

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

JANUARY 18, 2024

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

**100 AUSTRALIAN AVENUE
WEST PALM BEACH, FL**

MEMBERS:

Commissioner Mack Bernard
George "Adam" Campbell
Lynda Charles
Shirley Erazo
William "Elliott" Johnson
Ezra M. Krieg
Tim Kubrick
Corey O'Gorman
Amy Robbins
Aquannette Thomas

COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:

Jonathan Brown, Director II, Housing and Economic Development (HED)
Sheila Brown, Senior Planner, HED
Tammy Fields, Assistant County Administrator
Carlos Serrano, Division Director II, HED

PRESENT VIA WEBEX:

Suzanne Cabrera, President and CEO, Housing Leadership Council (HLC)
Yvette Cueto, Planner II, HED
Lesley George, Housing Liaison, HED
Joyce Grimm, Planner II, HED
Sherry Howard, Division Director V, HED
Elizabeth Jo Miller, Senior Planner, HED
Stefania Russell, Planner II, HED
Michael Sklar, Principal Planner, HED
Tessa Wattley, Real Estate Contract Analyst, HED

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE STAFF PRESENT:

Danielle Freeman, Deputy Clerk
Jillian Zalewska, Deputy Clerk

I. Call to Order

Mr. Serrano called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. in the absence of the chair.

II. Roll Call

Present: Adam Campbell, Lynda Charles, Shirley Erazo, Tim Kubrick, Corey O’Gorman, and Amy Robbins

Absent: Elliott Johnson, Ezra Krieg, and Aquannette Thomas

Via Webex: Commissioner Bernard

Mr. Serrano confirmed the presence of a quorum and asked one of the members to lead the meeting prior to the election of a new chair and vice chair.

Mr. Campbell volunteered to chair the meeting.

III. Approval of Remote Attendance

MOTION to approve remote attendance. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Amy Robbins, and carried 6-0.

IV. Approval of Agenda

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Shirley Erazo, and carried 7-0.

V. Approval of Minutes

MOTION to approve the December 21, 2023, meeting minutes. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Lynda Charles, and carried 7-0.

VI. Old Business

Mr. Serrano informed the commission that the incentives review and recommendations report adopted at the December meeting had been submitted as an amendment to the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) and would be presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for approval at the February 6, 2024, meeting. He said that he would distribute the agenda item and staff comments on the recommendations to the CAH members.

VII. New Business

a. Elect Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Serrano informed the members that Len Tylka had stepped down from his position on the CAH.

MOTION to nominate Ezra Krieg as CAH chair. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Shirley Erazo.

The members agreed to revisit the agenda item when Mr. Krieg joined the meeting.

b. Focus Areas for 2024 Incentives Review

Discussion ensued regarding the CAH’s request for status updates on recommendations including the implementation of a shepherd position, online access, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Mr. Serrano spoke about an event he had attended at which several counties and municipalities had presented about ADUs.

Ms. Charles suggested inviting a representative from the City of St. Petersburg to participate at a meeting and said she would try to establish contact.

(CLERK’S NOTE: Ezra Krieg joined the meeting).

The members discussed the status of the housing plan, and Mr. Serrano said that the plan would be presented to the BCC as an agenda item at the January 23, 2024, meeting with a staff recommendation to endorse and support the plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the CAH’s priorities for 2024. Ms. Charles suggested that the CAH could consider the implementation process for the housing plan. She spoke about efforts undertaken by the City of Riviera Beach and proposed that the CAH select one of the initiatives and make recommendations.

Mr. Serrano discussed the updates that had been requested and mentioned that the Building Division was in the process of updating its electronic plans review and permitting system to incorporate expedited permitting for affordable housing projects. He informed the members that property development regulations had been changed to eliminate the requirement that the kitchen in an ADU had to be removed when the property owner vacated the main house; however, the recommendation regarding separate electrical meters for ADUs was under review by staff. He noted that the separate electrical meter could affect density.

Ms. Charles mentioned that other localities were utilizing ADUs to increase affordable housing stock.

Mr. Krieg suggested that the CAH consider the implications of the Live Local Act after the conclusion of the legislative session.

Mr. O’Gorman commented that it would be helpful to understand how recommendations that were implemented translated to results regarding development of affordable housing.

In response to a comment by Mr. Campbell, Mr. Serrano said that staff would typically present proposed State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program allocations in April or May. He also said that he would request staff updates regarding expedited permitting, flexible zoning, ADUs, and the shepherd position.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of reducing parking requirements.

Mr. Krieg requested that PZB staff include visual aids in future presentations. He also asked that staff create a guide or report that could be used to address the public perception that nothing was being done to address the affordable housing issue.

Commissioner Bernard said that it was important to ensure that any information shared with the public was accurate.

Ms. Charles agreed that transparency was needed.

(CLERK'S NOTE: Item VII.a continued at this time.)

Upon call for a vote, the motion to nominate Ezra Krieg as chair of the CAH carried 8-0.

MOTION to nominate Amy Robbins as vice chair of the CAH. Motion by Corey O'Gorman, seconded by Adam Campbell, and carried 8-0.

c. Strategy for Establishing Partnerships

Mr. Krieg discussed prior efforts to engage with other entities and suggested that the CAH could serve as a conduit to reduce repetitive discussions.

Ms. Charles agreed that the CAH could act as a connector and said that she would like the CAH to participate in the implementation of the housing plan.

Mr. Brown explained that staff's recommendation that the BCC support and endorse the plan was intended to help the Housing Leadership Council (HLC) secure funding.

Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of collaborating with the HLC, and Mr. Brown said that staff would share any relevant information once a contact person had been designated.

Ms. Cabrera said that the HLC had contracted with Christina Romulus as a consultant to work on tracking implementation of the plan.

In response to a question posed by Mr. Krieg, Ms. Cabrera said that the HLC would be interested in scheduling a time to discuss the housing plan with the CAH.

The members agreed to schedule the discussion for the February 15, 2024, CAH meeting.

Mr. Krieg asked Ms. Erazo about the possibility of engaging with housing authorities.

Ms. Erazo stated that housing authorities were very involved in affordable housing projects.

The members agreed to invite representatives from the housing authorities to the March 21, 2024, meeting.

Ms. Charles suggested inviting a new nonprofit group, Partners for Housing, to attend a CAH meeting, and the members agreed to invite them to the April meeting.

Mr. Krieg stated that he would like to revisit discussions with the school board.

Mr. Kubrick agreed to provide an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Robbins suggested scheduling a discussion with the school board for the May CAH meeting, and Mr. Kubrick agreed.

Ms. Charles suggested the health sector as a potential partner.

Mr. Krieg said that the CAH might want to consider that possibility in the future.

VIII. Member Comments

Mr. O’Gorman asked if the members could express their gratitude to Len Tylka, the former chair. It was agreed that Ms. Robbins would bring a card to the next meeting for everyone to sign.

Ms. Robbins asked if there were any candidates to fill the vacancy left by Mr. Tylka’s departure.

Mr. Serrano stated that candidates were nominated by the individual County commissioners and approved by the BCC, but he would forward any suggestions.

UNSCHEDULED ITEM

Staff Comments

Mr. Brown informed the commission that staff had begun the process of issuing RFPs for the housing bond. He also said that a notice of funding availability had been released for a SHIP multifamily acquisition. He explained that \$300,000 per unit would be recommended if a nonprofit wanted to acquire the property, but the money had to be

spent by June 1, 2024. Additionally, Mr. Brown stated that a first mortgage program had been opened to assist buyers purchasing homes that cost up to \$450,000.

Ms. Charles asked how quickly the money would be allocated if a nonprofit acquired the multifamily property.

Mr. Brown said that the County could assist with acquisition, but the units had to be occupied by June 1st. In response to questions by the members, he clarified that the money was intended to support acquisition but not major rehabilitation work.

Discussion ensued regarding the first mortgage assistance program, and Mr. Brown said that funds from the program could be combined with other forms of assistance.

Ms. Fields stated that the County would occupy the first mortgage position.

Ms. Robbins noted that funds obtained through the Hometown Heroes program could not be used in conjunction with assistance provided by the first mortgage program.

Ms. Fields introduced herself to the commission.

At Ms. Brown's request, the meeting attendees introduced themselves.

IX. Adjourn

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Adam Campbell, seconded by Shirley Erazo, and carried 8-0.

At 11:51 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED: