

# COACHELLA VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

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County of Riverside • Agua Caliente Band of Indians • Cabazon Band of Mission Indians • Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

## **COACHELLA VALLEY REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES** (COMBINED WITH WORKFORCE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

**JANUARY 9, 2008, 2:00 P.M.**

CVAG OFFICES, ROOM 119

**CHAIR: DICK OLIPHANT**

**VICE-CHAIR: VALERIE VAN WINKLE**

### **I. INTRODUCTIONS: ALL**

### **II. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 7, 2008 MEETING MINUTES**

Staff reviewed CVAG's Committee process, explaining that all actions by the Blue Ribbon Committee must be taken through the Human and Community Resources Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Executive Committee. **The Blue Ribbon Committee approved the recommendation that the Human & Community Resources Committee approve the November 7, 2008 Blue Ribbon Committee Minutes.**

### **III. MEMBERSHIP**

Staff provided a verbal update regarding the new additions to the Committee that have been approved through CVAG's Committee process: Fred Jandt, Reuel Young, and Barry Nestande. Staff explained that the Executive Committee did approve the Human & Community Resources Committee's recommendation that all member jurisdictions be given an opportunity to appoint a representative to the Blue Ribbon Committee. Letters were sent to all cities that had not yet appointed a representative and three new members have now been appointed: Leticia De Lara from Supervisor Wilson's office, Jesus Gomez from the City of Indio, and Susan Weisbart from the City of Indian Wells. An additional six individuals could still be appointed from the remaining jurisdictions.

### **IV. UPDATE FROM DECEMBER 5, 2008 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Staff reminded the Committee that the Advisory Committee was the original body that brought this issue forward and now acts as the technical advisory committee to this body, meeting independently every other month to bring back recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Committee. The Committee met on December 5<sup>th</sup> and reviewed the bylaws and discussed plans for the Summit.

Chairman Oliphant attended the Advisory Committee and stressed the key role that the Committee plays in the progress of the Blue Ribbon Committee.

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## V. DRAFT OF BYLAWS FOR THE COACHELLA VALLEY REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST

The “specific purpose” of the corporation was discussed in great detail. Attorney Lena Wade stressed that the language in the Bylaws can stay fairly broad. Ideas of language to be included regarding the purpose included that the Trust should:

- Act as a facilitator of programs;
- Act as a clearinghouse;
- Find additional funding sources;
- Serve all working families;
- Not include specific programs;
- Not supplant already existing programs;
- Focus upon the Coachella Valley region;
- Address “Workforce Housing” as opposed to Affordable Housing.

Emilio Ramirez from the Economic Development Agency suggested the following: “Promoting housing accessible to the diverse population of the Coachella Valley.” All recommendations from this discussion will be considered by Attorney Lena Wade and a recommended purpose statement will be created and circulated to the Committee.

There was discussion regarding the need for term limits for the Government Appointed Directors. It was discussed that there could be difficulties created if a jurisdiction has term limits and is, therefore, required to appoint a new representative every four years. Ms. Wade suggested that two classes of directors could be created: At Large Directors who have term limits and Government Appointed Directors who do not. The Committee agreed with this suggested change.

The Committee agreed to the recommendation that the initial Board of Directors would be no more than 25, which allows that all 12 member jurisdictions could be represented and that the remaining 13 Directors would be “At-Large.” This is in line with the requirement that government appointees constitute less than 50% of the Board for this public-private partnership.

Ms. Wade expressed concern that the original Bylaws allow removal of a Board of Directors’ member “without cause.” She recommended to the Blue Ribbon Committee that a member only be removed “with cause.” The Committee concurred with this recommendation.

The Committee discussed and concurred that the Annual Meeting should be held in November of each year in order for preparation of the Trust’s budget for January 1.

Staff recommended that Directors should not be allowed to miss more than 50% of meetings in a fiscal year and the Committee concurred.

The Committee also agreed that non-voting members can sit on the Board Committees but would not have a vote. Concern was expressed regarding giving too much power to the committees. The Trust will be subject to the

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Brown Act and therefore, so would the committees. The importance of the Board being given full authority, with the authority not being dispersed out to committees was discussed. The committee arrived at the consensus that it would be up to the Board to determine how much power each committee could be given, who will sit on the committees, and how often they will meet. This wording is already included in the Bylaws.

The Committee agreed that the Secretary and Treasurer positions could be combined into one position if the Board so chooses.

**Ms. Wade will edit the documents based upon this meeting and will send to staff for distribution to the Committees. The Blue Ribbon Committee will be polled by email and if the Committee concurs with the changes that are made, the document will be taken through CVAG's Committee process in February. If there are remaining concerns, a special meeting will be called of the Blue Ribbon Committee in February to discuss additional changes.**

## VI. NEXT STEPS - DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMS/MISSION

The Advisory Committee established goals more than a year ago that they wanted to see the Housing Trust meet. CVAG Staff reviewed these goals:

- Increase the development of Workforce Housing;
- Assist first time homebuyers;
- Help those in danger of foreclosure stay in their homes;
- Advocate for increased workforce housing opportunities; and,
- Match unsold/foreclosed inventory with prospective buyers.

Staff further explained that other areas discussed were rental development, home owner/buyer programs including mortgage assistance, down payment assistance, moderate income homebuyers programs, and advocacy/education programs. Advocacy/Education can be for jurisdictions and/or for potential buyers/renters.

It was also recommended that "green" building standards encouragement be included as a program for the Trust. However, it was stressed that it is not the responsibility of the Trust to mandate any changes to jurisdictions' current standards.

Fred Bell, BIA, explained that the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) was created by the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. Jurisdictions have been meeting to discuss how the funds could be pooled to have a larger impact on the Coachella Valley. There has been discussion that the NSP funds could be pooled throughout the Coachella Valley and coordinated by the Housing Trust. There is administrative funding included in the allocations that could be used to drive some of the Trust's activities. Some cities are required to partner with other cities because they are receiving a funding amount that is below the minimum amount (\$250,000) required for the funds to be spent.

Dan Horn expressed concern that this additional "layer" could make it more difficult for developers to acquire funding. The importance of the Trust being

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able to provide funding when cities/County cannot was stressed by both Emilio Ramirez, EDA and Janet Moore, City of Palm Desert. It was stressed that other outside funding must be found.

Emilio Ramirez further explained that the NSP could become a more permanent fund. An additional allocation is expected. The County of Riverside has a Request For Proposal out for a consultant to study the feasibility of initial capitalization of some source of funds for a housing trust fund. This previously originated from the Department of Public Social Services, but EDA has been able to tag this effort onto the duties of this consultant.

There are a lot of questions that need to be answered; staff and Advisory Committee members will continue to research and discuss the possibility of collaboration. The Committee agreed to allow Fred Bell to relay to the representatives from the jurisdictions that have been meeting over the past few months to discuss the NSP that the Blue Ribbon Committee would be interested in recommending that the Trust be established as the coordinating agency.

## **VII. WORKFORCE HOUSING SUMMIT: Amanda Keil**

Last year's Housing Summit was held from 9 am to 3 pm and had a much broader focus than is being recommended for this year. Staff reviewed discussion by the Advisory Committee that the event be shortened for this year and focus on introducing the established Trust. A subcommittee of both Advisory Committee members and Blue Ribbon Committee members was created and will meet in the coming weeks. Subcommittee members include:

- Mike Shepherd;
- Reuel Young;
- Emilio Ramirez;
- Dick Oliphant;
- Fred Bell;
- Todd Hooks; and,
- Valerie Van Winkle.

Several dates were discussed for the month of June, but a consensus was not reached. The Subcommittee will meet and bring a recommendation back to the Blue Ribbon Committee.

## **VIII. NEXT MEETING: MARCH 6, 2009 AT 2 PM**

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**