

**Leon County**  
**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee**  
**March 3, 2021**  
**Meeting Minutes**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Trina Rose Searcy  
Vice Chair Marthea Pitts  
Commissioner Nick Maddox  
Lawrence Tobe  
Herschel Holloway

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Deborah Lloyd  
Ian Waldick  
Madelon J. Horwich  
Shawn Menchion

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Oral Payne

**STAFF PRESENT:** Shington Lamy, Director of the Office of Human Services &  
Community Partnerships  
Matthew Wyman, Housing Services Manager  
Geraldine Green, Housing Services Specialist

**Item # I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present, Chair Searcy called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

**Item # II. Roll Call**

Mrs. Green proceeded with roll call.

**Item #III. Approval of March 3, 2021 Agenda**

Chair Searcy requested a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

Commissioner Maddox moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Chair Pitts. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item #IV. Approval of January 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Tab 1)**

Chair Searcy requested a motion to approve the January 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Maddox moved to approve the January 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes, seconded by Vice-Chair Pitts. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item # V. Approval of February 16, 2021 Joint Meeting Minutes (Tab 2)**

Chair Searcy requested a motion to approve the February 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes.

Co-Chair Pitts stated there was a correction needed to be made regarding members present. She stated Mr. Lawrence Tobe was present and was marked as absent. Mr. Herschel Holloway stated he was also present on the telephone call.

Vice-Chair Pitts made a motion to accept the minutes with the necessary changes regarding attendance, seconded by Commissioner Maddox. The motion passed unanimously.

**Item # VI. Public Comments**

Mr. Oral Payne who was present as a member of the public, stated he had no comments.

**Item #VII. OLD BUSINESS**

**Presentation of a Revised Meeting Schedule**

Chair Searcy turned the floor over to Mr. Wyman for the introduction of the agenda item on a revised meeting schedule. Mr. Wyman stated that actions taken by the City's AHAC at the February 16 Joint County City AHAC meeting impacted the schedule that was approved by the County AHAC at the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and that because the County's AHAC did not have a quorum present at the February joint meeting the following actions must now be ratified:

- Hold joint meetings at least quarterly;
- Receive presentations from agencies such as the Tallahassee Housing Authority, Big Bend Continuum of Care and Career Source;
- Review and establish metrics to measure performance of the County and City affordable housing programs; and
- Invite a representative from the Leon County School Board to participate in the quarterly joint meetings.

In the future, all votes during joint meetings will be taken separately from each respective AHAC.

Commissioner Maddox made a motion for options #1 (Ratify the actions taken at the February 16, 2021 Joint County – City Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Meeting including to hold joint meetings quarterly) and #2 (Approve the proposed meeting schedule to accommodate the additional meetings), which was seconded by Mr. Herschel Holloway. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Item # V11I. New Business**

### **Housing Services Program Presentation**

Mr. Wyman gave an overview of the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) which is the County's policy document that governs expenditure of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funds. SHIP is the primary source of funding for the County's housing services program, which is funded by the documentary stamp tax collected at the time real estate is conveyed. The proceeds are deposited into the state housing trust fund and governed by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC). The overview of the LHAP included the following:

#### **Section I: Program Details**

**Waiting List/Priorities.** A Waiting List exists for the Home Rehabilitation/Replacement Program. The waitlist is currently closed preventing staff from adding additional citizens. Presently there are 108 households on the list. Staff has assisted 8 households from the waitlist since 2019. Chair Searcy asked why the program had only served 8 homes. Mr. Wyman stated that limitations in SHIP funding due to legislative sweeps as well as other programs such as the Emergency Repair Program, which fix leaking roofs and replaces septic systems, has been prioritized due to emergent need. The Home Rehabilitation Program typically includes a comprehensive renovation but needed repairs may not necessarily be risking the health of occupants or the structure of the home.

**Purchase Price Limits.** The maximum Purchase Price Limit is currently \$294,601 and is established by the U.S Treasury. Any home that has a value exceeding this amount cannot be assisted. Mr. Holloway asked what the income limit threshold is for the programs. Mr. Wyman stated that each program strategy, which will be discussed later, has a household income category limit. Most of them are at 80% of area median income (AMI) which is known as the Low-Income category. The income limits are all adjusted by household size and calculated by the Department of Housing & Urban Development and adopted by FHFC. The down payment assistance program allows households to have income up to 120% of AMI (Moderate income threshold).

**Efforts to Reduce Homelessness.** The Big Bend Continuum of Care coordinates the entry of homeless individuals and families into the various programs established across the region such as the Big Bend Homeless Coalition or the Kearney Center is available. The County also has a Direct Emergency Assistance Program (DEAP) and Veteran Emergency Assistance Program (VEAP) both of which assist with utilities, mortgage and rent. Additionally, the original COVID-19 legislation which funded the 2020 Leon CARES Individual Assistance Program awarded individuals with rent, mortgage and utilities assistance. The County has been awarded another \$9 million dollars to establish an emergency rental program similar to Leon CARES Individual Assistance. Rent assistance paid as part of the new program must be disbursed directly to landlords. The new program will not include mortgage assistance and should start by the end of March.

#### **Section II: LHAP Strategies**

**Down Payment Assistance Program.** This program is administered by the Tallahassee Lenders Consortium. The purchaser must be a 1st time homebuyer and must attend a homebuyer education class. The maximum amount of assistance is varied based on the situation. All SHIP liens are deferred payment no interest loans. The down payment assistance program is available for homes that rest on land in a community land trust as well as fee simple purchases. Under a community land trust model: the land is owned by the Trust and is separated from the value of the home; the buyer purchases the home and rents the land from the trust allowing for more affordable pricing since the land is not included in the transaction.

**Home Ownership Development.** The program provides a developer up to \$50,000 to reduce the cost to develop a home. The home must be built and sold within a year to an income eligible buyer who assumes the no interest, deferred payment loan.

**Home Rehabilitation.** The Home Rehabilitation Program provides repairs to correct code violations, prepare for future disasters, conduct structural as well as accessibility improvements. The maximum award limit is \$60,000 with a five-year lien period. The client must own the home and live outside the city limits for this program as well as the following four programs. The program can assist mobile homes, but they must be registered as Real Property and manufactured by July 1994 or newer.

**Home Replacement.** The Home Replacement program is an extension of the Home Rehabilitation Program. When the cost of rehabilitation exceeds 50% of the value of the home the County may consider replacing the home. The maximum award is \$150,000 with a 20-year lien period.

**Emergency Housing Repair & Housing Resilience.** Leon County's SHIP funded Emergency Home Repair Program provides \$30,000.00 with a five-year lien period to remediate an immediate health hazard; eliminate a developing threat to the dwelling or infrastructure; and improve the home's resilience to future disaster.

The Housing Finance Authority of Leon County (HFA) is another funding source for the County's Emergency Housing Repair which provides \$50,000.00 annually. Households can receive up to \$1,650.00 each in emergency repairs. This amount can be up to \$7,500.00 if someone residing in the household qualifies as Special Needs or is elderly (62 or older). HFA awards for emergency repairs are in the form of a grant.

In 2020, Florida Housing Finance Corporation provided Leon County with funding from the original COVID-19 stimulus package. Nineteen households impacted financially by COVID-19 were able to receive needed COVID related repairs totaling nearly \$400,000 to ensure air quality such as leaky roofs, mitigation of mold like substances and replacement of HVAC units during the final 3 months of 2020.

**Disaster Recovery.** The Disaster Recovery program is utilized whenever the President of the United States or the Governor of Florida declares a disaster. The program is similar to the Emergency Housing Repair program with the exception of the term length (three years) and households with moderate income are eligible.

**Foreclosure Avoidance.** The Foreclosure Avoidance program is awarded to bring the existing balance of the first mortgage of owner-occupant households current to avoid foreclosure. The amount and the terms are in alignment with the Down Payment Assistance strategy.

**Rental Development & Rehabilitation.** The Rental Development and Rehabilitation program allows the County to provide funding up to \$300,000 to a property owner and/or developer in partnership with other programs that are available to build new or rehabilitate affordable rental units.

**Housing Rental Assistance.** Rental assistance funds can be awarded for: first and last month's rent, security and utility deposit assistance, moving costs and storage fees and past due rent. Maximum award is \$10,000.00. Funds are awarded as a grant.

### **Section III: LHAP Incentive Strategies**

All adopted incentives provided in Section 420.9076, F. S are listed in the Incentive Strategies section of the LHAP and will be covered later as the Committee will hear presentations from subject matter experts on Local Building Code, Land Development Code, the Comprehensive Plan, and others.

Mr. Wyman concluded his overview of the SHIP Local Housing Assistance Plan and offered the committee an opportunity to discuss and ask questions.

### **Questions and Discussion**

Mr. Lawrence Tobe asked what determines a household to qualify as special needs. Mr. Wyman responded that the most common way to qualify is by a household member being in receipt of disability payments from Social Security or the Department of Veterans Affairs but added that he would provide a statutory definition to all members by email.

Commissioner Maddox asked what is the standard administrative budget across the state. Mr. Wyman responded that it is 10% of the SHIP allocation amount.

Commissioner Maddox asked if a report exists that breaks down the expenditures based on location, race, or single parents. Mr. Wyman stated that race is tracked, and addresses can be presented on a map, but that parental status is not currently tracked, but stated staff would look into adding it to the software the Division is using.

Commissioner Maddox asked if we as a committee have the ability to make recommendations to the City and County to focus these SHIP funds in a certain area. Mr. Shington Lamy replied yes. Mr. Herschel Holloway stated this could be impactful and could move the needle to focus these funds to a certain demographic.

Vice-Chair Pitts requested that single parents as a data point begin to be captured, if possible.

Commissioner Maddox asked why the AHACs are meeting jointly. Mr. Lamy stated that approximately 5 years ago the Affordable Housing Workgroup made the recommendation that the County and City AHAC meet jointly to ensure a greater level of collaboration. Additionally, staff meet together constantly, and it is good if the AHACs meet to share ideas to make the programs aligned to be reasonably similar.

Commissioner Maddox asked if it was possible to create a comprehensive joint document to memorialize the County and City committee's actions. Mr. Wyman stated that the 2019 County AHAC recommended the County's Comprehensive Plan be revised and is the best place for the type of plan Commissioner Maddox described.

Mr. Wyman reminded everyone that based on the schedule approved earlier in the meeting that the next scheduled joint meeting will be Monday, May 24, 2021. The next County AHAC meeting will be April 7, 2021.

**Item # V11I. Election for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (TAB 5)**

Chair Searcy opened the floor for nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Maddox asked if Chair Searcy and Vice Chair Pitts had a willingness to continue to serve. They both responded yes.

Commissioner Maddox motioned that Chair Searcy and Vice Chair Pitts be nominated for the same positions. Chair Searcy and Vice Chair Pitts both accepted their nominations. No other nominations were made.

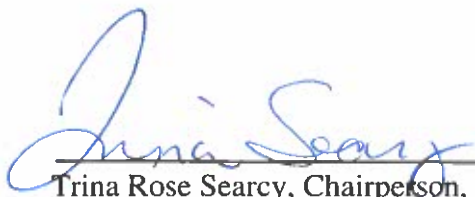
Mr. Wyman concluded that since only one person was nominated for each position and nominations are closed Chair Searcy and Vice Chair Pitts were elected without the necessity of a vote. Their first full terms will begin on April 1, 2021.

**Item # XI. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

ATTEST:

Minutes approved on April 7, 2021



Trina Rose Searcy, Chairperson, Affordable Housing Advisory Committee