

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Friday • March 31, 2006 • 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Diocese of Yakima Conference Room
Yakima, Washington

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Guillermo Castaneda, Pete Garza, Alicia McRae, Mario Villanueva, Tomás Villanueva, and Michael Youngquist. Members participating by phone: Billie Heath, John Smith. Members not present: Juan Aguilar, Gloria Burton, Mike Gempler, Dixie Kracht, Erik Nicholson, Heyward Watson. Ex Officio members present: Mary McBride – Office of Senator Murray, Janet Abbett, Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. Staff present: Tom Byers– Cedar River Group, and Brien Thane - Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing.

WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT

While waiting for a quorum to arrive, the Trust's new web site was unveiled. It looks great, and should be available to the public within three weeks.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

In the absence of an officer, the group requested that Mike Youngquist serve as chair. He called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the February 24th meeting were reviewed. Mario Villanueva noted a correction. Tomás Villanueva moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. His motion was seconded by Guillermo Castaneda and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

- **Nominating Committee Report:** Tom Byers reported that the nominating committee had met by conference call and reviewed the qualifications of six candidates for the two open positions on the Board. Mario Villanueva reported on the committee's discussions and described the qualifications of the three candidates the committee had decided to submit to the Board.
- **Grower Position:** The nominee for the grower position is Donn Etherington, who operates a cherry orchard in the Wenatchee area and also operates the seasonal farmworker housing at Monitor. Prior to becoming an orchardist, Donn developed affordable housing in King County and was involved in the creation of the State Housing Trust Fund. Guillermo Castaneda said that he appreciated the committee's recommendation, but was concerned that we the staff were not able to provide a resumé or other written materials on his qualifications. After considerable discussion Tomás Villanueva moved that the nomination be approved upon the condition that Mr. Etherington's resumé will be circulated to all members of the Board for ratification. Mario Villanueva seconded the motion. During discussion Alicia

McRae spoke strongly in favor of his nomination. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

- **Community Stakeholder Position:** Mario indicated that the nominating committee had decided to forward two names for the community stakeholder position: Stella Vasquez and Marty Miller. Stella is the deputy director of the Yakima Valley Farmworkers Clinic and a former official in the State Department of Social and Health Services. Marty is well known to the Board as director of the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing. Board discussion centered on the excellent qualifications of both candidates, the desirability of diversifying the Board membership by adding more women and representatives of farmworker organizations, the imperative of keeping ORFH actively engaged in the Board, and the possible conflicts of interest that might arise if ORFH were represented on the Board while still acting as financial manager. The possibility of expanding the Board was raised, and there was general agreement that the option should be explored, provided that the balanced representation inherent in the Senator's original plan could be retained. Tomás Villanueva moved the selection of Stella Vasquez for this position. The motion was seconded by Pete Garza. Additional discussion focused on the need to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest now that the Trust is entering a phase of grant-making. The question was called and **the motion selecting Stella was approved on a vote of 6-1 with the Mike Youngquist abstaining.** Alicia McRae asked that the minutes reflect that her no vote was not intended to oppose Stella Vasquez, but as an expression of support for Marty.
- **Election of officers:** Tom Byers reported that the Nominating Committee has recommended the following slate of officers for 2006: President, Mario Villanueva; Vice President, Dixie Kracht; Treasurer, Mike Gempler; and Gloria Burton, Secretary. Guillermo Castaneda moved approval of the recommendations. Tomás Villanueva seconded. **The motion was approved unanimously.**
- **Executive Director Search:** Tom Byers reported that he is working to schedule a conference call between Executive Search Services and the Search Committee as soon as possible. He asked for additional volunteers to serve on the search committee.
- **Seasonal Housing Planning Retreat:** Tom announced the location and dates of the retreat which will be held at the Sleeping Lady Conference Center, April 26th-28th.
- **May 23rd Legislative Tour:** Tom announced that the staff of the House of Representatives is trying to set up a legislative tour and work session in the Yakima Valley in May. They have asked the Trust for assistance. He will keep the Board informed as the plans take shape.

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Brien Thane distributed a financial report through February 28th. The report was presented in a new format responding to Board suggestions. On the date of the report, the Trust had a positive balance of \$69,847.46.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Tom reported that there has been no real news in this area since the announcement 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 said the challenge now is to bring in all the funds the Trust has been awarded so that we can get the money out to the agencies that need it. We still have not received a letter of award for the federal allocation secured by Senator Murray four months ago.

FARMWORKER SURVEY COMMITTEE REPORT

Tom reported that we are still struggling to get the survey on track due to problems in obtaining data from the Employment Security Department.

FEDERAL ACTION AGENDA

Mary McBride announced that Senator Murray and her staff were able to solve the new issue that had 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 misinterpreted the closing date. Mary indicated that earlier this morning Senator Murray's staff had received word that HUD had agreed to solve the problem by posting a notice in the Federal Register clarifying the dates. This will make it possible for several affordable housing projects in rural Washington to move forward. The members of the Board expressed their appreciation to the Senator and her staff for their efforts, which saved more than 200 units of quality housing for farmworkers and other disadvantaged groups.

NEXT MEETING LOCATION/TIME

The next meeting of the Board will be held in conjunction with the Board Retreat on seasonal Housing at Sleeping Lady Resort, April 26th-28th, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

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



Respectfully Submitted:

Secretary

Approved:



President/Vice President