

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Friday, March 21, 2008**  
**Banner Bank, Yakima**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Roger Bairstow, Donn Etherington, Mike Gempler, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, Stella Vasquez, Mario Villanueva, and Mike Youngquist. Members participating by phone: Billie Heath, Mary McBride, and John Smith. Ex Officio members present: Janet Abbett, Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. Staff present: Brien Thane and Rosalinda Mendoza.

Members not present: Gloria Burton, Guillermo Castaneda, Tomás Villanueva and Steven Witte.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mario Villanueva called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m., there being a quorum present.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Minutes of the February 15, 2008 Board meeting were reviewed. *Roger Bairstow moved approval of the Minutes. Stella Vasquez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

**III. Financial Report**

Since Treasurer Mike Gempler had not arrived yet, Brien Thane was asked to present the Finance Committee Report. Brien reported that even with advertising for the Development Director position, expenses for recruitment and advertisement were still below budget. The only budget items overspent for the period are Supplies and Miscellaneous for establishing the new office. The Finance Committee also discussed budget projections without funding from the Allen and Gates Foundations. The Finance Committee will present projections to the full Board after reviewing them in detail. *Mike Youngquist moved approval of the February 29, 2008 Financial Reports. Roger seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

**IV. Fundraising Report**

*Development Director hiring*

Staff finished that last round of interviews on 3/17. Brien reported that one of the finalists expressed concerned about the Trust's youth and small staff. Mario asked whether the candidate assessed the Trust's situation accurately. Alicia McRae asked whether it was a salaried position or if it depends on what they fundraise. Brien replied that it was a salaried position but that the Development Director should bring in at least three to five times their salary. Roger pointed out that the Trust needs to be clear on expectations with the Development Director. Stella also cautioned that the Development Director's fundraising goals need to indicate if there will be a salary increase if they exceed fundraising expectations. The Board also expressed urgency to get someone on staff.

*Community Capacity Fund – Allen and Gates Foundation*

Brien reported that the Gates Foundation has officially notified the Trust that they will not be funding our multi-year proposal. They will however consider a one-year proposal that includes 3-4 specific, *measurable* goals. Two potential activities mentioned by the Gates foundation are:

- Convening housing providers for joint trainings

- Working locally to prevent NIMBY opposition

If we are successful, the Gates Foundation will then consider a multi-year proposal. Many thanks to Mary McBride for her role in negotiating this opportunity for the Trust.

Brien also noted the Gates Foundation doesn't want to fund capacity grants in our one-year proposal. Mario asked if their lack of interest for the Community Capacity Fund was because they can give that money directly to the housing providers. Brien replied that he was not clear on that but key questions from the Gates & Allen staff included

- What is the unique role of the Trust?
- How will the Community Capacity Fund:
  - Change systems or create systemic change?
  - Build capacity beyond just adding more staff to local partners?
  - Not duplicate the efforts of others?
- They want more information and clarity on our process for re-granting funds.
- The Trust doesn't have enough track record

Mike Gempler suggested we may have an opportunity to work with Benton County Commissioner Claude Oliver to do collaborative outreach work at the county level. This could address the House Housing Committee's concern over the lack of planning at the county level. Mike Youngquist proposed working with the local Educational Service Districts and other service providers who may have data on the importance of decent housing, economic development, and children's education. John Smith recommended educating Annie and other foundations on the development realities, that with capacity building it takes years before we can see an increase in units. Stella and other board members urged that the Trust needs to demonstrate tangible outcomes.

Brien asked the Board's input on

- 1) What we want to propose the Gates Foundation for the one-year funding proposal.
- 2) How to proceed with the Community Capacity Fund. Without funding from the Allen and Gates Foundations, we only have about \$800,000 in HUD funds for capacity building.

Roger stated that for the Gates proposal the Trust should focus on outreach to strengthen support from housing providers and other constituents for the Community Capacity Fund. Mike Youngquist proposed using Gates funding for for the first year of a five year strategic plan. Stella pointed out that the CCF will require a couple years to see any deliverables and that we should translate our advocacy work into tangible outcomes (number of units built). Dixie Kracht also suggested tying our advocacy work to family improvement instead of units. Brien stated that an essential component of the Community Capacity Fund is working with housing providers to track residents' success. Both Mike Gempler and Roger emphasized that people don't really understand the role farmworkers play in our economy and telling that story should be a priority of the Trust. Mike Youngquist added that most employers do not realize the benefit they receive from housing and suggested that housing providers identify employers of their residents. Billie Heath urged the Trust to have the CCF grants and survey out so that when we go back to Gates we will already have success on our plates. She also mentioned that this discussion should be an agenda item at our board retreat.

## **IX. Announcements & Updates**

Mario asked to move Announcements and Updates earlier in the agenda and the directors present agreed.

Mike Gempler: Growers reached an agreement with the UFW in an attempt to revive AgJobs. Sen. Feinstein has made it clear that there could be extended visas but not citizenship opportunities in any 2008 legislation. House leadership has not weighed in on AgJobs. Also, last week Rep. Drake filed a discharge petition on the SAVE Act (electronic verification) to place it on the House calendar. Representatives Hastings and McMorris have stated that they will not sign the petition. Next Monday, ICE will publish procedures on how it would coordinate with the Social Security Administration on mis-match letters. The Washington Growers League is focusing on having enough legal workforce. Also, next Tuesday at 1:30pm, Sage Bluff will have its groundbreaking ceremony and the entire board is invited.

Alicia: Vista del Rio won in superior court! Judge Antosz from Grant County found that the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan clearly calls for more low-income housing for farmworkers. The neighborhood association has also dropped their appeal of Bello Rio.

Mario: The Hispanic Communications Network will be working with Catholic Charities Housing Services and Sen. Murray to get more financial support for pre- and post-purchase homeownership counseling.

Mike Youngquist: ICE has been checking for documents at the Anacortes ferry dock.

## **V. Effective Messaging**

Since Ben Gitenstein from the Washington Low-Income Housing Alliance was unable to join the meeting Brien provided a quick overview of the Alliance's Communications and Information Program. Brien indicated that the Trust needs to do a better job of telling its story. Donn Etherington asked if there is value in distinguishing ourselves from the rest of affordable housing. Brien replied that the Trust does need a separate message because we have a different story to tell. Board members stated that they would like Ben to join the April Board Meeting.

## **VI. Farmworker Survey Roll-out**

Brien has spoken with Alice Larson to review and finalize the survey analysis. Brien reported that he asked Alice to draft a new Methodology section of the Survey Report. Brien and Janet Abbett have also met to edit the draft Survey Report. Staff will email draft report to the Board next week. Completion of the report is targeted by the beginning of April. Mary McBride stated that Senator Murray could be available from June 30<sup>th</sup>-July 4<sup>th</sup> or August 11-22<sup>nd</sup>. Janet mentioned that at the end of June and early July is cherry peak season so it might be a good time to schedule it then. Mario, Mike Gempler and others stated that the Trust should release the survey as soon as possible. Mary also offered having a video of the Sen. Murray at the forums. Donn suggested having a series of events culminating to the big event to ensure that the Trust's message is not lost. Directors asked the staff to email the Agenda Item Summary with survey roll-out questions and the PowerPoint Presentation of survey data to the entire Board for responses by April 1.

## **VII. Program Updates**

### *Green On-Farm*

Mithun Architects have developed two simplified floor plans for preliminary cost estimates. They are refining the plans and analyzing the construction and operating costs of various sustainable building measures. Work must be completed by March 31 under the terms of our contract with Enterprise Community Partners. The Mithun team met again on Friday 3/14 and Brien will be meeting with Mithun on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

### *Advocacy*

- House Bill 2279 Fair Zoning for Affordable Housing has passed the House and Senate and is on its way to the Governor for signature.
- \$2 million appropriated to expand the Farmworker Infrastructure Loan Program to include rehabilitation and new construction.
- \$48 million appropriated to the Housing Trust Fund. A total of \$80 million was appropriated for various housing programs.

## **VIII. Board Development**

Brien reminded the Board that the Board terms of John Smith, Guillermo Castaneda, and Mike Gempler expire in April. The Executive Committee will meet to consider nominations. Mike Gempler advised the Trust to open up Board membership to other organizations such as the Vineyard Group or the Farm Bureau. Roger asked if the Trust had an oath of office that board members had to sign. Brien replied we do not and asked Roger to email him a copy.

Directors present expressed a preference to hold a Board Retreat in May and to make it a full retreat. Board members agreed to email the staff with possible dates, venues and agenda items for the May Retreat. Mike Gempler noted the importance of all directors' presence at the Retreat.

Mario suggested that he would like to have a quarterly board education session with invited guests such as legislators. Mike Gempler, Mike Youngquist and others agreed and mentioned that Representative Newhouse should be invited to attend one of our meetings.

Dixie and Mike Youngquist will not be able to attend the April 18 Board Meeting and asked the Board to consider moving that meeting to April 25.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Roger moved and Dixie seconded adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

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

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