

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, July 20, 2007
Federal Home Loan Bank of Seattle

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Roger Bairstow, Gloria Burton, Billie Heath, John Smith, and Mike Youngquist. Members participating by phone: Mike Gempler, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, Mario Villanueva, Ex Officio members present: Janet Abbett, Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, Mary McBride, Senator Patty Murray's Offices (by phone). Staff present: Brien Thane.

Members not present: Guillermo Castaneda, Donn Etherington, Stella Vasquez, Tomás Villanueva, Steve Witte.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

John Smith agreed to chair the meeting since Mario Villanueva was participating by phone. John called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m., there being a quorum present.

I. Overview of Day's Agenda

Brien Thane introduced Roger Bairstow of Broetje Orchards, a grower representative director who was elected at the June 22 meeting. Board members welcomed Roger and thanked him for joining the Board. Brien then provided a brief overview of the day's agenda, noting key action items.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the June 22, 2006 Board meeting by conference call were reviewed. *Mike Youngquist moved approval of the Minutes. Mike Gempler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

III. Advocacy and Policy – Planning 2008 Agenda

Mike Gempler reported that 50 to 75 farmworkers were evicted from informal campsites on Stemilt Hill last week due to fire danger. These workers were camping out because all seasonal-occupancy facilities in the area are full. The WA Growers League, WA Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, Chelan County Commissioners and others were able to relocate people after arranging for additional tents to be sited at Monitor Park.

Mike also reported that he sent information on the evictions to the Governor's staff to follow up our letter to the Governor requesting a meeting to discuss opposition to the Bello Vista and Vista del Rio housing developments in Douglas County. Several directors commented that they think it is important for the Trust to be involved in addressing the issue of local opposition to developing farmworker housing. Alicia McRae reported that they don't expect court hearings on Bello Vista and Vista del Rio until January. Columbia Legal Services has a client who needs housing and they are intervening in the court cases in support of the housing developments.

Brien reported that the WA House of Representatives Committee on Housing has tentatively scheduled a work session with the Trust in September to hear our policy recommendations for supporting farmworker housing development. John Smith suggested an ad hoc committee be formed to develop policy suggestions for the 2008 legislative session and asked Mario

Villanueva to chair the committee. John, Gloria Burton, Roger Bairstow, Alicia McRae and Mike Youngquist volunteered to serve on the committee. Directors present asked Janet Abbett to also attend committee meetings, to which she agreed. All present asked Brien to invite Steve Witte, Stella Vasquez, Tomás Villanueva, Donn Etherington and Guillermo Castaneda since they were not present. Directors also asked Brien to send a list of the Housing Committee members and to contact the WA Senate Consumer Protection and Housing Committee. John Smith volunteered to talk with State Senator Harriet Spanel and invite her to the Housing Committee work session.

IV. State AHAB Farmworker Housing Subcommittee

The 2007 budget proviso appropriating funds for farmworker housing included direction to the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to consult with a stakeholder committee to establish priorities for those funds. The Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB), appointed by the Governor, has created a subcommittee for this purpose and invited several Trust members to join the committee: Donn Etherington, Mike Gempler, Alicia McRae, Mario Villanueva and Steve Witte. Brien has also been invited, as well as Robbie Scott (Columbia Legal Services), Marty Miller (ORFH), Fred Stouder (Prosser City Manager) and Jim Colbert (Stemilt Growers.)

Janet Abbett provided an overview of the recommendations developed in 2000 for farmworker housing funds by a subcommittee of the Affordable Housing Advisory Board (included in meeting materials.) The recommendations included targeting 25% of the state funds to seasonal-occupancy housing. She also noted that the budget proviso specified that any unspent farmworker housing funds that were not awarded during the biennium would revert to the general Housing Trust Fund, which could be a challenge since this year's appropriation of \$14 million is significantly more than previous biennia (\$8 million.) Janet reported that CTED has contracted with the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing to assess the costs of different types of seasonal-occupancy housing, as well as that the Governor's office is interested in developing policies and strategies for farmworker housing as part of a broader workforce development strategy.

Mike Youngquist reminded directors that in the 2007 legislative session we supported expanding the state's Farmworker Housing Infrastructure Loan Program for growers to include new construction and rehabilitation of existing housing. He would like the Trust to continue supporting such an expansion. John and Janet recommended that we raise that recommendation with the AHAB subcommittee and enlist their support. General discussion ensued regarding the impact the immigration debate on farmworker housing.

V. Farmworker Survey Report, Roll-out Planning

Brien introduced Dr. Alice Larson, with whom the Board contracted to help us with the survey. Alice reported that with 2858 respondents our survey is by far the largest survey of farmworkers ever conducted in WA State and the geographic range is also unprecedented. Alice outlined the work she is doing to review data accuracy, assure consistency and provide additional analysis, especially of the housing and demographic data.

Alice's key points:

- Due to the obstacles preventing a consistent methodology for randomly selecting respondents, the data is representative of those surveyed; not the general farmworker population.
- Alice is asking agencies like the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic for their demographic data as a comparison.
- The final report findings may be different from the draft report; the draft report should not be released.
- Alice recommends separating our conclusions and recommendations from reporting the data findings in the report and use the 3rd person when reporting the data. She believes this will result in a more professional report.
- She is comparing the housing responses of folks interviewed at housing sites with the responses of those not interviewed in housing too see how they might differ.
- Housing responses of H(2)(A) workers are being excluded since such workers don't have any choice in where they live.
- Housing and demographic data are being separated for local and non-local workers, as well as those of accompanied and unaccompanied respondents.
- We will be presenting preliminary housing findings at the Housing Washington conference on September 10 in Spokane. Mario, Alice and Brien will present a workshop on the Trust's work and the survey.
- We are targeting release of the final report in October at an event with Senator Murray. Mary McBride offered to do all she can to work on dates when the Senator will be in state. A Monday or Friday is most likely; Mondays are better days for news coverage.
- The WA House of Representatives Housing Committee has asked us to present policy recommendations and preliminary survey findings at a work session in mid-September in Central WA.
- Alice would like to see us coordinate a conference devoted to the survey with expert panels. She acknowledged that would require special fundraising. Brien suggested that such a conference would need to be considered in the context of our overall workplan.

General discussion ensued. John Smith suggested that we include our previous findings on housing needs in presenting the survey.

VI. Low Income Housing Tax Credits – Proposed Changes

The WA State Housing Finance Commission is proposing a number of changes to priorities for allocating Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Members present asked Brien to contact directors who are housing providers, requesting comments on the proposed changes by Tuesday, July 24 and encouraged him to prepare both written comments and oral testimony on the proposed changes.

VII. Personnel Policies

The Executive Committee recommended to the Board (motion by Dixie Kracht seconded by Mike Gempler) adoption of these policies as presented, with the agreement that they will be reviewed and amended, as necessary, within the next 12 months. Billie Heath asked Brien to check one more time that all organizational references in the policies were accurate. John Smith pointed out that the date the policies were adopted also needed to be updated. *Billie Heath then moved adoption of the Personnel Policies as presented. Mike Gempler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

VIII. Executive Director – Evaluation Planning

Members present asked the Executive Committee to develop a recommended process for this evaluation since there wasn't sufficient time remaining in the meeting.

X. August 17 Meeting Agenda Items

Directors asked that reports on the AHAB Farmworker Housing Subcommittee, the survey and the Community Capacity Fund be scheduled for the August meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: _____
Secretary

Approved: _____
President/Vice President