application process, using something like Zoom Grants.
91 She noted that Social Services is a little siloed at present, with people calling
92 specifically for Senior Services and Human Services and SHIP and that the
93 application processes are different and it is not yet consolidated. She said that it
94 appears that the leadership had been hoping to streamline the services a little in
95 Social Services soon.

96
97 **8. Annual Housing Conference**

- 98 a. Sandra explained attendance at the annual housing conference and her reaction to
99 understanding climate gentrification. She announced that she has asked Working
100 Films to be guest speakers via Zoom for her next Rotary meeting. She says what
101 they do advocate for the use of documentaries to advance social justice and
102 environmental protection. She said civic organizations can partner with Working
103 Films, and that the films are powerful and have the potential to transform hearts and
104 minds.
105 b. Sandra asked members to become Sadowski Affiliates to advocate for the housing
106 trust fund and said that membership is free, and links are available on the Florida
107 Housing Coalition web page.

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109 **9. AHAC Recommendations**

- 110
111 a. Devrie explained that she had sent out the previous triennial AHAC report so that
112 new members can get an idea of the type of recommendations that the committee
113 submits to the local government. She noted that, the very next report will come due
114 in December of 2021, and will be an annual requirement; however, she also
115 explained that if SHIP does not receive more than the minimum allocation of
116 \$350,000, AHAC is not required to submit an annual report.

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118 **10. Public Comments**

- 119 c. Pastor Daisy Henry offered input into the Cares Act funding through the FDEM by
120 stating that she made an appointment online and got a confirmation number and she
121 had submitted her paperwork, but the staff couldn't even find her name when she
122 went there. She had to re-schedule her appointment. She says the problem isn't
123 always a lack of compliance with the citizens but the communication and process
124 that causes problems. She said that people have been waiting on the check for
125 weeks, as she'd applied on in the last week of August and that is an issue.
126 d. Pastor Daisy asked how often SHIP gets funding, and Devrie explained that it was
127 annual but that it had been vetoed. She noted that there are several strategies that
128 SHIP has funded.
129 e. Pastor Daisy clarified that she was concerned that if the money hasn't been spent
130 that it would impact the program. Devrie explained that the money had been spent
131 primarily on other strategies and they still have funding this year set aside for rehab,
132 but it has not been any issue spending the funding. She confirmed that there's a
133 need and that is has been demonstrated
134 f. Bernice Jones said that there is a way to get information through flyers at libraries
135 and utility companies, and through orientations/courses on community needs. She
136 said that emailing document lists helps since people access the internet at the

137 library. She suggested that nonprofits can get more grants to expand assistance.
138 Sandra suggested that schools are indeed a good avenue through their robocalls
139 and that perhaps the county partner with Flagler Schools to use those
140 announcements since they impact families with children.

- 141 g. Mary Vasilyevsky followed up with Pastor Henry's observation regarding the Care's
142 Act, and said that she helped someone apply, and that there was no confirmation
143 regarding the actual appointment date, and that by the time a frazzled person
144 dealing with economic uncertainty gets to the point of needing to get everything
145 together, they may easily forget the date of the appointment. She says that folks
146 might lose some trust in the process given the statistical disenfranchisement the
147 population experiences already with voting.
- 148 h. Sandra suggested to Heidi that the consensus seems to be to evaluate the process.
- 149 i. Pastor Henry commented on the AHAC membership and said that when the positions
150 are posted, citizens who are involved in the community and show up to the meetings
151 are not even eligible. She is a nonprofit manager and is experienced with some
152 grant management, and would like to have more information and involvement. She
153 says she is a community advocate who has access to Internet but seems not to get
154 social information about meetings and offerings as they do become available.
- 155 j. Mary suggested getting assistance information out to property management. She
156 also will volunteer to help with orientation video production or helping to streamline
157 resource information for citizens.
- 158 k. Devrie mentioned the Social Services Directory

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160 Rick Belhumeur moved to adjourn and Trish Giaccone seconded the motion. All voted in
161 favor to adjourn at 10:00 am.

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163 AHAC adjourned at 10:00 am.

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165 Next meeting will be October 13th, 2020.
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