

Orange County Affordable Housing Advisory Board Minutes

Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 6:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Jenn Sykes (Chair), Arthur Sprinczeles, Dion Graham, Mae McLendon, Olivia Fisher, Paul Voss, Saru Salvi, Holly Meschko

Members Absent: Keith Cook, Tim Woody, Jim Eichel

Staff Present: Alexis Battle (Administrative Assistant), Corey Root (Housing Director)

Public: Cody Dockery, Kristin Doyle, Zoe Jennings

I. Call to Order/Introductions:

Chair Sykes called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

II. Approval of the January 11, 2022 AHAB Meeting Minutes

The board unanimously approved the minutes from [January](#).

III. Board Member Updates:

There were no updates from anyone. We are still dealing with Covid and individuals catching Covid.

VI. FY21-22 Outside Agency Funding Application Review:

Chair Sykes noted that in the scoring of applications, there were some yes and no's on the scores. However, the scores were consistent for the most part. Board members reviewed each application and finalized board member recommendations for funding.

Several outside agencies were evaluated and scored. Center for Community Self Help had an overall total application score of 81.60. Community Empowerment Fund had an overall total application score of 90.80. Habitat for Humanity had an overall total application score of 96.00. Hope Renovations had an overall total application score of 83.80. Rebuilding Together of the Triangle had an overall total application score of 91.20. The last outside agency is EmPOWERment. EmPOWERment had an overall total application score of 96.00.

Mr. Voss shared that he wished there were a list showing the cost of the homes in the proposals. He needed more information. Chair Sykes says we will get the

applications sent off the County Manager who makes the determinations on what outside agency funding is included in her draft budget send to County Commissioners. County Commissioners will decide on final funding for outside agencies later this Spring as part of the FY22-23 Orange County budget.

V. Two Cents for Housing:

Mrs. Root shared with us that there were an email sent out to us from the chairs of the Affordable Housing Coalition. It has been asked that the town commissioners will approve two pennies on the tax rate. This will help create affordable housing in our surrounding areas. One penny will create about \$2.2 million dollars annually, and two pennies would be \$4.4 million annually.

Mrs. Root discussed the CARES ACT and AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN. She stated that we have received funding from these programs. Funding have allowed housing to hire temporary Emergency Housing Assistance workers and temporary Housing Helpline workers. Funding from these funds need to be spent by December 2024.

Mr. Voss wants to know how the office is going with there being short staff. Mrs. Root states she hopes to hire a temporary worker to help around with day-to-day activities. The manger position is posted and we are waiting to post the specialist job until we get a say from the County Manager.

Ms. McLendon says there should not be any reason why anyone should pass away in the cold. Ms. Meschko spoke on the two men that passed away in a garage. Says that the shelter stated they were trying to stay safe. Ms. Meschko says being safe should not rule over someone passing away.

Ms. McLendon motioned to support the affordable housing coalition. Also requested to ask the county to institute the two cent to raise taxes for affordable housing. All members were in favor.

VII. Advisory Board Application Review and Appointment:

Mrs. Root states we have four vacancies on the Affordable Housing Advisory Board. Members considered the applications and decided to recommend Hasan Abdullah, Anjail Taylor, and Alice Mahood to be appointed to the Affordable Housing Advisory Board. A motion was made to submit to the town commissioners the three applicants and to review the others. The board members want to get the membership count up and have a diversity of people on the board.

VIII. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

Submitted by Alexis Battle, Administrative Support II

NAME OF BOARD/COMMISSION: Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB)

Board/Commission Name: **Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB)**

Person to address the BOCC and contact information:

**Jenn Sykes, Chair (919)
442-8152
sykes.jennifer@gmail.com**

Primary County Staff Contact:

**Corey Root
Director, Department of Housing and Community Development
(919) 245-2490
croot@orangecountync.gov**

How many times per month does this board/commission meet, including any special meetings and sub-committee meetings?

Generally, the AHAB meets once a month, excluding the month of July. The Board may elect to have two meetings during March or April in order to review the applications relating to the County's Outside Agencies Funding Program. The AHAB may also meet additional times during a month depending on need or as it sees fit in order to carry out its work. Regular meeting locations alternate between Hillsborough and Chapel Hill. In 2019, the AHAB began to schedule some meetings in locations throughout the County in order to increase accessibility to all Orange County residents interested in attending.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Orange County Board of Commissioners created a policy allowing Advisory Boards to meet virtually during the pandemic if and when extenuating circumstances make it necessary for a Board to meet. The AHAB did not hold regular monthly meetings, but only met on an as-needed basis, for the first part of 2021. Regular monthly meetings (virtual) resumed in August.

Brief Statement of Board/Commission's Assigned Charge and Responsibilities.

The Affordable Housing Advisory Board is to advise the Orange County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) on affordable housing issues and work to increase the community's awareness of, understanding of, commitment to and involvement in producing and maintaining sustainable affordable housing. The AHAB also

explores new and/or innovative affordable housing strategies and new funding opportunities in order to make cogent recommendations to the BOCC, and monitors the progress of local housing programs.

The AHAB participates in the review of housing-related applications for the annual Outside Agencies Funding Process. In 2021, the AHAB also reviewed and made funding recommendations to the BOCC for the 2021 Affordable Housing Bond Program.

What are your Board/Commission's most important accomplishments?

In 2021, the AHAB's notable accomplishments include the following:

- **Reviewed and scored housing-related applications for the annual Outside Agencies Funding Process.**
- **Developed a standardized PowerPoint presentation that can be used by AHAB members at community meetings.**
- **Board members helped promote local regulatory changes to advance affordable housing (e.g., the density bonus considered by the Town of Hillsborough Planning Board).**
- **Board members promoted increased awareness of and communication with local groups and organizations by attending their meetings and reporting back to the AHAB at their regularly scheduled meetings; members attended meetings of the Partnership to End Homelessness, EmPOWERment, Community Empowerment Fund, Town of Hillsborough Planning Board, and the Town of Hillsborough Water and Sewer Board.**

List of Specific Tasks, Events, or Functions Performed or Sponsored Annually.

- **Review and provide comments on the Annual Action Plan and Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the County's federal HOME funds.**
- **Monitor accomplishments of the Affordable Housing Bond and other County housing programs.**
- **Review Outside Funding applications from organizations providing housing services.**
- **Educate the community on affordable housing needs and resources and related partnerships with the towns, public agencies, nonprofits, civic and for-profit organizations. This is primarily done informally by individual members through their civic engagement activities in their respective communities.**

Describe this board/commission's activities/accomplishments in carrying out BOCC goal(s)/priorities, if applicable.

The AHAB advises on and supports the BOCC's affordable housing initiatives, goals and priorities. The tasks, activities and events described in the preceding sections of this report and annual work plan support the BOCC's established goal to *ensure a community network of basic human services and infrastructure that maintains, protects and promotes the well-being of all County residents* and the priorities of providing decent, standard housing options for all residents regardless of household income level. The AHAB may also develop explicit plans to inform bond expenditures and other BOCC affordable housing funding.

Describe the collaboration relationship(s) this particular board has with other advisory boards and commissions?

The AHAB hopes to work more closely with the Affordable Housing Advisory Boards in the Towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill, and with the Orange County Local Government Affordable Housing Collaborative. The AHAB will also work with the nonprofit partners in the housing space to support their missions and evaluate any work they do using county funds.

Identify any activities this board/commission expects to carry out in 2022 as they relate to established BOCC goals and priorities. If applicable, is there a fiscal impact (i.e., funding, staff time, other resources) associated with these proposed activities (please list).

- **Increase interaction with community groups working on housing and related issues (e.g., criminal justice resources, immigrant/refugee resources).**
- **Increase Board member participation in affordable housing marches and other outreach events.**
- **Increase Board member support of fundraising efforts by local housing nonprofits.**
- **Increase Board involvement in local discussions around the Greene Tract, mobile home park closures, and filling the homeless services gaps. □ Align the Board's work with the countywide racial equity plan coming in 2022.**

What are the concerns or emerging issues your board has identified for the upcoming year that it plans to address, or wishes to bring to the Commissioners' attention?

- **Greene Tract**
- **Manufactured Home Park Closures**
- **Filling the Homeless Services Gaps**