

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Friday, June 22, 2007**  
**Telephone Conference Call**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Gloria Burton, Mike Gempler, Billie Heath, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, John Smith, Stella Vasquez, Mario Villanueva, Tomás Villanueva and Mike Youngquist. Ex Officio members present: Janet Abbett, Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development. Guests: Steven Witte. Staff present: Brien Thane.

Members not present: Juan Aguilar, Guillermo Castaneda, Donn Etherington, Pete Garza.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mario Villanueva called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., there being a quorum present.

**I. Community Capacity Fund (CCF)**

Brien Thane provided an overview of the Capacity Committee's discussions and recommendations to date: The Capacity Committee (Mario, Donn, John, Gloria, Guillermo, Billie) met by conference call on May 2 and 10 to discuss details of the *first round* of capacity grants. On May 10 the committee voted to recommend a proposal to the full Board (motion by John Smith seconded by Guillermo.) Key discussion points included:

- Public perception of limiting the first round of grants to experienced farmworker housing providers,
- How the application schedule relates to current Trust staff capacity and workplans (fundraising, survey roll-out, Solar/Green On-Farm Demonstration, hiring, general business) and application cycles for public capital funds.

A revised proposal based on these concerns was provided prior to the 6/15 Board meeting and is attached. Key points are:

- The first 1½ pages provide background and an overview of the Capacity Fund –
  - The basic framework for the Fund was developed at a Capacity Conference held in Yakima in April 2005 that was attended by a broad array of community-based housing providers, developers, technical assistance providers, growers and other interested parties.
  - The CCF will be evaluated and improved based on findings of Organizational Assessments and Resident Surveys, in which all Fund grantees will participate. These findings will inform/shape both WSFHT and public policies by documenting the contributions of decent affordable housing to farmworkers' and their families' success, as well as grantee's improved capacity.
  - CCF grantees will participate actively in team meetings to foster best practices, provide mutual support and accountability.
- The Phase 1 grant proposal endorsed by the Capacity Committee was limited to experienced farmworker housing providers who have additional farmworker units in development. This was intended to expedite awarding some funds as soon as possible with limited staff. Some committee members expressed serious concern that this would be perceived as unfair, especially since several experienced providers are represented on the WSFHT Board.

- The revised proposal is open to all nonprofit 501(c) and public housing providers interested in developing additional farmworker housing. ***Applications from nonprofit and public housing providers who have developed and placed in service more than 100 designated FW housing units and have additional FW housing units currently in development will be prioritized.***
- **In order to qualify for WSFHT investment, housing units must be reserved or set-aside for farmworkers and their families; a preference is not sufficient.** (Added by 5/10/07 Capacity Committee consensus.)

Billie Heath asked who the Request For Proposals would be sent to. Brien replied that it would be sent to all nonprofit and public housing providers in the 14 labor-intensive counties that we surveyed. He also noted that it will be posted on the Trust web site. The RFP will clearly state that subsequent application rounds will support a broader range of fund uses in conformance with the framework developed at the 2005 Capacity Conference. Mario asked whether this will be a manageable workload for staff considering other responsibilities. Brien responded that while it will not be easy, funders are anxious for us to start allocating grant funds.

*John Smith moved that the Community Capacity Fund proposal be approved as presented. Mario Villanueva seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

## **II. Finance Reports**

Treasurer Mike Gempler reviewed the cashflow forecast included in the meeting materials and Brien's request for authorization to negotiate a new contract with Cedar River Group for assistance with the Solar/Green On-Farm Demonstration Project, rolling out the survey report, and potentially helping to write grant applications. Mike also asked Brien to check how much we paid Cedar River for rewriting the draft survey report, noting that we need to discuss possibly reducing the amount we pay to ASR due to the low quality of their draft report.

*Billie Heath moved to authorize staff to negotiate a contract with Cedar River Group for up to \$25,000 for additional assistance. John Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

## **III. Board Nominations, Terms, Annual Meeting**

Brien noted that five board positions need to be filled due to pending resignations and John Smith's retirement from his position at the Housing Authority of Skagit County. He also noted that action is required by the Bylaws to establish staggered terms for directors and an annual meeting date. Tomás Villanueva stated he'd like to see a legal services representative on the Board. Several directors asked that potential new board members be encouraged to participate in meetings in person rather than by phone as much as possible. Alicia McRae, John and Janet Abbett all suggested Marty Miller of the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing as a new community-based housing provider representative. Mario asked whether the definition of community-based housing provider representative included actually owning and/or managing housing units? It was noted that Dixie Kracht is a community-based housing provider representative who doesn't own or manage.

*After discussion, Billie Heath suggested and the members present agreed by consensus that the Bylaws should be amended at a future meeting to specify four-year director terms. This will result in one director from each of the four representation classes to be elected each year, providing continuity.*

*Tomás Villanueva moved the election of Steve Witte as an advocacy representative. John Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Tomás Villanueva then moved the election of Roger Bairstow as a grower representative and John Smith as a community representative. Alicia McRae seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

#### **IV. Farmworker Survey Report, Roll-out Planning**

The directors present expressed a preference to hold the primary event releasing the survey report in Central Washington with Senator Patty Murray participating. Mike Youngquist suggested that we also host a series of in-depth technical discussions on the survey. Janet Abbett suggested a presentation to the state Affordable Housing Advisory Board. Many directors expressed concern that the survey report be finalized and released as soon as possible without compromising careful review to ensure accuracy. Directors asked that Alice Larson be invited to the July Board meeting to discuss the survey. Stella Vasquez volunteered to help review the health section of the survey. Board members then agreed to form a new survey committee to plan the report release: Billie Heath, Tomás Villanueva, Janet Abbett, Mario Villanueva, Mike Youngquist and Stella Vasquez volunteered.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Tomás Villanueva moved and John Smith seconded adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

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

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