

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

MARCH 3, 2021

**WEDNESDAY
10:32 A.M.**

**RISK MANAGEMENT TRAINING ROOM 1-470
100 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVENUE, WEST PALM BEACH**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS:

Commissioner Mack Bernard
John-Anthony Bogess
George "Adam" Campbell
Timothy Coppage
Corey O'Gorman
William Elliot Johnson
Ezra M. Krieg
Amy Robbins
Aquanette Thomas- via Webex
Leonard "Len" A. Tylka

STAFF:

Jonathan Brown, Director, Housing and Economic Sustainability (HES)
Sherry Howard, Deputy Director, HES
Carlos Serrano, Director of Strategic Planning and Operations, HES
Dorina Jenkins-Gaskin, Mortgage and Housing Assistance Manager, HES
Sheila Brown, Planner II, HES

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:

Yadzia Roa, Deputy Clerk, Clerk & Comptroller's Office

III. VOTE ON REMOTE ATTENDANCE

MOTION to approve those members attending remotely. Motion by Ezra Krieg, seconded by Elliot Johnson, and carried 10-0.

IV. INTRODUCTIONS

Each member of the Commission introduced themselves.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION to approve the agenda. Motion by Corey O’Gorman, seconded by Tim Coppage, and carried 10-0.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the September 9, 2020 and December 2, 2020 minutes. Motion by Ezra Krieg, seconded by Adam Campbell, and carried 10-0.

VII. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Carlos Serrano, Director of Strategic Planning and Operations, Housing and Economic Sustainability (HES) called for nominations for chair.

Corey O’Gorman nominated Len Tylka as chair, seconded by Timothy Coppage and carried 10-0.

UPON CALL FOR A VOTE Len Tylka was elected as chair.

Elliot Johnson nominated Ezra Krieg to vice chair, seconded by Timothy Coppage and carried 10-0

UPON CALL FOR A VOTE, Ezra Krieg was elected as vice chair.

VIII. CAH MEMBER ORIENTATION

Carlos Serrano said that the Commission on Affordable Housing (CAH):

- Served as the County’s affordable housing advisory committee required by Florida Statute under the condition that the County received funding through the State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP) from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC).
- Created by Palm Beach County (PBC) Housing Ordinance 2017-017.
- The committee consisted of 8-11 members that represented various categories related to affordable housing.
- Members are appointed by the BCC to three-year terms.
- The PBC Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability (DHES) facilitated the committee.
- Meetings were subjected to the State's Sunshine Laws and conducted by adhering to Roberts Rules of Order.

- Had quarterly meetings the first Wednesday of March, June, September, and December 2020 with additional meetings as needed.
- Members were removed if they were absent for 3 consecutive meetings or more than half the meetings in one year.
- Responsibilities included:
 - Conducting an annual review of Affordable Housing Incentives.
 - Review and comment on the PBC Local Housing Assistance Plan.
 - Review and comment on proposed uses of the proposed allocation of SHIP funds.
 - Other functions as assigned by the BCC.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

IX.a. Sadowski Funding Update

Ezra Krieg said that:

- In 2020, the legislature recommended full appropriation of all Sadowski funds in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2021 budget.
- When the pandemic hit, Governor Ron DeSantis vetoed \$225 million of SHIP funding, but approved \$115 million for the SAIL program and other FHFC programs.
- \$250 million from the CARES Act was allocated to indicate a commitment to housing issues.
- The legislature did not hold a special session, so the \$225 million intended for SHIP remained in the State Housing Trust Fund.
- Documentary tax (Doc) stamp collection remained on target in FY 2020 and increased in late 2020/ early 2021.
- Governor Ron DeSantis recommended full Sadowski funding for the FY 2021-2022 budget.
- The State's Senate and the House of Representatives have not yet released their FY 2021-2022 budgets.

- House Bill (HB) 13 and Senate Bill (SB) 510 would protect Housing Trust Funds.
- The Sadowski Coalition was a statewide organization with their next meeting via Zoom on March 9, 2021.
- The PBC Legislative Delegation was active in their support of the Housing Trust funds.

Sherry Howard, Deputy Director of the Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability clarified to members that CARES Act funding was not able to address affordable housing inventory where SHIP funding had more flexibility.

Amy Robbins inquired about last year's affordable housing allocation in the County.

Mr. Krieg said that the County's allocation was estimated at \$20 million.

Mr. Tylka reviewed decision making at the Florida Housing Boards.

IX.b. COVID-19 Response Update

Sheila Brown, Planner II, said that:

- The CARES Act created the \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF).
- The County received \$264 million of direct federal allocation and \$6.3 million from the CRF through the State.
- The funds received must be used for COVID-19 preparation or response and be expended by December 30, 2020.
- Some of the allocation was provided to the PBC Community Services Department for CARES emergency financial assistance preventing eviction and/or utility disconnection of COVID-impacted renters.
- As of January 25, 2021 there were:
 - 17,046 rental assistance applications processed.
 - 11,869 applications approved and/or paid.
 - \$22,549,311 in payments processed.
- PBC Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability (DHES) provided CARES emergency financial assistance for mortgage arrears and other related costs preventing foreclosure of COVID-19-impacted homeowners.

- There were two rounds of mortgage assistance with a total of 1,584 homeowners assisted and \$12,226,287 expended.
- DHES provided State CRF emergency financial assistance to homeowners and renters impacted by COVID.
- As of February 15th, the State CRF funded:
 - \$2,779,613 for emergency repairs assisting 157 homeowners.
 - \$313,887 for mortgage assistance received by 39 homeowners.
 - \$2,380,877 in rental assistance received by 414 residents.
 - A total of \$5,474,377 in expenditures assisted 610 households.
- The County received \$45 million in federal emergency relief assistance funds for rental assistance which was administered by the County's Community Services Department.
- The rental assistance application process was anticipated to open by March 2021.
- The County received \$9.1 million of federal Community Development Block Grant - Coronavirus funds that was used for mortgage and small business assistance.
- There was a stimulus bill in Congress pending a final legislative decision.

X. NEW BUSINESS

X.a. Annual Incentives Review 2021

Mr. Serrano said that:

- The core function of the CAH was to review County policies and regulations as related to affordable housing and then for the CAH to provide recommendations for modifications to those regulations in order to facilitate affordable housing.
- The last incentive review was conducted in 2018.
- The legislature changed the requirement to annually with the next incentive review due December 30, 2021.
- The incentives meant policies or processes by which the County could facilitate or stimulate the market's production with preservation of housing that was affordable for the local population.

- Affordable Housing Incentives were within PBC ordinances, land development regulations, the Comprehensive Plan and County policies and procedures.
- Florida Statutes identified the following 11 incentive areas that had to be addressed in the Incentive Reviews:
 1. Expedited processing of development order approvals or permits for affordable housing projects.
 2. Allowable fee waivers provided for the development or construction of affordable housing.
 3. Flexible densities for affordable housing.
 4. Reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for low and moderate-income individuals.
 5. Affordable access to residential units.
 6. Reduction of parking and setback requirements
 7. Flexible lot configurations that would include zero lot line style developments.
 8. Modification of street requirements.
 9. Local government processes that reconsidered policies and actions that increased the cost of housing.
 10. Inventory of publicly-owned lands that were suitable for affordable housing.
 11. Development near transportation hubs and employment centers and mixed use developments.
- The Incentive Review Process identified the current policies, regulations and governing authorities in the 11 incentive areas.
- The CAH offered modification recommendations advancing affordable housing that would ultimately be presented to the BCC for consideration.

Jonathan Brown, Director of HES, said that affordable housing funding was not used for entitlement municipalities, but for unincorporated areas, which were actually governed by HES.

Mr. Cerrano said that:

- SHIP dollars were received from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) by the County to cover its jurisdiction and certain municipalities within the County, from which they received funding from the FHFC, making them entitlement municipalities.
- Municipalities that were eligible for SHIP funding did not receive it directly from the State.
- The City of Palm Beach Gardens, the Town of Jupiter, and the Village of Wellington were some municipalities that did not receive SHIP funding from the State.

Mr. Tylka suggested that incentives become a bit more specific to the projects.

John-Anthony Bogess said that these incentives and priorities were needed for teachers.

Commissioner Bernard said that properties from the school district's perspective should be looked into for repurposing for affordable and workforce housing.

Mr. Tylka said that the BCC should have the CAH look into workforce housing as well.

Mr. Serrano continued the presentation, and said that:

- DHES reached out to County divisions and offices that had authority over various incentive areas.
- The Planning, Zoning, and Building (PZ&B) Department and the County Engineer had authority over the incentive areas.
- DHES would populate a FHFC report template with information provided by PZ&B and Engineering.
- Members may perform their own individual research.
- Additional meetings were requested to discuss incentives with County staff and with their feedback, be able to develop recommendations.
- DHES produced a draft report using CAH recommendations, which would be discussed at the June 2, 2021 CAH meeting.
- DHES produced the final report per CAH directions and the final adoption would be at the September 1, 2021 meeting.

- The BCC considered an amendment to the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) to incorporate the CAH incentive recommendations.

X.b. Schedule Special Meeting Date(s)

Mr. Krieg suggested:

- The CAH meet more often before the final report.
- Conducting 3 additional hearings that included interested parties as well.
- An additional hearing in between June 2, 2021 and September 1, 2021 where the parties could view the draft and offer suggestions before the final draft.

XI. MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Tylka suggested monthly meetings instead of the suggested meeting dates.

Timothy Coppage suggested inviting companies that actually worked on the projects for their input.

Mr. Kreig said that having a specific meeting with non-governmental people for discussion would be beneficial.

Commissioner Bernard recommended that the first meeting include PZ&B, the second meeting include the County Engineer's department and the third meeting be nongovernmental people, before the July meeting.

Mr. Johnson said that because of traveling, he could contribute virtually for any additional meetings being scheduled that were not already scheduled.

The committee agreed on virtual attending for those who could not attend physically.

Mr. Tylka suggested the first Wednesday of every month.

Mr. Serrano confirmed monthly meetings would be scheduled until September 1st at around 10 a.m.

Sheila Brown said that the Community Services Department (CSD) administered the \$45 million of Federal ERA funds.

Mr. Brown said that the CSD would present the program to the BCC to receive further direction and details on the start of the program.

Mr. Boggess said that the School District of Palm Beach County partnered with the County to provide a Wi-Fi mesh project to the municipalities.

MOTION to adjourn. Motion by Len Tylka, seconded by Commissioner Bernard, and carried 10-0.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:53 a.m., the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED:

Chair/Vice Chair