

AMENDED
HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF MESA
MESA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
57 EAST 1ST STREET, LOWER LEVEL
SEPTEMBER 26, 2002
-MINUTES-

MEMBERS

Mr. Greg Holtz, Chairperson

Dr. Carlos Vallejo

Ms. Teresa Cotton

Mr. Michael Graham (Excused)

Mr. Bob Hisserich

Mr. Len Locke

Ms. Susan Klecka

Ms. Elaine Nelson

Mr. Ken Salas

GUESTS

Anita Mapes- Mesa Fire Department
Connector Program

STAFF

Ms. Debbra Determan

Mr. Jack Caroline

Ms. Nichole Wamble

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Len Locke, Ken Salas, and Robert Hisserich introduced themselves to the body as a whole.

REVIEW OF JULY 24TH, MEETING MINUTES

Susan Klecka made a motion to approve the minutes of July 24th, 2002 with the addition of Michael Graham's name to the list of members present. Carlos seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried as amended.

ELECTION OF OFFICER for 2002-2003

Susan Klecka made a motion to nominate Greg Holtz as Chairman and Carlos seconded the motion. Greg asked if there were any other nomination for Chair of the Board. A vote was taken and the motion carried with a vote of (7) yes votes and (1) no vote registered by Greg himself. Next, Greg opened the floor to nominations for the position of Vice Chair. Carlos made a motion to elect Susan as Vice Chair and Theresa Cotton seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried with (7) yes votes and (1) abstention registered by Susan.

PRESENTATION BY DIRECTOR OF HOUSING SERVICES DIVISION, JACK CAROLINE

Jack gave a presentation on the Housing Services Division and the Housing Monthly Management Report put together by his office. The division maintains 26 employees and has a budget of over \$9M. Jack stated the approximately 95% of those funds are federal and come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The funds are used to implement three major programs. The first of which is the Housing Rehabilitation program, that is funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds at a little over \$1M a year. Those funds are used to help homeowners who are unable to upgrade or maintain their homes with rehabilitation.

It is required that the home be owner occupied and has been owned for at least one year. The second program is the Rental Rehab Program. This allows the City to work with a private landlord who has units that might need some repairs. If the landlord is willing to upgrade the units to City standards then the City will pay 50% of the cost of the rehab. This type of rehabilitation helps the neighborhood from deteriorating and becoming blighted and also helps to provide more affordable housing for low-income families. The third program is the Section 8 Voucher Subsidy. If a family lives in Mesa is low-income and meets the criteria their rent can be subsidized. The family pays 30% of their gross adjusted income and the difference will be paid to the landlord to support those families. Currently there are 5600 individuals or 1800 families on this program and over 600 landlords who participate. The houses are scattered throughout Mesa helping to alleviate the stigma of public housing.

The monthly management report gives an overview of what happens from month to month. It is primarily used as a management tool to see how the division is measuring up to it's goals, what the needs are in terms of affordable housing, how well is that need being met.

Jack concluded his presentation by asking if there were any questions. Carlos asked for clarification on the report about the Section 8 waiting list. Jack explained that the waiting list was opened last August for one day and all new vouchers were distributed. He then explained the process for receiving a voucher begins with a person filling out an application and then being placed on the waiting list. Once a voucher becomes available the name is moved to the top of the waiting list and the family is briefed. The family is then told what the rules and regulations of the program are and what would be expected of them and the landlord. The family will then be given search papers to go out and begin looking for a unit. The family has approximately 60 days from the time they are briefed to find a unit. Jack pointed out in July there were no briefings because there were no vacant vouchers at that point in time. Greg asked that the list of housing definitions that had been previously sent out be redistributed for the sake of the new board members. Theresa asked how the economy has been affecting the housing programs. Jack responded that there hasn't been too much of an affect because the division is federally funded. Bob asked about the number of inspectors for the home inspections. Jack reported that there is only one inspector and an assistant; Jack Garcia who conducts all initial and yearly follow up inspections. To insure the units are decent safe and sanitary. Jack clarified that the housing quality standard HQS inspection as specified by HUD must have all utility service operational, no flaking paint or broken window ect. However, the inspection does not get into the structure of the building.

REVIEW THE FUNDING ALLOCATION PROCESS

Nichole referred to the funding guidelines and the City funding philosophy distributed with the Board packet. She pointed out that within the next month staff would be sending out notices of funding availability and simply wanted to confirm that the Board was still confident in those priorities and guidelines going forward. Nichole stated that staff is continuing to look at rolling the ABC and the General fund processes together and the 2003-2004 application packet will include information on both sources of funding. Once the agency makes application to the City, the Board and staff will determine from which funding source the agency will be funded. The tentative timeline begins in late October with a notice of an RFP. A funding review meeting for a all applicants will take place on November 5th 2002 and applications will be due in late December. Staff will review the applications in January and February and then bring their recommendations to the Board in March. Debra asked the Board to think about whether or not the allocation

process should place more priority on one category over the other or should it look at all areas as equal. Susan stated that she would like to see an equal weight placed on all areas of funding to allow the flexibility in funding allocation based on need. Ken asked if there was any data that could be used to determine how these funding allocations should be distributed. Debbra replied that there have been needs assessments done but nothing recently. However, she also mentioned that in the last general fund cycle approximately \$9,000 was allocated to be used for an East Valley needs assessment. She discussed the informal coalition consisting of all of the east valley cities and both the Mesa and Valley of the Sun United Ways that have come together to coordinate an East Valley Needs Assessment. The goal is to have a comprehensive needs assessment completed within 18 months. Debbra stated that although it would not be complete for the upcoming funding cycle, she and Nichole would bring to the board what they are seeing as the unmet needs in the community based on their participation in various groups and organizations.

Carlos suggested that the Board again look at the terminology of funding emphasis and funding priority and instead use focus area. Nichole suggested that neither emphasis, nor priority be used to describe the areas of funding and instead simply outline the potential areas of funding. This allows discretion in how the funds are distributed amongst the agencies. Carlos made a motion to suppress the previously used ABC emphasis of funding guidelines and that the City of Mesa General Fund priority list be updated, omitting the word priority. Theresa seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC)

Debbra explained that the IRS has asked the City to get involved in publicizing and developing a volunteer base for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Currently staff is working to coordinate a couple of sites with in Mesa with at least 50 trained volunteer who will be able to help with tax preparation. The goal is to look at ways of collecting on some of the \$99M unclaimed dollars for City of Mesa residents. Residents who have been unaware of the program may be able to collect these dollars for the past couple of years. Staff is looking at this program as being an easy way to benefit residents of the City of Mesa. Debbra explained that one of the current obstacles is with finding suitable computers and printers. She explained that laptops would be most beneficial because they could be easily stored. Nichole mentioned that if there were enough volunteers and equipment; this program would be able to be available 5 nights a week. Carlos mentioned that Dr. Bernie Ronan of MCC has assisted the coordinators of the Latino Town Hall with obtaining laptops for their meeting and suggested that he may be of assistance with doing the same for the EITC program. Carlos also mentioned that David Luna, Director of Education Television would be very helpful in getting the word out through the schools. He also mentioned that PTO's and PTA's would also be of benefit to getting the word out. Ken stated that he could make no commitment, but he would be willing to check into obtaining some computers to be used. Len suggested that Area V Care would be a great place to recruit both volunteers and potential recipients. Debbra mentioned that there would be publicity at both the Neighborhood Conference October 12, 2002 and the Latino Town Hall October 19, 2002. Carlos asked if there was any linkage with Housing for Mesa. Nichole replied that she would be disseminating the information to all of the agencies with which the City has Human Service contracts, in an effort to gain volunteers and make residents aware of the program. Debbra mentioned that at our next funding cycle meeting it might be possible for Staff to discuss the merits of the EITC program. Carlos mentioned that it might be helpful if the information was to be inserted in the City of Mesa Utility Bills. Susan stressed that it is most important to recruit volunteer. Len pointed out that it would be

key to tap into the service groups and organizations that already have the volunteer base established.

HOUSING ROUNDTABLE LIASION

Debbra referred to the meeting notice for the Housing Roundtable September 24, 2002. She addressed how the Board had previously discussed becoming more connected with housing. The Housing Roundtable is a group that has come together to develop a Master Plan. She stated that it would be beneficial for the Board to have a designated liaison to the housing roundtable that will be able to report to the full Board. This will help the Board to become updated on housing issues and the progress of the Housing Master Plan. Debbra asked for a volunteer to perform this duty. Theresa asked how often the group met. Greg clarified that the meeting are typically held quarterly from 6:00 – 7:30. He also explained that the Roundtable is in the process of evolving into a citizen's taskforce on housing issues. Specifically, members of the taskforce would be investigating housing and the development of housing plans. Additionally, they would conduct research and recommend policy changes or make new policy as it relates to the housing plan. Carlos suggested that a letter be written from the Chair of the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board requesting that a representative of the Board be appointed to this task force.

Debbra clarified that the Housing Roundtable will continue on a quarterly basis and an offshoot of the roundtable will be the Master Plan subcommittee. Individuals will need to be appointed to that position, but there is a need for a liaison at both positions. The Board agreed that they will have a liaison who will regularly attend the Housing Roundtable and report back to the full Board. The Board also agreed by general consensus that they would like to have a representative of the Housing and Human Services Advisory appointed to the Citizen's Housing Taskforce. Greg will email to Kit requesting to have a person appointed from the taskforce working on the Master Plan.

STAFF REPORTS

Nichole reported that based on the Boards previous decision to withhold the \$5000 allocated to CASA during the 2002-2003 funding cycle based on their reorganization and financial status, she will be sending out a formal letter making them aware of the Boards decision.

Debbra announced the 9th Annual Conference on Homelessness will be taking place on October 28th and 29th at the Embassy Suites on Greenway Road in Phoenix. The conference will consist of several workshops and in addition to that there will be a full day institute on Day Labor Tuesday the 29th. Also, on October 15th from 8:00 to 2:00 there is another conference entitled *Breaking Down the Barriers to Affordable Housing*. The cost to attend is \$35 and will be held at the Black Canyon Conference Center on Dunlap Ave.

Debbra discussed the Department of Economic Security and Department of Commerce funding formula process. The group looked at those who fall within the 125% of poverty range and the unemployment rate in each of the areas. Trends show that much of the money has been shifted from the rural areas toward the more urban areas. Smaller, rural Community Action Agencies may have to cut back on both their services and their staffs. Based on the funding formula, the City of Mesa is staying relatively level but there is a chance that with State cutbacks they could lose TANF dollars. This has an affect on MesaCAN who will probably have less administrative dollars and more money for client services.

Carlos announced the 1st annual Latino Town Hall will be taking place on October 19th from 7:30 - 3:00 at the Word of Grace Church. The conference will look at education, economic development and neighborhood issues and will have Spanish and Sign language translators.

A motion was made to adjourn, was seconded and approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Determan, Human Services Coordinator