

**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
COMMISSION ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING (CAH)
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

JULY 18, 2024

**THURSDAY
10:30 A.M.**

**100 S. AUSTRALIAN AVE
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

MEMBERS:

Commissioner Mack Bernard
Nicholas Bixler
Brandon Cabrera
George "Adam" Campbell
Lynda Charles
Shirley Erazo
William "Elliott" Johnson
Ezra M. Krieg, Chair
Tim Kubrick
Amy Robbins, Vice Chair
Ashley Whidby

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Yvette Cueto, Planner II, Housing and Economic Development (HED)
Tammy Fields, Assistant County Administrator
Sherry Howard, Division Director V, HED
Carlos Serrano, Division Director II, HED

PRESENT VIA WEBEX:

David Brandt, Executive Director, Housing Finance Authority
Jonathan Brown, Director II, HED
Suzanne Cabrera, President & CEO, Housing Leadership Council (HLC)
Wilneeda Emmanuel, Senior County Commission Administrative Assistant
Lesley George, Housing Liaison, HED
Joyce Grimm, Planner II, HED
Dorina Jenkins-Gaskin, Division Director II, HED
Skip Miller, Greenspoon Marder LLP
Roslynne Powell, Housing Program Coordinator, HED
Stefania Russell, Planner II, HED

ALSO PRESENT:

Jeff DeMario, Vita Nova
Natalie Keys, Intern, Valley Bank

**COMMISSION ON AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:
Alyssa Berg, Deputy Clerk

I. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 10:43 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Nicholas Bixler, Brandon Cabrera, Adam Campbell, Lynda Charles, Amy Robbins, and Ashley Whidby

Absent: Shirley Erazo, Elliot Johnson, Ezra Krieg, and Tim Kubrick

Via Webex: Commissioner Mack Bernard

III. Approval of Remote Attendance

MOTION to approve remote attendance. Motion by Ashley Whidby, seconded by Adam Campbell, and carried 6-0.

IV. Approval of Agenda

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Adam Campbell, seconded by Brandon Cabrera, and carried 7-0.

V. Approval of Minutes (May and June)

MOTION to approve the minutes of May 2024 and June 2024. Motion by Adam Campbell, seconded by Nicholas Bixler, and carried 7-0.

VI. Member Introductions

Ms. Robbins initiated the session by introducing herself to both the new and returning committee members. Following her introduction, she invited each attendee to share his or her name and professional background with the group.

VII. Old Business

a. CAH Role in Housing For All Plan

Ms. Robbins provided an overview of the committee's involvement in the "Housing for All" plan, which was initiated by the HLC. Furthermore, she addressed the recent meeting with representatives from the City of Riviera Beach, during which they discussed efforts

to utilize elements of the plan to create a housing strategy for their community. She encouraged the committee to extend invitations to other municipalities to participate in future discussions.

Mr. Brown clarified that the CAH did not have the authority to oversee the HLC's housing plan within the parameters of its role as defined by County ordinance.

Discussion ensued regarding the "Housing for All" plan and the role of the CAH.

At the suggestion of Ms. Fields, non-member attendees introduced themselves.

Ms. Fields spoke about the various housing programs administered by the County and stated that HED did not have sufficient staff to oversee implementation of the HLC plan.

Ms. Robbins stated that it was important for the CAH to remain informed in order to effectively develop incentives and meet its goals as an advisory body.

Mr. Campbell noted that the CAH's primary responsibilities concerned the incentives recommendations and the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program.

Mr. Serrano stated that he would continue to provide the committee with regular updates regarding any developments related to the housing plan in municipalities as well as implementation of the countywide housing plan.

b. CAH Incentives Review Timeline/Priorities

Mr. Serrano provided an overview of the CAH's responsibilities regarding the incentive recommendations report, and he explained the timeline for the process. He also proposed that County staff review the incentives reports generated by other large counties and provide a summary to the CAH members prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Serrano detailed the forthcoming course of action, encompassing the identification of preferred incentives by the committee, conducting of research, and initiation of discussions with County agencies.

Ms. Charles inquired whether the committee could proceed with the development of incentives proposed in previous years.

Mr. Campbell recommended implementing a more comprehensive approach to inactive incentives.

Ms. Charles suggested contacting PZB for a status update on previous recommendations that were supported by staff.

Mr. Serrano stated that staff could request an update and present it to the CAH or could invite PZB representatives to participate at the next meeting.

STAFF DIRECTION:

Ms. Robbins directed staff to invite PZB to provide a status update at the next CAH meeting.

Mr. Campbell expressed agreement with the proposed research involving the examination of incentives reports drafted by other counties.

c. Flexible Zoning

Ms. Robbins suggested moving the item to the next month's meeting agenda to allow Mr. Johnson to be present.

Mr. Serrano provided an explanation of how self-regulating development orders were utilized. He stated that the committee had discussed sending a letter to PZB regarding implementation of that mechanism, but the letter had not yet been drafted for the CAH's consideration.

STAFF DIRECTION:

Ms. Robbins directed staff to add the flexible zoning item to the August 15, 2024, meeting agenda under "New Business."

VIII. New Business

SHIP Allocations for FY24

Ms. George provided an overview of the proposed SHIP funding allocations for 2024-2025 and outlined the housing initiative strategy recommendations. She explained that the SHIP program was state-funded and noted that the County had been allocated less funding than in 2023-2024.

Ms. Howard explained that the decrease in funds relative to the prior year was attributable to the "Live Local Act," which had resulted in an increased allocation in 2023-2024.

Mr. Bixler inquired if the committee had access to data that broke down usage of the prior year's allocation according to category.

Ms. Jenkins-Gaskin clarified that the funds were to be spent within a three-year window and that funds from 2021-2022 were still being allocated.

Ms. Howard explained that HED staggered the programs so that they were not all open simultaneously. She also noted that a portion of the funds from 2023-2024 had been allocated.

Ms. Jenkins-Gaskin clarified that expenditures were analyzed monthly, and unused funds could be reallocated to different programs.

Mr. Brown discussed two new initiatives, the mortgage assistance program and the multifamily acquisition program, and said that HED would make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in August.

Discussion ensued regarding utility connection fee assistance for income-eligible households.

Mr. Bixler inquired if the committee would be able to explore options for homeowners to reduce insurance premiums while also increasing resilience to storms and climate change.

Ms. Howard responded to Mr. Bixler and stated that HED currently prioritized hurricane hardening.

Mr. Brown stated that homeowners were able to reduce their insurance premiums by participating in a four-point inspection for eligible homes in need of rehabilitation.

Ms. Charles discussed accessibility to resources for elderly residents within the county and how the committee could aid such individuals in accurately processing applications.

Discussion ensued regarding assistance available to elderly residents.

Mr. Bixler inquired about the potential to revise the budget recommendation regarding single-family new construction to include multifamily housing and duplexes.

Ms. Jenkins-Gaskin stated that multifamily projects were allocated through the developer rental assistance program.

Ms. Howard clarified that single-family homes encompassed townhomes that were for purchase.

Ms. Charles discussed the lack of available space within the county to build multifamily housing.

Mr. Serrano informed the members that the proposed funding allocations would be presented for BCC approval at the September 17, 2024, meeting.

VIII. Member Comments

Mr. Cabrera said that he appreciated learning about the committee's role and looked forward to working with everyone.

Ms. Fields stated that staff was available to provide information and answer questions.

Mr. Serrano discussed the Sunshine Law and emphasized the importance of not discussing committee business with other members outside of CAH meetings.

MOTION to approve the proposed 2024-2025 SHIP allocations. Motion by Brandon Cabrera, seconded by Adam Campbell, and carried 7-0.

IX. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Brandon Cabrera, seconded by Ashley Whidby, and carried 7-0.

At 11:44 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.