

**BOARD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MEETING
10:00 A.M., January 23, 2017
Richmond, Virginia**

Members Present

Mr. John Ainslie
Mr. John Patrick Carr
Mr. James “Robby” Dawson
Ms. Susan Dewey
Mr. Sean Farrell
Ms. Helen Hardiman
Mr. Rich Napier
Mr. Shekar Narasimhan
Mr. Earl Reynolds
Mr. Jeff Sadler
Mr. Steve Semones
Mr. Tommy Shields

Members Absent

Mr. Roger McLellon
Ms. Patricia Shields

Call to Order

Mr. John Ainslie, Chairman of the Board of Housing and Community Development, called the meeting of the Board to order.

Roll Call

The roll was called by Ms. Elizabeth Rafferty of the Department of Housing and Community Development’s (DHCD) Policy Office. Ms. Rafferty reported that a quorum was present.

Public Comment

No comments were made by the public; the public comment period was then closed.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rich Napier made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2016 meeting of the Board. The motion was seconded. Mr. Shekar Narasimhan questioned when there is a dissenting vote, is it recorded in the minutes. Ms. Rafferty explained that when a voice vote occurs the minutes reflect whether the motion fails or passes. Any board member can request their vote be recorded. The motion to approve the minutes unanimously passed.

Code Change Process
Updates

Ms. Cindy Davis, Deputy Director of Building and Fire Codes at DHCD, provided a brief update referencing the handout in the board member packets that included the dates for the remainder

of the code change process.

Ms. Helen Hardiman asked that the board and staff discuss options of ways board members can attend the workgroups and hear the discussion from the professionals without violating the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirement to provide notice of a public meeting of the Board. Ms. Rafferty mentioned that staff has discussed options with the Attorney General's Office about either making the workgroups public meetings or the option of an electronic meeting. Ms. Susan Dewey advised that she preferred the electronic meeting option so that discussions are directed toward staff and not Board members. Mr. J.P. Carr asked if the meeting could be recorded to be reviewed at a later time. Mr. James Dawson said he would prefer giving each member the opportunity to attend by making it a public meeting and allow Board members to interact with the code officials.

Discussion continued on the clarification of a public meeting with Board members being actively engaged. Mr. Dawson asked that staff contact the FOIA Council for further explanation or options for Board members to participate in the workgroup discussions. Mr. Ainslie added that over the years he has attended the workgroups and found them very beneficial for understanding the code change process.

Board Member
COIA/FOIA Training

Mr. Bill Shelton, Director of DHCD, stated staff would not be conducting a training today but wanted to briefly go over the requirements and provide any assistance to the Board members. Ms. Rafferty went over the PowerPoint but stated this was an external requirement conducted through the Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) Council and if there were any questions she could seek guidance from the Council. Mr. Shelton also added that staff could assist members in seeking guidance from the Attorney General's office regarding specific scenarios. The statement of economic interest is due annually on January 15th and the FOIA training is required on a biennial basis.

Consolidated Planning
Process Update

Mr. Shelton informed the Board that staff is currently working on the Consolidated Action Plan and that the Board will vote on the plan in May. Mr. Shelton then introduced Ms. Lyndsi Austin, Associate Director of Housing Policy at DHCD, to give an update on the process.

Ms. Austin advised that they are currently in the fourth year of a five year plan. The Consolidated Plan is a requirement for grantees of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The plan is comprised of a needs assessment, a strategic plan, and annual goals and focuses on housing, homelessness, and community development. DHCD receives over \$30 million in funding from HUD to oversee numerous programs such as: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), HOME Investment Partnerships, Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS/HIV (HOPWA), and the National Housing Trust Fund. As part of the planning process it includes public input and feedback from citizens, service providers, housing developers, other state agencies, localities, and Continua of Care. Citizen input will take place in February followed by a public hearing in March. The Board will review the Action Plan and input session feedback at the March meeting and will vote to approve the Action Plan at the May meeting.

Mr. Narasimhan noted that the citizen input dates did not cover the entire state and asked what areas are not covered. Ms. Austin explained that not all the funding is statewide and the input meeting that is held in northern Virginia gets a lot of participation from homeless service organizations from the area.

Ms. Hardiman questioned where the state is with their analysis of fair housing. Ms. Austin said currently the tool to complete the study is not available and DHCD is waiting on further guidance from HUD, however, DHCD is aware of their fair housing obligations.

HPAC Update

Mr. Shelton directed the members that information from the Housing Policy Advisory Council (HPAC) study was included in the packet. The Council agrees that they need to work on

capitalizing and distributing the information to a broader audience. The 2015 data reflects housing as the sixth largest industry sector in Virginia with the 2016 data being released soon. The Council met in December with Todd Haymore as the new Secretary of Commerce and Trade and they will hold another meeting in the spring. The draft of the study should be completed by June or July and the Council will share the recommendations with the incoming administration. Ms. Dewey added that previous studies have been conducted by the industry itself but by having the consortium of universities conduct the study it will provide more credibility.

Legislative/Budget Update

Mr. Shelton stated that the General Assembly session began on January 11th and that this year is a short 45 day session. This is the mid-term of a biennial budget on a down cycle. The agency has seen two budget reductions from fiscal year (FY) 17 and amendments have been introduced for FY 18. Both the Enterprise Zone (EZ) program and the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Fund (GO Virginia) have seen budget reductions. There are currently proposals in both houses to restore funding for the EZ program. There have not been any amendments to restore the funding for GO Virginia but many legislators sit on the board and may speak to those measures when the bill is brought to the floor. The budget also includes language amendments that would charge DHCD with registering and inspecting all short-term residential lodging (AirBNB) that would be absorbed as part of the agency's budget. This would allow the agency to collect a registration fee but would be difficult to implement since inspections and enforcement are carried out at the local level. Mr. Shelton added that they have not spoken to Senator Norment, the patron of the budget amendment, on the intention of the amendment.

Ms. Rafferty also stated the agency had been assigned approximately 110 bills to submit Legislative Action Summaries (LAS) to the Secretary's and Governor's Office. Ms. Rafferty went over several bills of interest such as: the Broadband Deployment Act, consumer fireworks, and a bill that would move the Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) from the Board of Housing to the Virginia Fire Services Board.

BHCD Operational
Review

Ms. Rafferty gave an overview on Robert's Rules of Order and provided a flowchart as a handout. Mr. Shelton then discussed committee structure and advised that the Housing and Community Development Committees could consider merging; the committee could include a vice chair to provide experience for future chairs. Mr. Narasimhan moved to merge both committees and have a chair/vice-chair structure with Steve Semones being the chair. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Mr. Shelton then asked the Board to consider any other committees that may be of interest to the Board.

VHDA Report

Ms. Dewey reported to the Board that their multifamily projects are starting to receive Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Ms. Dewey added that with the interest rate having increased, transition at the federal level, and tax reform, some applicants are in danger of not moving forward with their projects. Ms. Dewey advised that the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) Board is thinking about what the next steps will be.

VFSB Report

Mr. Farrell reported on behalf of the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) that they have not met since this Board met in December. Mr. Farrell did add that the Virginia Building Code officials have been added to their Codes and Standards Committee and is looking forward to moving ahead in the workgroup sessions.

Report of the Director

Mr. Shelton reported that Virginia has a transitioning coal economy. Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) is an initiative with approximately \$50 million in federal funding in the current year to develop new strategies for economic growth and worker advancement for communities that have historically relied on the coal economy for economic stability. DHCD helped Virginia communities receive \$14.5 million in POWER funding in recent years. Mr. Shelton also commented on staff turnover, with the retirement of a Deputy Director of Administration and the Director of the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission.

Unfinished Business	There was no unfinished business to be discussed.
New Business	There was no new business to be discussed.
Board Matters	There were no board matters to be discussed.
Future Meetings	Mr. Ainslie went over the dates of the upcoming meetings, noting the next meeting of the Board would be March 20 th .
Adjournment	Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.