



**2019-2021 Commissioners Advocacy
Subcommittee Teleconference
Thursday 07-16- 2020
1:00- 1:30 PM Eastern Time**

Presiding: Renee Smith - Chair

Roll Call/Introductions/Welcome – Chair Smith

Advocacy

- Awesome job on most recent letter writing campaign! The goal was 2000 and we exceeded the goal – approximately 2400.
- Commissioners are urged to encourage your board colleagues and others to submit letters, contact their local State Representatives to solicit their support and visit the Advocacy Action Center to stay abreast of important advocacy updates.

Phil Bernal noted your voice and experiences with your agency, residents and community carry a greater weight on the Hill than the asks of the NAHRO staff. An example of this occurred at the Washington Virtual Conference where Chair Smith and Gary Valentine spoke and were encouraged to do so by Hill Representatives to learn from those at the ground roots level the importance of funding the programs that serve our residents. Further, Gary advised that he encouraged state participation (Michigan NAHRO) in the letter writing campaign. Dina Getty advised she experienced positive results from her ED, Alan Zais who is proactive and responsive in disseminating information. Chair Smith also expressed that she forwarded the notice to board members and encouraged them to send it to their respective networks and community stakeholders.

It was expressed, in one instance, that an executive director did not encourage his staff to participate in the letter writing campaign.

- Willie Haynes mentioned distributing information during the new time attendee's session at the NAHRO Conferences concerning the work the committee is doing and to provide the Commissioners mentors list. Additionally, we host a Commissioners Mentors booth at the National Conference where we have more time devoted to speaking with members who are interested in the information the commissioners provide. He encourages this to be done at the local level also.
- Please visit the commissioners resource page for information provided by your colleagues.
- NCRC will convene a virtual conference August 25-26. Chair Smith encourages anyone else from the region or commissioners from any region to contact her or Gary Valentine if they are interested in participating as they will have a session on the Commissioner's Handbook.
- The NAHRO website is password protected as certain information and tools are only for members. This feature protects our documents from being altered. Non-members may learn about the committee's vision, mission, values, composition and view the list of who

is on the committee. Should they desire to learn more, they can contact Staff Liaison, La Tonya Rajah.

- To renew your commissioner's certification, make sure to complete the form <https://www.nahro.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/NCC-Application.pdf> Mention this in your regional reports as well.

Commissioners Track Group – Co-Chair, Dina Getty

- Unknown if National Conference will take place due to COVID-19. We have several topics that can serve as the basis for a session (virtual or live) *see attached list from 2/11/2020 committee summary*. We will revisit when we have been updated on the National Conference status.

Motion to Adjourn by Gary Valentine, second by Willie Haynes. Motion Carried.

Next Call: August 20, 2020, 1:00 pm

Attendance: E. Renee Smith, Phil Bernal, Carleen Cumberbatch, Robert Finch, Willie Haynes, Dina Getty, Sheryl English, LaRence Snowden and Gary Valentine.

SUGGESTED TOPICS

Advocacy Subcommittee focus items

- CAHA legislative priorities
- End use of federal shutdowns as leverage
- Protect and strengthen Community Reinvestment Act
- Expand availability of Moving to Work
- Improve analysis of and support for Rental Assistance Demonstration program
- Additional flexible funding for housing assistance (section 8 HCV and CoC rental assistance)
- Increase CDBG, HOME, and other funding directed to providing new homes for the homeless
- Coordination/collaboration of funding for case management and mental health services
- Continued funding and operation of USICH

Commissioner workshops/session suggestions

- Resident board: how residents adapt to a new community Commissioner handbook review
- Save yourself: D Daniel presentation re active shooter response
- commissioners' duties, responsibilities, and role as advocates
- Roundtable vantage point: agency process from applicant to resident Understanding the development process
- Roundtable - commissioners re: their experience (make sure there is diversity: resident, years of service, areas across country)
- Understanding financials (preview of/plugin for commissioners' seminar?)
- Audit DV prevention: our role as commissioners
- Census 2020
- Advocacy: jobs (training, better pay), higher ed
- Translating housing language: units=homes, homeless=people/neighbors experiencing homelessness/people struggling to find shelter
- Partnering with ED (educational resources/strategies for residents): partnerships can benefit adult learners (English learners, GED, those who didn't complete a college certificate or degree), teens (transitioning from high school to college), and younger learners (to build a culture of college-going in the family) .

Commissioner engagement (year-round and at conferences)

- Communication tool for commissioners (*item for commissioners' resource page*)
- Regular booth with giveaways in exhibitor hall
- Presentations template/outreach to local service clubs like Rotary
- Identify our community partners. Are they part of national franchises, so we can build on those local relationships to make them national partnerships?
- Share our local policies and monitoring protocols
- How are we advocating for our families? YouthBuild partnership, financial literacy/budgeting, adult literacy, high school diplomas for adults, continuing/post-secondary education, rent-to-own options, scholarships

Engagement with other Standing and Advisory Committees

- Agenda/outline/plan for regular check-ins with legislators (state, city, county, etc.)
- Adequate funding to preserve housing portfolios, build new housing, and create stronger communities
- Support creation of local solutions to meet local needs
- New/improved tools in the housing and community development toolkit
- How can commissioners' effect lasting change through policies, knowing that legislators may change frequently? Need for funding for supportive services aligned with funding for new housing developments What funds are available to benefit residents? Veterans funding, Sec. 3, etc.