

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Friday • July 28, 2006
Grupo Mexico Housing Committee
Seattle, Washington

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Gloria Burton, Guillermo Castaneda, Mike Gempler, Billie Heath, John Smith, and Mike Youngquist. Members participating by phone: Juan Aguilar, Dixie Kracht, Alicia McRae, Stella Vasquez, Mario Villanueva, and Tomás Villanueva. Members not present: Donn Etherington, Pete Garza, and Erik Nicholson. Ex Officio members present: Janet Abbett, Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, and Mary McBride, Office of U.S. Senator Patty Murray. Staff present: Tom Byers and Kristi Buck - Cedar River Group; Brien Thane - Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing (by telephone), Dan Evans - Retreat Facilitator.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Guillermo Castaneda was asked to chair the meeting as the President and Vice President were participating by telephone. Guillermo called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Minutes of the July 7, 2006 Board meeting were reviewed. Juan Aguilar moved approval. His motion was seconded by Tomás Villanueva and passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Ratification of Committee of the Whole Actions of July 7, 2006:

- **Minutes of June 2, 2006.** The Minutes of the June 2, 2006 Board meeting were reviewed after having been revised. Tomás Villanueva moved approval. His motion was seconded by Juan Aguilar and passed unanimously.
- **Contract for Web Site Maintenance and Spanish Language version.** The contract was approved unanimously with no revisions.
- **Renewal of Membership in WLIHA.** Juan Aguilar asked who represents the Trust within the Alliance. Tom Byers responded that Brien Thane is currently the President of the Alliance, and several Trust Board members attend regularly. Renewal of the Trust's membership was approved unanimously.

Staff Report:

Tom Byers and Mario Villanueva reported on the following items:

- **Board Vacancy.** Tom asked that who wish to suggest nominees provide their names to him as soon as possible. Juan Aguilar suggested that Beth Castro of Washington Mutual be added to the list of nominees. Juan noted that the Board of Advisors, on which Ms.

Castro currently serves, has never formally met. He suggested that such a meeting would be useful in the near future.

- **Executive Director Search.** Tom notes that the job opening closes August 4, 2006. As of today there are nine applicants who appear to be qualified for the position. At this point Mario advised the Board that he intends to apply for the Executive Director position, and will therefore resign from the Search Committee effective immediately. Guillermo stated that any Board member is free to apply for the position. With Mario's resignation, the Search Committee now consists of Juan Aguilar, Mike Gempler, Alicia McRae and Erik Nicholson. Billie Heath volunteered to replace Mario on the committee for the duration of the search. Guillermo suggested that the committee make arrangements for a conference call to discuss guidelines and ensure fairness for each nominee. The Board unanimously supported Guillermo's suggestion, and the staff will work with Linda Riggle and the committee members to schedule the call.

FINANCIAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Brien Thane presented the financial report through the end of June. Our balance on that date was \$254,356.73. Brien indicated that ORFH has been investigating higher yield accounts for the Trust's funds as decided in our last Board meeting. Brien will make a recommendation to the Board when the research is completed.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

- **Status of Federal Funds:** Tom reported that the last forms required by HUD have been completed and we are awaiting final approval from Washington to allow the Trust to begin using the \$1,485,000 secured for the Trust by Senator Murray.
- **Status of Other Committed Funds:** Mario and Tom reported that they had a conference call with Katie Hong of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Tom provided the Board with copies of a follow-up letter sent to Katie Hong dated July 20, 2006 describing the Trust's Community Capacity Fund and asking for a meeting. Tom will contact Katie Hong to check the status of our request. During the conference call Ms. Hong stated that the Diocese of Yakima had also submitted an application and added that the applications were understood to be separate. Mario stated that Katie made it clear that the protection of vulnerable children is most important to the Foundation, and any formal application from the Trust must focus on the importance of housing to meeting the needs of children.

FARMWORKER SURVEY REPORT

Tom Byers and Kristi Buck presented a PowerPoint created by ASR to illustrate the progress of the survey. Photographs of the survey workers interviewing residents of Monitor camp were also presented. Tom reported that to date, 670 surveys have been entered in the database and many more completed surveys from the cherry harvest have yet to be entered. The Board members had a spirited discussion of the survey report. Although there were many questions, the Board members seemed very pleased with the progress.

Guillermo suggested creating a committee to review the final survey results before taking them to the 'public' and 'press.' Billie reminds the Board that a Farmworker Survey Committee has been in place for more than a year, but has not met recently. She suggested that committee should schedule a meeting in the near future to follow-up on Guillermo's suggestions. Mike Gempler agreed with using the existing committee to address the challenges.

Mario stated that one of the strengths of the survey has been the increased visibility it has provided for the Trust's activities. Ninfa Gutierrez of the DYHS staff was instrumental in creating a public service announcement that is being used by Spanish language stations across central and eastern Washington. There have been several radio and television interviews with Mario and Rosalinda in recent weeks. So far Rosalinda has trained a survey team of 110 people.

Although the Board members were generally pleased with the progress, Mike Gempler raised a concern that the survey data to date is not as strong in regions 4 & 5 as it should be. He stated that those are the areas that need housing most and that our survey needs to be certain to cover the Pasco and Mattawa areas. Tom promised to bring the concern to the attention of Peter Connery and Rosalinda.

FOLLOW-UP ON THE BOARD RETREAT

- **Discussion and Adoption of Statement of Rights and Responsibilities:** Dan Evans reviewed the latest draft of the Statement of Rights and Responsibilities. He said that once the Board has a final draft of the Statement we should send it to stakeholders for their review. Dan stated that an earlier draft was reviewed by Columbia Legal Services at their request, but that it has not been widely circulated pending the Board's approval. The Board members then suggested numerous revisions and clarifications. The approved changes will be incorporated in a third revised version for the Board's approval at the next meeting. Guillermo asked Board members to e-mail Tom and Dan with any question, concerns, or additional revisions as soon as possible. Dixie Kracht stated that after it is approved by the Board, the document should have a thorough legal review before it is released to the general public.
- **Status of Work on Construction Standards:** Tom reported that Marty Miller is working to set up a conference call with the members of the committee on construction standards in early August.

STATE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Janet Abbett reported on the State's progress in establishing the \$1 million housing voucher program authorized by the legislature. \$150,000 has been earmarked for farmworkers in key target areas including Grant County. Farmworkers will also be eligible to tap into the balance of the funds, which will be administered by existing emergency housing voucher providers. The State is hoping to have the program in operation by September to deal with problems that emerge during apple harvest.

Gloria Burton and Mike Youngquist pointed out that there has been a great need for the vouchers or some other form of assistance this year in Skagit County.

TRUST GRANT-MAKING PROCESS

Tom Byers stated that he now believes the Trust will receive the final approval for expending funds from the federal grant within a few weeks. This will make it important that the Board tackle the issue of grant-making protocols in the next two months.

CRITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Alicia McRae announced the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Housing Authority of Wenatchee and Chelan County.
- Mike Youngquist announced that James Fitzgerald of Spokane has been appointed head of USDA's Rural Development programs.
- Janet Abbett announced that a committee has been established to work with CTED and the legislature on the use of the \$3 million in additional funding allocated by the 2006 legislature for farmworker housing projects. Mike Gempler, Erik Nicholson and Mario Villanueva have been asked to serve.

NEXT MEETING LOCATION/TIME

The next meeting of the Board will be held in Yakima on September 15th, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

Mario Villanueva moved to adjourn. His motion was seconded by John Smith, and the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: _____
Secretary

Approved: _____
President/Vice President