

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday and Friday •April 27th and 28th, 2006
Sleeping Lady Conference Center
Leavenworth, Washington

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Gloria Burton, Guillermo Castaneda, Donn Etherington, Mike Gempler, Billie Heath, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, Erik Nicholson, John Smith, Mario Villanueva, Tomás Villanueva, and Michael Youngquist. Members not present: Juan Aguilar, Pete Garza, Stella Vasquez, 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 and Kristi Buck– Cedar River Group, Brien Thane and Marty Miller- Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing, Dan Evans—Retreat Facilitator.

Note: The April Board meeting was held during the Board Retreat on Seasonal Housing.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Mario Villanueva called the Board meeting to order at 11:45 on April 27th during a break in the Board retreat discussions pending the arrival of Mike Gempler.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the March 31st meeting were reviewed. Tomás Villanueva moved approval. His motion was seconded by Erik Nicholson and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Nominating Committee Report: Tom Byers reported that Heyward Watson has submitted his resignation from the Board because he will be moving to Vancouver, British Columbia in June. He asked Tom to convey his regrets that he has not been able to be more active during recent months. Tom pointed out that Heyward's resignation creates a vacancy among the community stakeholders, and leaves us with just one representative of the financial community (Juan Aguilar). Mario asked the members to route suggestions for candidates to Tom so that a slate can be assembled for the nominating committee's consideration. Erik asked if Senator Murray's staff might be willing to suggest candidates. Mary McBride indicated that she would raise the matter with her colleagues.

Executive Director Search: Mario reported that the staff is attempting to schedule a meeting of the search committee by conference call in early May and asked the members of the committee to let Tom know of their availability.

Contract Extensions: The Trust's contracts with ORFH and the Cedar River Group are slated to expire on April 30th. The recommendation is that Cedar River's contract be extended under its current terms and conditions through July, and that ORFH's contract be extended through

December to allow the new Executive Director time to get acclimated before changing financial management arrangements.

Senator Murray's Call. During the discussion of the contract extensions Senator Murray called from the Senate floor to express her support for the work of the Trust and to urge the Board to reach an agreement on the issues surrounding the development of seasonal housing. She stated her support for the Trust and its efforts in very positive terms.

Contract Extensions (continued). After the call, the discussion of the proposed contract extensions continued. Tomás Villanueva moved that ORFH's contract be extended through December. Guillermo Castaneda seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously. Tomás Villanueva then moved that Cedar River Group's contract be extended through July, 2006. Billie Heath seconded the motion, which was adopted unanimously.

May 23rd Legislative Tour: Tom announced that the staff of the House of Representatives is still considering a legislative tour and work session in the Yakima Valley in May, but has yet to receive final clearance from the leadership. He asked the Board members to keep the date clear on their calendars. Guillermo Castaneda suggested that we be certain to invite Kate Riley, the Seattle Times editorial writer who recently wrote a favorable piece on the Trust's efforts.

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Brien Thane distributed a financial report through March 31st. 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 \$73,306.72. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the new reporting format. One difficulty is that the budget is based on having staff positions rather than contracts for staff, which makes it difficult to compare actual expenditures to the budget. A second problem is tracking the funds that are committed to specific activities as opposed to funds that are earmarked for specific purposes. Brien was asked to work with Tom to deal with these concerns.

At this point the President suspended the Board meeting to resume the retreat discussions. The Board meeting was reconvened on Friday, April 28th at 11:30 a.m. following the completion of the retreat.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Tom reported that he has shifted his emphasis from writing grants to bringing in the funds that have been committed but are not yet in hand. He has completed the final paperwork for the grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation and expects the check within two weeks. He has also completed the formal proposal and environmental review for the federal grant secured through the efforts of Senator Murray. All the paperwork has been submitted to the Washington, D.C. offices of HUD, so we should be receiving notice of the availability of the funds within the next sixty days. Tom also reviewed the status of the grant agreements with Skagit County and CTED, and with the Community Health Plan of Washington.

PROPOSED THREE-YEAR BUDGET AND WORK PLAN

Tom Byers asked Board members to review the draft budget and work plan that the staff has developed. He pointed out that to meet its goals, the Trust will have to continue its fundraising efforts in the months ahead, and briefly outlined potential strategies for working with several major foundations. He also indicated that the Enterprise Foundation has expressed an interest in making a multi-year funding commitment to the Trust. As part of that commitment they are interested in having the Trust convene a conference of rural housing providers on the issue of applying “green building standards” in rural areas. Members of the Board voiced both enthusiasm for the topic and concerns about the resources that would be required to hold a conference while we are trying to move forward on so many other fronts. At the end of the discussion a working group was identified to meet with the staff of the Enterprise Foundation to develop a plan for meeting our mutual objectives without depleting the Trust’s resources or diluting our focus on production. John Smith, Billie Heath, Mario Villanueva, Gloria Burton and Marty Miller volunteered to serve as members of the working group.

REGIONAL FORUMS

Tom reported that Craig Nolte of the Federal Reserve Bank has been organizing community forums in various areas of the state to provide the Trust with an opportunity to present its strategic plan and publicize the farmworker survey. The forum in Mt. Vernon was quite successful, drawing a diverse crowd of about 50 people. Craig is looking for Board members to participate in upcoming forums in Wenatchee and Pasco.

FARMWORKER SURVEY

Tom reported that the initial attempts to conduct the survey through work-site contacts did not work well because of the high level of fear created by the current political climate surrounding immigration. Both growers and farmworkers were reluctant to participate in interviews arranged at the work site. As a result, the team is changing its approach to focus on community sites that are frequented by farmworkers. Rosalinda Guillen and her team have tried this approach and it seems to be working. The survey is slightly behind schedule because of the delays caused by waiting for the Department of Employment Security to provide a list of growers, but with the new method, the list is no longer essential. Interview teams are now being organized and trained, and the team believes that we may be able to get back on schedule by the end of May.

NEXT MEETING LOCATION/TIME

The next meeting of the Board will be held in Seattle on June 2nd, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

At the invitation of the President, Erik Nicholson moved that the meeting be adjourned at 2:37 p.m. The motion was seconded by Tomás Villanueva and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted: _____
Secretary

Approved: _____
President/Vice President