

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Sumter County, FL

Meeting: April 8, 2010

**Present:** Glenn Frazier-Watson/Moffitt Realty; PJ Lewis-Lewis Bros. Construction; Virginia Watson-Watson/Moffitt Realty; Richard Cole-Zoning and Adjustment Board; Diana Couillard-Dibarco Building Corporation; Annette McCullough-Banking Industry; Kathy Young and Sandie Purvis-Sumter County Housing Department

**Public Attendees:** Kelly Pisciotta-Habitat for Humanity

A copy of the public notice for this meeting is on file.

Hand-outs to members: tentative LHAP 2010/2011, 2011/2012 and 2012/2013

*Call to Order.* Rich Cole, acting Chair in the absence of Gary Schick, suggested today's gathering be held in the form of a workshop due to the absence of a quorum. Members present agreed and the workshop was called to order at 10:10am.

**First order of business:** *Approval of minutes dated January 14, 2010.*

No action
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**Second order of business:** *Resignation of committee member.* Kathy Young notified members Lena Wasserman has submitted her resignation from the AHAC committee. Ms. Young reminded members of the importance of attending meetings in an effort to keep up to date and giving advance notice to housing staff when there will be an absence. Advance notice will allow staff to determine whether a quorum will be available should alternative scheduling be necessary. Ms. Young stated she is prepared to add Kelly Pisciotta of Habitat of Lake-Sumter but has held off in hopes of adding additional member(s) at the same time since it must be done by resolution. Rich Cole stressed the importance of filling additional spots as soon as possible, preferably by the next quarterly meeting.

No action
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**Third order of business:** *Lake County's quest to eliminate criminals from program assistance.* Ms. Young stated no further information on this topic has been made available to date. Ms. Young stated she continues to research the topic in other counties as well and recently reviewed one county's plan which contained verbiage relative to criminal activity. However, Ms. Young believes a margin of liability still exists and leaves the county vulnerable. Diana Couillard questioned the definition of a criminal. Ms. Young responded indicating her research revealed one county, which eliminated persons convicted of a felony; no definition of a criminal was found in her research. Ms. Young stated she did not believe the criminal status to be a heavy burden, as most applicants with a criminal history surface on their own by providing false or misleading information on their application for assistance under the notion they will not be assisted if they are honest. Ms. Young stated there is a big push from the federal government to mainstream

people out of nursing homes, penal institutions and those being released from foster care programs and now are on their own, noting there are a large amount of grants available to fund these initiatives. Diana Couillard briefly discussed hurdles faced by kids aging out of the foster care program and forced into society without the basic means to seek employment or shelter. Rich Cole indicated his work experience has determined as many as 70% of children phasing out of the foster care program suffer from a disability of some type. Additionally, Mr. Cole voiced some concern relative to criminal activity in the situation when a young person makes a bad choice in what results in probation, yet they have been labeled a felon for the rest of their life. Many of these young people do not realize the full consequences of their actions. Mr. Cole stated he is more comfortable with verbiage in the application for assistance notifying applicants of the failure to disclose truthful information may disqualify them from receiving any assistance. Virginia Watson voiced concerns over those applicants who have convictions of a sexual nature, drugs or other violent criminal activity who are forthcoming with the information and the ability to have criteria or leeway to avoid these persons living in certain areas. Ms. Young's response indicated SHIP can not tell applicants where to live as it is a means for financial support only; this direction is left up to the courts to determine where a criminal can and can not live. Ms. Young continued noting Florida Housing adheres to this stance to avoid law suits and, as a committee, one of the goals for AHAC members is to protect Sumter County from such lawsuits. Diana Couillard questioned whether applicants could be selected to receive assistance by a committee; a no response was provided by Ms. Young. Additionally, Ms. Young stated statute requirements must be met and applicants are processed on a first-come, first-qualified, first-served basis; alternatively no other prioritizing exists in Sumter County, although some assistance providers prioritize on the basis of elderly or disabled status.

Virginia Watson questioned whether special offers on foreclosed homes at a discount rate to counties could be beneficial for emergency housing if offered to Sumter County. Ms. Young stated funding would be a problem with the belt tightening in the current economy; from a maintenance and liability perspective it would not be cost efficient at this point in time. Ms. Young briefly discussed problems within the Sanford Housing Authority in regards to public housing which have been ongoing for some time and these are problems which must be avoided.

No action

**Fourth Order of Business:** *New LHAP (local housing assistance plan) review.* Kathy Young provided today's handout for review and input from committee members. Ms. Young reminded members any input must be submitted quickly as the draft will be placed on the executive summary for the BOCC approval process on Friday, April 16, 2010.

No action

**Fifth Order of Business:** *Update on BOCC's decision for Kelly Pisciotto's nomination to AHAC.* Ms. Young stated she has held back on this process in the hopes of adding additional persons to the committee by resolution.

No action

**New Business:** None

**Old Business:** None

**Public Input:** Kelly Pisciotta indicated her excitement for the opportunity to serve on the AHAC committee. Additionally, Ms. Pisciotta noted Lake County received NSP funding. Part of Habitat's initiative for the next 12 to 24 months will be purchasing foreclosed homes for rehabilitation. Ms. Pisciotta stated she is in the process of getting Habitat of Lake-Sumter approved as a HUD organization and eligible to purchase foreclosed properties at the current rate of fifty cents on the dollar, noting there will be a heavy concentration in Sumter County due to the county not receiving NSP funding.

Discussion ensued concerning the affordability of property taxes, insurance premiums, escrow accounts and payment options through the tax collectors office. These items are important educational tools for the consumer/applicant and should be disclosed during home ownership counseling. Ms. Young indicated escrow accounts are not eligible for the rehab/replacement projects; however the homeowners are made aware of coming changes and encouraged to plan accordingly. Ms. Young continued giving a brief overview of the mortgage, change order process and recapture plan.

Note to record: Glenn Frazier arrived at 10:55am bringing today's attendance to a quorum; today's meeting was officially called to order by Vice-chairman Rich Cole. A brief review of the workshop was provided by Mr. Cole, after which he entertained a motion to approve January's meeting minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes from January 14, 2010 was made by Diana Couillard and seconded by Annette McCullough. The motion carried unanimously.

**Items for next agenda:**

- None to date

**Next Meeting:**

- July 8, 2010 @ 10:00am in Room 142 (as published for public notice)

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Diana Couillard at 10:59am and a second was provided by Virginia Watson. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by: Virginia Watson  
Virginia Watson, Secretary

Approved on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2010.

By: Gary Schick  
Gary Schick, Chairperson