

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting • January 21, 2005**  
**Washington State Department of Community,**  
**Trade, and Economic Development (CTED) • 906 Columbia Street S.W.**  
**Olympia, WA 98504**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Juan Aguilar, Gloria Burton, Guillermo Castaneda, Mike Gempler, Billie Heath, Dixie Kracht, Erik Nicholson, John Smith, Tomás Villanueva, and Mike Youngquist. Members participating via teleconference: Alicia McRae. Members not present: Lupe Gamboa, Pete Garza, Frank Ochoa, Mario Villanueva and Heyward Watson. Staff present: Tom Byers and Kristi Buck – Cedar River Group; and Brien Thane – Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing. Ex Officio: Mary McBride – U.S. Senator Patty Murray’s office. Guests present: Craig Nolte, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco; Bruce Newman and Art Seavey, RCAC; Janet Abbett and Stephen Buxbaum, CTED.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The annual meeting of the Washington State Farmworker Housing Trust Board of Directors was convened by Vice President Dixie Kracht at 10:45 a.m., and a quorum was recognized.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The minutes of the December meeting of the Board were reviewed and approved as submitted.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2005**

The bylaws of the Trust specify that officers will be selected at the annual meeting. Mike Youngquist moved that the current officers (Juan Aguilar, President; Dixie Kracht, Vice President; Mike Gempler, Treasurer; and Gloria Burton, Secretary) be elected to serve as the leadership of the Trust for 2005. His motion was seconded by Tomás Villanueva and approved by a unanimous vote.

**REPORT ON MEETINGS WITH STATE OFFICIALS**

Juan Aguilar, Gloria Burton, Billie Heath, Brien Thane and Tom Byers reported on the Trust’s presentation to the Housing Committee of the House of Representatives. All felt that the presentation had been very effective and well-received by the members of the committee who made a number of favorable comments during and after the hearing. Gloria noted, however, that the concerns of local governments about the tax-exempt status of farmworker housing seem to have found a sympathetic ear on the committee. She and others stated that Mario Villanueva had done an excellent job of addressing the issue, and that his remarks could serve as the basis for a more formal response on the part of the Trust. Guillermo Castaneda reminded the Board that homeownership programs actually add to the tax rolls and they are a part of our plan as well as rental housing. Billie Heath said that she had seen reports of measures that had been taken in California to address this concern. She volunteered to head a committee to address the issue. The committee will have three goals: 1.) to identify the costs and benefits to local communities of having farmworker housing; 2.) to develop a case statement; and 3.) to seek creative solutions

that could be enacted in Washington State. Gloria, Brien, Alicia, and John volunteered to serve on the committee.

### **PLANNING FOR THE CAPACITY CONFERENCE**

Tom Byers provided a brief summary of the events leading up to the conference. In exploring the potential for philanthropic funding, it became apparent that the Trust may have an opportunity to apply for a major grant from the Paul Allen Foundation in their March funding round to increase the capacity of rural housing providers to develop and effectively manage farmworker housing. The competitiveness of our application will be determined in large part on having a coherent statewide plan for distributing the funds in a way that will address the full range of housing needs, and be sustainable over time. Although ORFH and others have done considerable work on this issue in the past, it was agreed that it would be a good idea to update and refine that work in a one-day conference. When Tom approached the regional office of HUD to seek funding for such a conference, the staff suggested contacting RCAC, which is allocated HUD technical assistance funding that might be an appropriate source of support. Through Billie Heath's efforts, RCAC has decided to allocate \$14,000 of their HUD funds to help stage the conference. Bruce Newman of RCAC then outlined the plans for the conference which will be held in early March in Yakima. He introduced Art Seavey, who will be doing the background interviews of the participants and managing the logistics of the conference. Tom then introduced Craig Nolte, of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, who has kindly agreed to contribute \$1,000 to cover some of the costs of the event. Craig stated that the FRB has recently completed a study of the needs in the region and identified the need for affordable housing as the top priority in Washington State, and the need for farmworker housing as among the most important manifestations of that need.

Bruce and Art then led the group in a discussion of the best dates for the conference. It was agreed that Tom and Kristi would work with RCAC to settle on the dates that worked best for the likely participants. If possible, we will have the next Board meeting in Yakima in conjunction with the conference.

### **MEMBER UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Juan and Dixie acknowledged the presence of Stephen Buxbaum, Director of the Housing Division of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, and his associate, Janet Abbett, and thanked them for the use of their conference room. Mr. Buxbaum responded with very kind words about the work of the Trust, and his determination to help meet the needs of farmworkers. He reiterated his invitation to apply to CTED for a "planning only grant" to offset the costs of the farmworker survey.

### **REPORT FROM THE FARMWORKER SURVEY COMMITTEE**

Tom reported that he had received a commitment from Applied Survey Research that they will have a revised proposal completed by our next meeting. They have stated verbally that they have made refinements in their initial proposal in response to issues raised by Dr. Larson, Brien and others. As a result, their cost estimate will rise somewhat, but Tom said he does not expect it to go above \$110,000.

### **FISCAL AGENT REPORT**

Brien Thane indicated that he was unable to have a final report for the meeting because of technical problems, but would submit it to all the members by e-mail early next week.

### **FUTURE FUNDING FOR TRUST OPERATIONS**

Tom Byers distributed a proposed budget for 2005, as the Board requested during its last meeting. The budget assumes that a full-time Director and support staff will be on board by July 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition to the line item budget, the staff developed a “project budget” that allocates the costs of staff and overhead by the proportion of time that staff will dedicate to each of five major projects. Tom also distributed a document entitled “fundraising target” which shows the total needed to complete the Trust’s 2005 projects and continue basic operations, the amounts raised to date, and the amounts still to be raised. He then asked the Board to adopt the budget and fundraising targets so that they can be used in fundraising proposals and grant requests. After discussion, the Board adopted the budget and fundraising target by unanimous vote.

Mike Gempler then suggested that the staff arrange a meeting of the Finance Committee so that the committee could take stock of the organizations financial condition and find the best ways to overcome the funding crunch. Juan indicated that he would work with staff to set up the meeting.

### **PROGRESS ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Tom thanked the members of the Board for their comments and suggestions regarding the PowerPoint summary of the comprehensive plan. He said that the document is much stronger because of those contributions, especially the photographs of farmworker housing projects that give the viewer a clear picture of the quality of the housing that is being created by our partners. Juan said that the PowerPoint had been very well-received by the financial community leaders and by the members of the House Housing Committee during yesterday’s work session with legislators.

Mike Gempler asked at what point we wanted to declare the draft comprehensive plan a final product. Tom responded that having it marked as draft at this point seemed useful, since we are still getting good ideas from those to whom we are making presentations, and incorporating them into the Plan. Board members also said they expected the Plan to continue to evolve to reflect changing conditions, but that the current version is accomplishing its purposes. The next test will be whether the Senator’s staff deems it sufficient to move forward with meetings with major philanthropies.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 3:25 p.m.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board will take place in conjunction with the capacity conference. The staff will work with RCAC to finalize the planning for that event and notify the Board of the time and place. Directions will be distributed prior to the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
President/Vice President