

**Orange County Affordable Housing
Advisory Board (AHAB)
Meeting Agenda**

November 14, 2022, 6:00 PM
Chamber for a Greater Chapel Hill
Louise Beck room
04 S Estes Dr, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

I. Call to Order – Jenn Sykes, Chair: 6:00

Hasan and Jenn tuning in from home.

Introductions

II. Approval of the [Oct 10, 2022 Minutes](#) (5 minutes)

Save minutes for December. We don't have approval process

III. Member updates

IV. Outside Agency presentations

PEE WEE HOMES:

Root lets board know that Outside Agencies will be presenting over next couple months. Erica Walker (Executive Director) with PeeWee homes starts us off with slides. Founded in 2017, became 501c3 then. Tiny homes for folks transitioning out of homelessness. Target 30% AMI and below. A little over \$20k/yr. 20 homes since 2017; 300 sq feet each. Rent is 30% of net income (about \$309). A few homes in Northside neighborhood with land bank. A few homes off Homestead. Inspired by Pee Wee, who now lives in one of the Pee Wee homes (since 2019). Church of the Advocate Homes. Mitchell Lane is also in Northside neighborhood. 10% of each on-time rent payment goes to escrow fund for emergencies. Residents have saved cumulative of \$4,500. Recently developed resident support program using grant funds. Just posted Assistant Director position (all tenant focused). PeeWee homes on Hill Street are underway.

Holley asks who designs the homes. Sarah Stellehow (architect). She does everything pro bono and Pee Wee has looped in some paid help. One home is built uniquely because it's next to OWASA land.

HOPE RENOVATIONS:

Nora Spencer, founder

Kat Reach

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Hope is very young. Incorporated in 2017 but launched in 2020. Grown from 5 to 14 people since 2020. Orange County was the right community to get started in. COVID actually fueled a lot of the need for Hope's work. Affordable Housing + Workforce development. Underemployed women and non-binary folks. 49 have graduated. Will be 65 as of this year. Also help older adults and folks with disabilities. Helping Trades employers by creating workforce. Have curriculum that teaches basics; want to provide them with skills, experience, and confidence to enter workforce. Participants receive OSHA10 certification. After basics, they go into basics of carpentry, plumbing, HVAC. At that point they sort of know what they enjoy. What they really bring to the table is working on professional skills (critical thinking, mock interviews, conflict resolution, etc). Lots of social workers on the Hope teams. Folks generally go into entry-level jobs or apprenticeships OR continuing education (community colleges). Construction program geared toward aging in place. All work done on sliding scale. Higher income folks will pay market rates, which can help subsidize the work for lower income folks. Program will be changing a little in the coming years. Participants sometimes struggle to transition to jobs (especially as women and non-binary folks). They will be coming on site a lot more. Hope Renovations works all over the county. Just finished their first tiny home. Want to be able to fund more of the free jobs for people who need them. Work with a lot of homeowners who don't feel comfortable talking with "normal" construction workers who will talk above their heads. Hope works in a lot of rural areas. Work with the coalition database—folks who have been waiting a really long time. Habitat doesn't work much with the rural areas. Unique because they can get to urgent needs more quickly than other entities. Had one client who had been waiting in a rehab bed for a ramp to be built; they were able to get to it quickly. Do every kind of repair, big or small. A lot of bathroom repairs. They try to do 30% AMI for free; if they don't have funding, they refer to the coalition. Completed over 160 jobs. Did the renovations for the Chamber of Commerce. Large majority of clients are lower income. Hope will be hiring Hope members as paid interns for 6 weeks. Adding a third crew this upcoming year.

Paul asks if he could receive assistance even though he's over AMI. They say yes. They would assess and give pricing. Really important for them to have revenue generating model because you can't always rely on govt funding or donations.

Often run into issues where someone who doesn't know what they were doing tried to make repairs.

Mae really appreciates the outreach that's being done. Hope Renovations' FB page is great. They have an intern who takes care of a lot of the social media.

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Orange County Housing updates:

Rapid expansion of programs over the last few years. Some is COVID response. Some filling longstanding gaps. Had different funding appear—a lot is COVID related. In 2019 there were only 12 employees; now we have 45 (25 started in 2022). Had a lot of turnover. Most of us are very new. 5 directors in 7 years. There's been a lot of firefighting over the years. Trying to organize/write things down as we go. Currently have 6 positions open; 4 will start Monday.

Focus in dept is not just WHAT we do, but HOW we do it. Incorporating Trauma-informed care (TIC) and ACES. Understanding that behavior is not the person—but a trauma response. Important when dealing with both clients and ourselves. Something we don't talk about it building TIC into programming. HH has very structured breaks built into the structure of that program in very intentional way. Treating everyone with dignity and respect doesn't cost a time. This hasn't always been a hallmark of the dept. How racial equity plays a role in housing. Housing is built on the foundation of white settlers stealing and building on land. If we don't have data by race, we can't understand what's happening or how to fix it.

Partnership to End Homelessness

Homelessness #s are worse than ever. Homelessness lags behind economic crisis because people will do anything they can to avoid it (first exhaust their resources, then friends' and families').

- Holly talks about residents in her neighborhood who have been through a lot. At first Holly was told that her grandson could come stay with her for 6 months if needed; now they're cracking down on visitors staying for only 14 days out of a whole year. Management forced out a client's sister who had cancer.
- Mae says they had a community meeting. Lives off Jones Ferry in Carrboro where there are encampments of unsheltered folks. SOHRAD has already been called in. Mayor of Carrboro said he wanted to bring up to the council to increase the number of staff for SOHRAD. It's an issue that the phone line isn't available 24/7. SOHRAD is fully staffed but there are other gaps like Rapid Rehousing (RRH) that could be filled.
- Jenn says unsheltered folks in Hillsborough know where to get resources (the business community is aware). A lot of the businesses are not members of the chamber.
- Paul comments re: Holly's comments: It may not be a management issue; may be a HUD issue to prevent folks from Airbnb. EDP can help folks better understand their leases/what their rights are.

Partnership:

A lot of HUD funding is allocated to organizations outside of the county that have to jump through hoops. Partnership helps them jump through said hoops. Ending homelessness isn't just a dream; other communities have done it. Goal is to rehouse people within 30 to 90 days. Partnership also has direct services such as RRH, which pairs financial assistance and case management. Highly flexible based on what the family needs. Want to make sure we give them the perfect amount of time/assistance. Trying

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to avoid charity model/hierarchy between service providers and clients. Trying to move into a social justice focused lens (we're all people, we all have needs). People are experts on what they need; let's not prescribe when we don't know.

We work a lot with LLs/property managers to de-stigmatize things like vouchers. Also want to know what concerns the LL has. Used to take months to get a unit inspected to become HCV LL. Now we do it within the week.

SOHRAD is about 2 years old. Works exclusively with folks unsheltered. Numbers have gone up A LOT in the last couple years. They weren't people who weren't here but are now noticed/a part of our database/systems. Rachel Waltz W will be presenting in December or Jan.

Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8)

Offers LONGTERM rental subsidy in any market rate unit in community. Lots of leeway in how the program is run. Blake Rosser and Corey Root are going through the whole HCV manual to remove all offensive/problematic language. Coming up with admin plan that is trauma-informed.

- Holly brings up the long waitlist. HCV has strict guidelines. We don't take applications from anyone who is unsheltered. 679 vouchers, 577 currently leased up. Issued 126 new vouchers since Oct 2021.

To get HCV, you have to be referred by service provider. If they have high service needs, they need to have case management. We were below 500 vouchers in 2018-2020. It's the highest now it has ever been. HUD is giving us more vouchers because we're using all of our funding. Lease-up times are very significant issue. It's taking about 3 months for HCV holders to find homes. We have financial incentives for LLs to allow HCV. \$1,000 for the lease; \$500 for every other new lease.

- Paul brings up voucher for elderly, low income folks (section 202?). Corey has never heard of that; we'll look it up

Community Stability

Libbie is manager. 3 sections:

- Housing Helpline
 - One-stop shop. We've helped 17k households, 50k calls, 33k emails, 792 walk-ins (up through November 13). HH is at SHSC Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- Emergency Housing Assistance. In 2019 Emmala brought together folks from the towns with goal of creating streamlined access point (HH). Programs used to do dif things, have dif eligibility requirements. Good thing, bc demand went through the roof in 2020. We've given out \$12mil in assistance.

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- Eviction Diversion Program
 - Moved to Housing in 2021; was part of Human Services
 - Loose guidelines. If your LL is using the word “eviction,” you’re eligible for assistance

Community Development

Creates and preserves affordable housing.

- Housing and Preservation Coalition
 - One application for everyone
 - Long waitlist with prioritization for health and safety
 - One-stop shop so that clients don’t have to be experts
- BOND funding
- HOME funding
 - Usually about \$400k/yr. \$1.3 in HOME-ARP
- Longtime Homeowner Assistance Program
 - This is the second year. We didn’t get many applications in 2021. Had about 130; 91 were eligible. Either \$16k or \$19k
 - Holly mentions Homestead Exemption in OH; it’s a state program and NC has it, too. Income eligibility requirements are really low; Jackson Center also has tax assistance program
 - Please share LHA videos with your networks!
 - Last year’s awards were really low (\$1.50 for one); this year we’ll have \$100 minimum
 - BOCC doesn’t want folks to spend more than 2% on the county portion of their tax bill. We’re prioritizing based on age, income, tax burden
 - Hoping awards will reduce bills by about 75%

Mae asks why there’s such high turnover. It’s a really hard job.

Meeting next month is in Hillsborough, December 13.

Adjourn: 7:28pm