

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES  
CITY OF MESA  
MESA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
57 EAST 1<sup>ST</sup> STREET, LOWER LEVEL  
MARCH 24, 2005  
-MINUTES-

MEMBERS

Ms. Mary Bolig  
Mr. Jon Burroughs  
Mr. Robert Hisserich  
Mr. LaShawn Jenkins (Excused)  
Mr. Raymond Jones  
Ms. Judy Kent  
Dr. Ken Salas (Excused)  
Ms. Linda Starr

STAFF

Ms. Nichole Ayoola  
Ms. Ruth Anne Norris  
Ms. Lisa Wilson  
Ms. Lisha García  
Ms. Debbie Cooke

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Raymond Jones welcomed those attending the meeting. Mr. William Egan, who has been appointed to the Housing Governing Board, was in attendance.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

None.

JANUARY 27, & FEBRUARY 24, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the January 27, 2005 and February 24, 2005 were approved unanimously.

MONTHLY HOUSING DIRECTORS/MANAGEMENT REPORT

Ruth Anne Norris, Housing Services Director provided a brief narrative of the February Housing Report. As of today, Escobedo is 100 percent leased. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are being used to complete several rehabilitation projects over the next three months. Some funds will be retained to handle emergency repairs such as air conditioning replacements during the summer months. Housing Services received 371 requests for rental assistance. Five families from the waiting list received leases. The Section 8 Program absorbed one new port-in family (a family that utilizes a portable voucher) and 25 families were terminated from the program. The Section 8 lease-up rate remained the same at 92 percent and the Affordable Housing lease-up rate increased from 95 percent to 96 percent. Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) of \$842,827 were paid to 671 private sector landlords for properties in Mesa. The waiting list continues to be closed at this time.

DISCUSS RENTAL INCREASE FOR ESCOBEDO APARTMENTS

Ms. Norris discussed the potential rental increase for the Escobedo Apartments. The Board received the memo explaining the increase along with alternatives and also a spreadsheet listing the amounts of the increase from 2004-05. In 2004, the Mesa City

Council approved a 10 percent rental increase. Council gave conceptual approval to increase the rent to seven percent for 2005. With the increase, the rental rates are well below the payment standards for Section 8 and the market. Ms. Norris said that a meeting was held to inform tenants of the potential increase. The new rates go into effect on August 1<sup>st</sup> as leases are renewed.

Robert Hisserich stated that if the goal were to move Escobedo into self-sufficiency, his recommendation would be a 10 percent rental increase but not lower than seven percent. Ms. Norris stated she prefers the seven percent alternative since that is what Council agreed to last year. After further discussion Board members voted on the alternatives.

Mr. Hisserich made a motion to increase the rent at Escobedo Apartments by 10 percent. The increases would be phased in over the next year, giving special dispensation to those residents who are unable to afford the increase. Jon Burroughs seconded the motion, adding that more clarification be given to the method of phasing in the increase.

After more discussion a vote was taken. The motion failed three to two against increasing the rents by 10 percent. Judy Kent made a motion to increase the rent by 7 percent. Linda Starr seconded the motion. The motion passed three to two.

Ms. Norris stated that in the City Council report regarding the rental increase, she would note the lengthy discussion and relay that some Board members felt strongly in favor of a 10 percent rental increase.

#### REVIEW OF THE MESA HOUSING SERVICES DIVISION 2005 ANNUAL & 2005-2010 5-YEAR PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY PLAN

Ms. Norris reviewed the Annual Plan and the 5-Year Plan, which were included in the H&HSAB packets. A memo explaining the purpose of the plan was also distributed to the Board. The memo states that the goals and objectives of the plans are to assist the “at risk” population in Mesa with rental subsidy in compliance with federal regulations. The plans offer a proactive approach to answering the community’s housing needs.

Ms. Norris stated there was one change that she would like to point out. This year Mesa Housing Services would be informing HUD (the Department of Housing & Urban Development) of Housing’s desire to have the option to provide project-based vouchers. This may be a direction that the Governing Board wants to explore. By choosing this option, a certain amount of vouchers would be designated and used at those locations only. Specific waiting lists would be developed for those locations. The tool adds flexibility to the program and places Housing Services in compliance with HUD regulations. The Plans go before the Housing Governing Board for approval on April 7, 2005 at 7:30 am.

Ms. Norris asked the H&HSAB to make a recommendation on the following alternatives:

- Approve the Housing Services 2005 Streamlined Annual and 2005 to 2009 Streamlined Five-Year Public Housing Agency Plan as presented. These plans align MHSD with HUD’s goals for the Five-Year Plan, as well as provide more

specific information on specific objectives in the Annual Plan. The plans incorporate input from MHSD staff members as well as members of the Section 8 Resident Advisory Board

- Revise and/or develop additional goals and objectives to meet community needs unidentified or unaddressed in the presented plans. The Plans are required to be submitted to HUD no later than April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Board members discussed both alternatives at length. Ms. Kent made a motion to recommend alternative one and Ms. Starr seconded. The vote passed three to two with one abstention.

#### ABC DONATIONS

Nichole Ayoola discussed the ABC (A Better Community) donation fund and stated that the donations are somewhat lower than 2003-04. There will be additional marketing to promote the program and increase donations.

Ms. Kent stated that the Pulliam Trust has new trustees and it may be worthwhile for Mesa to discuss the option of reapplying for matching funds again. Ms. Ayoola said that she would research this further.

#### 2005-2006 PROPOSAL DISCUSSION

Ms. Ayoola informed the Board that next month's meeting would have to be moved up by one week. The meeting will be held on April 21, 2005 in order to finalize recommendations before the April 28, 2005 Budget hearings. Staff notes would be provided to the Board before the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting in preparation for the discussion. The Board was also reminded to return any outstanding evaluations so that staff may use them when making recommendations. There must be a quorum to make the final recommendations to City Council. If by chance, a member is unable to attend they were encouraged to provide Raymond Jones, H&HSAB chairperson or Ms. Ayoola with their feedback. The following agency proposals were then discussed:

##### *Child Crisis Center- of the East Valley- Emergency Shelter*

The CCC provides emergency shelter services for children in crisis situations such as abuse, parents who may require substance abuse treatment or health issues and those that are homeless.

##### *Mesa Public Schools-Mesa Youth Placement Services*

Mary. Bolig and Mr. Jones attended this site visit. Ms. Bolig stated that she wasn't clear on the services that are provided and very few jobs placements are completed. Mr. Jones stated that Mesa's funds could be used a little bit better. There is concern about the actual follow-up of the placements and the program model.

*Boys & Girls Club of the East Valley- Teen/Youth Programs*

Ms. Bolig stated that this year's proposal was a lot better and commended them on the charter school. Issues were identified and questions were answered. The Teen Program is directed towards educational activities and has won awards for the Technology Center.

*Sirrine Adult Day Care- Day Care for the Indigent Elderly*

The proposal was not well written but questions were cleared up during their presentation. The program is well run program with a dedicated staff and director.

*Salvation Army- Senior Lunch Program*

Ms. Kent stated that the Salvation Army received an endowment for the program, which is to provide lunch for elderly women. This would be a duplication of services since Mesa Senior Services already provides meals for seniors.

*East Valley Catholic Social Services- My Sister's Place/Family & Child Counseling*

My Sister's Place would provide an additional safe haven for those experiencing domestic violence. The counseling portion would be great to fund but PREHAB provides counseling through the Center Against Family Violence.

*MesaCAN- CTAC*

Ms. Kent stated that she was present for the tour of some of CTAC's projects. The administrative salaries for the program seem high along with the units of service. The consultants provide outreach to neighborhoods and communities, but services are definitely a duplication of the City's Neighborhood Outreach Division.

*Community Bridges-Substance Abuse Treatment*

The Board and staff agreed that this is a good program that works well in Mesa. Community Bridges also works well with Mesa police officers to provide the homeless with detoxification services.

*YMCA-NYPUM/1<sup>st</sup> Offender's/Non-Traditional Day Care*

Several members of the Board, along with staff attended the presentation of the YMCA. The presentation did not go well. There was concern about the City of Mesa being the only funding source for the programs. There are also concerns regarding the Non-Traditional Day Care Program.

*CARE- Wellness/Volunteer Project*

Members of the Board thought the Wellness program is worthy of funding. Both program proposals were well written.

*Central AZ Shelter Services- Emergency Shelter for Women*

Although the budget portion of the proposal was not completed properly, questions were cleared up during the presentation. It's a well-run program and provides shelter for homeless single women.

*Big Brothers & Big Sisters- Lowell Elementary Mentoring Program*

This organization has improved financially. The agency proposes to provide mentoring to children at Lowell Elementary School at the cost of \$1,000 per child. This was a program started last year. There are 18 students on the waiting list for mentors.

*Jewish Family & Children's- Mesa Geriatric In-Home*

Ms. Kent attended the presentation provided by this agency. There were several questions regarding the budget but the financial officer provided answers. They gave a great presentation and have a great program. Ms. Kent stated that she would recommend funding if available. Mesa Senior Services Caring Corps provides a similar service.

*Empact- Senior Peer Counseling*

Empact gave an impressive presentation. There were questions asked about the budget portion of the proposal. There was no finance person available to answer those questions. The program is great and provides seniors with counseling from their trained senior peers.

*United Food Bank*

Staff attended the presentation and was very impressed with the efficient way that service is provided. They have many collaborative partners, which include other non-profits around the City of Mesa.

*A&A Cottages- Empower*

Mr. Hisserich and staff attended the agency presentation and tour. The services provided are needed but is also new. The funds would be used to start the program. Mr. Hisserich stated that historically, the City has not provided money to start new programs. The program provides self-sufficiency skills to 18 year-olds leaving the facility without any support.

ADJOURN

Mr. Hisserich made a motion to adjourn and Jon Burroughs seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Nichole V. Ayoola, Human Services Coordinator