

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting • May 26, 2004**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Juan Aguilar and Dixie Kracht, co-chairs; board members: Gloria Burton, Guillermo Castaneda, Pete Garza, Mike Gempler, Alicia McRae, John Smith, Mario Villanueva Tomas Villanueva, and Mike Youngquist. Board member(s) absent: Lupe Gamboa, Billie Heath, Heyward Watson, and Erik Nicholson. Other attending: Rosa Cabrera, United Farmworkers Union (by phone on behalf of Erik Nicholson), Marty Miller and Brien Thane, Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing; Mary McBride, Office of Senator Patty Murray. Staff present: Tom Byers and Kristi Buck, Cedar River Group.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Co-chair Dixie Kracht brought the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Dixie Kracht opened the meeting by asking everyone to review the Minutes of the April 26, 2004 meeting. Guillermo Castaneda moved acceptance of the Minutes, seconded by Juan Aguilar. The motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Juan Aguilar reported that the nominated committee had followed up on the Board's decision to appoint Eric Nicholson to the Board subject to an interview with the committee. Mario Villanueva and Mike Gempler interviewed Eric by phone on April 28, 2004. Tom Byers joined the call in Eric's office. Based on that interview, the committee reaffirms the Board's decision. Eric indicated that he would be unable to attend the May meeting due to a long-scheduled conflict, but would ask an associate to participate by phone. As a result, Rosa Cabrera is joining us today. (The group welcomes Rosa). Tom Byers provided Eric with a briefing book and brought him up to date on the Board's actions.

With Eric now on the Board we have only one vacancy to fill – the grower position created by Julie Keen's resignation. Juan indicated that he had contacted Frank Ochoa, a grower in Eastern Washington, who has a history of participation in civic affairs. His roots in Washington agriculture go back to the 1930s when his family moved to the Yakima Valley. He indicated an interest in serving and Juan believes he would be an excellent Board Member.

Mike Gempler stated that he had discussed Mr. Ochoa's interest with Juan and concurred in the nomination. The Board members present agreed by consensus, and directed Tom to invite Mr. Ochoa to the next meeting. This brings the Board to full strength.

**FISCAL AGENT REPORT**

Dixie recognized Marty Miller, the new Executive Director of the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing. Marty indicated that he is deeply interested in the work of the Board, and ready to help in any way. He also invited all of those present to attend ORFH's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration later in the day.

Marty indicated that Brien Thane would continue to be the primary contact with the Board in his new capacity as director of special projects at ORFH.

Brien then presented a budget report which summarized expenses to date. He noted that we are now 50% of the way through our first year and have expended 33% of the amount budgeted, leaving a balance of \$120,016.70.

Although the organization is in good financial health, Brien indicated that both he and Tom believe it would be appropriate to have a representative of the Board review and approve the invoices from CRG and other contractors. Juan Aguilar accepted that responsibility on behalf of the Executive Committee.

Tom then reminded the Board members that we have set aside funds to cover mileage and other expenses incurred by the members when they attend meetings. He will develop a standard form for requesting reimbursement. In the interim, members may request reimbursement directly from ORFH.

#### **HUD DDA DESIGNATION ISSUE**

Mary McBride announced that Michael Bagley of Senator Murray's Washington D.C. office had requested to join the meeting by phone to discuss the DDA issue. Once on the line, he described the work the Senator and her staff have been doing to address the issue. He stated that the responsible assistant secretaries of HUD and Treasury will be meeting on June 2, 2004, to attempt to reach agreement on a proposal to address our concerns. He indicated that he had reviewed the letter Tom had drafted on behalf of the Board and thought it was a very good statement of our case. He suggested strongly that the Board should mail copies by Federal Express to the two officials prior to their meeting. He said that he had arranged to meet with each of them during the days following the meeting and would keep us informed of progress.

The Board then discussed a number of refinements in the draft letter and asked Tom to incorporate the changes in a final version and send it by Federal Express as requested.

#### **UPDATE ON FARMWORKER SURVEY**

Dixie asked Mario Villanueva to report on the work of the Farmworkers Survey Committee. Mario distributed a "preliminary action plan" developed by the committee which outlined a three-phase plan for completing the survey. The projected cost of the work is \$250,000, although that amount could change depending on the methods that are ultimately selected. He indicated that the committee had come to the realization that the survey will be a major undertaking, requiring significant time and resources. The committee believes that a project manager will be required to move this project forward. The committee had identified Alice Larson as one person who could fill this role, but there is concern about simply hiring Ms. Larson to complete a task of this magnitude without a formal selection process.

The committee's preliminary action plan touched off an in-depth discussion of the purpose of the survey and potential resources that could be deployed to accomplish the task. Mike Gempler asked the Board members to revisit the purpose of the survey. In the discussion that followed several purposes emerged:

- to validate the needs data we have developed;
- to give a “human face and voice” to the statistics;
- to understand the preferences of farmworkers regarding housing types and locations; and
- to provide an added dimension to our proposals to Foundations.

While most Board members stated that the survey would be valuable, there was concern about the cost in light of our limited resources. Juan Aguilar indicated that he believes it will be possible to secure a substantial portion of the necessary funding from financial institutions once the scope of the survey is adequately defined.

Based upon the discussion, Mario moved that the Board authorize Alice Larson to develop a scope of work and budget for the planning phase of the project so that funding proposals for the study could be prepared. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Mario will contact Ms. Larson.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS**

At the request of the chair, Mary McBride provided the Board with an update on the federal appropriations process for fiscal year 2005, which begins October 1. She indicated that this year will be an extremely difficult time to secure federal funds for domestic projects because of the federal budget deficit, the rising costs of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and other budget pressures. Nevertheless, Senator Murray and her staff are pressing ahead with a request for continued funding for the Trust’s operations based on our progress to date. The amount requested for FY2005 is \$200,000. Mary will keep the Board informed as the request makes its way through the appropriation process.

### **PROGRESS ON PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

#### Survey of Best Practices:

Tom Byers distributed copies of the “Draft Report on Best Practices” prepared by the Cedar River Group from interviews of organizations throughout the United States. The survey results for 12 of the 15 organizations CRG plans to survey are included in the draft. During June the CRG staff will complete the remaining interviews, prepare a summary chapter and complete the report, which will be a chapter of the comprehensive plan.

### **REVISED INVENTORY OF FARMWORKER HOUSING**

Tom also handed out an updated inventory of farmworker housing that, for the first time, incorporates data from the Department of Health listing licensed temporary housing. Tom asked the Board members to review the inventory for accuracy.

### **NEEDS ASSESMENT**

Tom then passed around a series of maps that CRG and Ravenna Planning Associates have developed that begin to display the data from the needs assessment in a more accessible format. He indicated that the staff team will continue to work on converting the needs assessment into a form that can stand on its own as a quality product.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION: BEST PRACTICES IN WASHINGTON**

The Board then continued the work it had begun during the last meeting to identify “Best Practices” within Washington State. The discussion focused on technical assistance and funding strategies. The summary of the discussion will be included in a separate report to the Board at our next meeting.

## **ALLOCATION FOR TEMPORARY FARMWORKER HOUSING AT PANGBORN FIELD**

During the discussion of Best Practices, Brien Thane and Mike Gempler mentioned that, in a last minute addition, \$2 million was included in the State budget for the development of temporary farmworker housing at Pangborn Field. Guillermo Castaneda indicated that it is important to share news of developments such as the State allocation among the Board members so that everyone has the information. As a result of his suggestion, a portion of all future Board meeting agendas will be reserved for information sharing on “hot issues and opportunities”.

## **REVIEW OF COMING WORK**

Dixie asked Tom to outline the work plan for the next month. Tom suggested that the completion of the Report on Best Practices will mark the completion of the first phase of the Board’s work on the comprehensive plan. He suggested that, if the Board approved, the staff would devote the next several weeks to creating “finished products” that present the needs data and the Best Practices report in clear and compelling form.

These products could then be used by the Board in a series of initial meetings with editorial boards and philanthropies. These presentations would be designed to introduce the Trust and its mission, and set the stage for later meetings to present the comprehensive plan and request funding. Tom suggested that the presentations be made by Board members in groups that reflect the cross section of interests represented.

Members of the Board said that they supported the approach. Several members said that it will be important to build relationships with Foundation staff before submitting grant applications, and this seems to be a good method. There was a consensus of support for moving in this direction.

## **SUMMER SCHEDULE**

With the summer months approaching, staff and Board members will be scheduling vacations, and it will be more difficult to get a quorum. Rather than setting a date today for the next meeting, Tom and Kristi will assemble a calendar with the dates when Board members and staff are available, and set a summer schedule of times when a quorum can be assembled. Members were asked to review their calendars and e-mail Tom and Kristi with their vacation plans.

## **ADJOURNMENTS**

There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

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

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