

**Housing Finance Authority of
St. Johns County, Florida
Regular Meeting
February 22, 2024
Minutes**

The Housing Finance Authority of St. Johns County met at the Kingfisher conference room in the Health & Human Services Building – 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by Michael O'Donnell, Chair

Members Present:

Michael O'Donnell, Chair
Robert Marshall, Vice Chair
Malinda Peebles
Erick Saks
Carolina Morrow
Linda DeGrande

Members Absent:

Brian Clark

Others Present:

Priscilla Howard – Executive Director HFA
Richard Komando, Esq., Bradley, Garrison & Komando, P.A.
Emily Magee, Butler Snow
William O'Connell, WH O'Connell, CPA
Helen Feinberg, RBC Capital Markets
Roy Alaimo, Board of County Commission, District 3
Joseph Cone, Assistant Director, Health and Human Services, St. Johns County
Jenny Harvey, Housing and Community Development Manager, St. Johns County
Marianne Edmonds, Public Resources Advisory Group
Bill Lazar, St Johns Housing Partnership
Victoria Pepper, CARE
Ervin Bullock, CARE
Nadine Hughy, CARE
Susan Jenner, CARE
Cricket Cleary, Lincoln Avenue
Alan Meza, Lincoln Avenue
Jordan Rector, Lincoln Avenue

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. Quorum was present. No press was in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

I. Agenda

Approval of Agenda as Amended: Motion was made by Board Member DeGrande to approve the agenda; motion seconded by Board Member Peebles. **Motion passed unanimously.**

II. **Public Comment:** None at this point in the Agenda

III. **Minutes –**

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Board Member DeGrande to approve the November Board Meeting minutes; motion seconded by Board Member Peoples. **Motion passed unanimously.**

IV. **Financial Report**

- Mr. O’Connell reported that the developer deposit (from Dominion Development) is shown as a liability. It was transferred back to the developer on February 12th. The Bank statements only run through January 31.
- Mr. O’Connell received a check in the amount of \$3000 for a Multifamily Bond application fee, from Lincoln Ave. Capital Management.
- Mr. O’Connell listed the receipt for the month - Loan Payment from Mr. Maxwell of \$550.00. He also listed the checks written to Mrs. Howard, his firm, and legal counsel,
- Mr. O’Connell stated that the \$107,550 deposit that was in transit last month has been recorded on the current statement.
- Mr. O’Connell has received the document needed to open the SBA Account
- Mr. O’Connell reported that the external audit is still in progress.

V. **County’s Update**

- Mr. Cone reported that Dominion Development’s Preserve at Wards Creek is scheduled to be on the Agenda for the Board of County Commission’s meeting in March but may get pushed back to May.
- Board Member Marshall asked about the outcome of their meeting with Planning and Zoning. Mr. Cone reported that Preserve at Wards Creek was approved.
- Chair ODonnell asked if the HFA had given any approvals. Mrs. Howard stated that the developer submitted an application and requested an Inducement Resolution from the HFA Board; however, the developer withdrew their request until they were further along with their county approvals. Mrs. Howard stated that she expects they will resubmit their request in August or September. Mr. Komando stated that if approved by the HFA Board then they will get in line for future bond allocation.
- Mr. Cone reported that they have hired Mr. Dirk Winston and assigned him to work on the down payment assistance program. The program will have to be approved by Florida Housing Finance Corporation as well as the Board of County Commissioners. Mr. Cone stated this will be another Affordable Housing program they can use. Mr. Cone discussed Mr. Winston’s experience and they are super excited to have him on board. He also thanked the Board of County Commissioners for funding the position.
- Mr. Cone announced that the last comprehensive plan in person community meeting will be held tonight in Ponte Verda. Mr. Cone reported that he attended the meeting held at the Southeast Branch Library. It was very well attended. There were a lot of positive comments. Several people were interested in affordable housing, nature preservation and conservation and infrastructure. Commissioner Alaimo added that the community is very engaged.
- Mr. Cone invited board members to attend the AHAC meetings. They are considering having subcommittee meetings to address 3 or 4 specific issues. One of which may be Missing Middle Housing. Mr. Cone stated he will keep the HFA Board abreast of future meetings. The subcommittee meetings will have to be publicly advertised.

- Chair O'Donnell asked if there is any way to bridge the gap between the AHAC and HFA Boards. Mr. Cone said that the boards could consider having a joint meeting once or twice a year.

VI. New Business

1. Presentation from Community Advocates for Racial Equity (CARE)*- requesting support for a Public Housing Authority in St. Johns County – A presentation and statement was made by Victoria Pepper, a member of CARE. Ms. Pepper discussed the timeline and key points on establishing of a Public Housing Authority in St. Johns County. Ms. Pepper discussed the research CARE has done on the cost and benefits of having a PHA in the County. CARE is seeking to have the BOCC readdress the issue of creating a PHA in the County and is asking the FHA Board for a letter of support. The Board expressed that they do not have any opposition to a PHA being established in the County but would like to understand the rationale for the BOCC voting to not move forward with a PHA. Board Member DeGrande asked how the PHA would be paid for. Ms. Pepper stated that the initial funds would come from the local governments and then become self-sustaining. Board Member Saks stated that a PHA would have access to additional affordable housing resources that could come into the County. Mr. Lazar agreed and stated that vouchers from Jacksonville HFA are being used in the county and that having a PHA in the county would give residents priority to the vouchers. After significant discussion, Attorney Komando stated that since the HFA Board is appointed by the BOCC they should meet with their commissioner to understand the reasons for their decision. Mrs. Howard stated that she would do some research and report back to the board at a future meeting.
2. Marianne Edmonds as financial advisor reviewed the Multifamily Bond Allocation Application submitted for Summerset Village & Summer Breeze for 200 & 305 Summer Breeze Way, St. Augustine, FL, which was built in 2006, 216 total units (132 Senior units at Summer Breeze and 82 Family units at Summerset Village), 100% of units are at 60% AMI rent restrictions. The developers are Lincoln Avenue Communities and Summerset Village Preservation, LTD.
 - Ms. Edmonds stated that the application is complete and consistent with the HFA's guidelines.
 - Mrs. Howard asked the developer if they had anything to add. Ms. Cricket Cleary, Lincoln Avenue introduced the development team. She stated that they are a mission driven affordable housing developer. They have over 150 communities and about one third are in Florida. It is important for them to have local support and community engagement. They also ensure that residents have service support if needed and amenities that enhance their quality of life. They will extend the affordability period for 40 years.
 - Ms. Edmonds went over the process required. The next step is for the Board to approve the application, authorize an inducement resolution, hold a TEFRA hearing, request the allocation and to close on the Bonds. Ms. Edmonds stated BOCC approvals are needed. There is currently \$53 million reserved for Region 4 at the Division of Bond Finance. So, the HFA could submit for allocation for this year.
 - Mr. Cone stated that he supports the rehabilitation of these units. It is truly needed. Code enforcement has had to get involved before. Mr. Cone would like to be assured that there will be better communication with current owners when issues arise.

- Mrs. Howard stated that the developer is planning to do substantial rehabilitation (\$50,000 per unit).
- Chair ODonell stated that he was surprised that these units would need rehabilitation when they are only 18 years old. Mr. Cone explained that this was not uncommon.
- Ms. Magee explained the Inducement Resolution. She stated the Board needed to vote on the Intent resolution delegating to the Executive Director the ability to host the TEFRA hearing (via teleconference) so the St Johns County Board of County Commission approval that is required prior to filing the allocation request can be secured prior to the next HFA Board Meeting.

Approval to move forward with Summerset Village and Summer Breeze Motion made by Board Member DeGrande to move the Multifamily Bond Application through the process motion seconded by Board Member Saks. Motion passed unanimously.

- Ms. Magee clarified that the request for bond allocation from the \$53 million will come from the bond allocation that is available for 2024.

Approval of the Inducement Resolution for Summerset Village and Summer Breeze (a combined development) Motion made by Board Member Morrow for an Inducement up to \$33,000,000, motion seconded by Board Member Saks. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Intent Resolution. Motion made by Board Member DeGrande to approve Intent Resolution delegating Mrs. Howard the ability to host the TEFRA hearing to secure BOCC approval prior to filing the allocation request, motion seconded by Board Member Saks. Motion passed unanimously.

Goals and Objectives for 2024 discussion – moved to the March meeting. The Board agreed to review this item and come back to the meeting with comments and questions.

Old Business/Informational:

Florida Association of Local Housing Finance Authorities – Conference July 10-13, 2024 – Casa Monica Hotel- St. Augustine Florida.

Ms. Peebles explained that we will find out in March if we have a full paying sponsor. Ms. Peeple suggested a portion of our registration could be used toward the conference sponsorship. Several board members also suggested soliciting sponsorships from developers that are currently building housing in St. Johns County.

VII. Other Information:

Legislative Update – final report will be at the March meeting.

VIII. Board Members Comments - There were no comments.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Board Member Morrow and seconded by Board Member Saks to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:17 pm

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting of the HFA will be held on March 28, 2024 in the Kingfisher conference room in the Health & Human Services building, at 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary