

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Friday • February 24, 2006 • 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
CTED Conference Room
Olympia, Washington

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Guillermo Castaneda, Pete Garza, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, Mario Villanueva and Tomás Villanueva (by phone). Mike Gempler, Billie Heath, Erik Nicholson, Michael Youngquist (in person). Members not present: Juan Aguilar, Gloria Burton, John Smith, Heyward Watson. Ex Officio members present: Mary McBride - Office of Senator Murray. Guests present: Stephen Buxbaum and Pat Arnold - CTED. Staff present: Tom Byers and Kristi Buck – Cedar River Group, and Brien Thane - Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mike Gempler, Treasurer, called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. by welcoming everyone.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the January 27th meeting were reviewed. Tomás Villanueva moved that the minutes be approved. His motion was seconded by Guillermo Castaneda and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Annual Meeting Date and Nominating Committee Meeting Date.** Tom Byers requested a change in the date of the annual meeting to our March meeting since the Nominating Committee must still hold a conference call to agree on candidates for the two open positions and for a new President. Tom asked Mario Villanueva to provide a brief summary of the candidates he had identified for the community stakeholder position vacated when Lupe Gamboa assumed his new position in Boston. Mario briefly described the backgrounds of Carlos Diaz of the Washington State Migrant Council and Stella Vasquez of the Yakima Valley Farmworker Clinic. Mike Youngquist and Dixie Kracht provided background on Jim Potts, a former County Commissioner who has also been mentioned as a potential candidate. Tom Byers indicated that Marty Miller, the Director of the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing, has also expressed an interest in serving. A conference call of the Committee is scheduled for March 6th.
- **Executive Director Search Committee Report.** Tom Byers reported that Executive Search Services is ready to formally launch the search whenever the Board is ready. Erik Nicholson requested that the latest draft of the job description be sent to all Board members for final review. Tomás Villanueva asked if the National Council of la Raza and other national organizations had been notified of the position. Tom indicated that ESS would be contacting any organizations the Board wished to have on our list.

- **Seasonal Housing Retreat.** Tom Byers announced that a survey of Board members indicates that April 26-28th is the preferred date for the Board retreat to wrestle with the issue of seasonal housing.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE MATCHING FUND

In light of the presence of Stephen Buxbaum and Pat Arnold, the Chair asked the Board's approval of reordering the agenda to accommodate their schedules. Pat Arnold then provided the Board with a brief update of the State's activities to implement the infrastructure matching fund. A spirited discussion ensued in which some Board members shared their concerns regarding on-farm, grower-owned housing, while others pointed to the critical need for a solution to the seasonal housing issue. At one point Erik Nicholson and Tomás Villanueva were asked by Mike Youngquist whether they were willing to work toward an agreement on the issue. They responded by saying that they had every intention of searching for common ground, and would not be planning on coming to the retreat if they did not have the hope that it would lead to a solution. On behalf of CTED, Stephen Buxbaum strongly stated his determination to find solutions that would provide "decent, affordable and family-friendly" models of seasonal housing. He asked for the Trust's help in identifying those models. He also pointed out that the amounts of money the State has available are insufficient to meet the need, and therefore it is imperative that we find a model that taps grower participation in funding seasonal projects. Mike Youngquist asked if CTED was looking at a method of monitoring the quality of seasonal housing projects funded by the State. Stephen responded by saying that it is the Department's intent to monitor the housing funded through the matching fund, but the details have not yet been developed. He indicated that he had asked Pat Arnold to focus on several objectives as she implements the Infrastructure Matching Fund program:

- 1) Building trust with local government agencies.
- 2) Streamlining the contract process.
- 3) Creating mechanisms for private financing.

At this point, Pat Arnold thanked the Board for the chance to provide an update and left.

2006 STATE ACTION AGENDA

At this point, the discussion turned to the status of House Bill 2418 which contains an additional \$4 million in funding for farmworker housing. Stephen reported that the bill will have "an uphill fight in the Senate." He also reminded everyone that the bill authorizes spending but doesn't appropriate funds. The real test will come in the budget process. He also pointed out that CTED believes the first priority is to reduce the backlog of good projects that are waiting for funding. That backlog is currently estimated at \$45 million, so even if HB 2418 passes, much of that backlog will remain. Mike Gempler thanked Stephen for joining us and for his willingness to share his perspective. He encouraged the Board members to continue their contacts with the members of the Senate, and said that he believed we would be able to find support there.

FEDERAL ACTION AGENDA

Tom Byers explained a new issue that has arisen regarding the DDA designation of several farmworker housing projects that were supposed to benefit from an extension of the designation until December 17th. Through an inadvertent error, the State Housing Financing Commission may have misinterpreted the closing date. Mary McBride indicated that Senator Murray's staff is aware of the problem and working very hard to resolve the problem.

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Brien Thane distributed a financial report through January 31. On that date the Trust had a positive balance of \$75,955.84. He indicated that the Trust had received \$22,000.00 from the Marguerite Casey Foundation and \$20,000.00 from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission during January.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Tom reported that the Paul Allen Foundation has awarded the Trust a one-year grant of \$250,000.00 for our capacity building initiative. It is the largest amount yet from a philanthropic organization. He also reported that Peter Berliner of the Allen Foundation said that the one-year award was due to the fact that the Trust is still relatively new. If we do well, we will be able to apply for a renewal award for 2007. Tom then announced that Billie Heath had secured a \$1,000.00 grant from RCAC. Billie indicated that she had the check, and photographs were taken of Board Treasurer Mike Gempler accepting the check on behalf of the Board.

FARMWORKER SURVEY COMMITTEE REPORT

Tom reported that there are beginning to be some concerns regarding the status of the survey activity. We are getting close to the beginning of bulb harvest activities in the Skagit and we are behind schedule. Part of the problem is that we still have not gained the grower's data from the State Department of Employment Security to enable us to secure a good sample list of growers. Tom is working through the Governor's office on this and will keep the Board informed of progress.

WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT

Tom Byers reported that work on the Trust Web site is proceeding well. The technical expert suggested by Pete Garza is proving to be very good, and he and Rhonda Peterson of the Cedar River staff are working well together. It is possible that we will have a test site ready for viewing at our next meeting.

NEXT MEETING LOCATION/TIME

The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for Yakima on March 17th, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: _____
Secretary

Approved: _____
President/Vice President