



**2019-2021 Commissioners Communication  
Subcommittee Teleconference Summary  
Thursday 8/24/20  
1:00- 1:30 PM EASTERN TIME**

**Presiding: Nikki Vazquez – Chair**

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**Roll Call/Introductions/Welcome – Chair Vazquez**

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**Remarks: Sylvia Gimenez, Director, Communications**

JOHCD Articles: Sylvia advised the group that the next JOHCD deadline is September 8 for the September/October issue and the last issue for the year will be November/ December and that deadline is November 2. She also is able to serve as ghost writer for any article ideas.

Thomas Jefferson wishes to write an article for the November/December JOHCD issue on a guide for landlords and public housing authorities on controlling property losses. We look forward to receiving his draft for subcommittee review prior to our next meeting September 28 which will allow the group to respond/comment then we will pass over to Sylvia and then the subcommittee can provide final review and approval.

A link will be forwarded to everyone so you may view the article schedule, enter your article ideas, and note if you would like to either author or serve as a contributor. Suggested topics are also attached. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, handbook sales were curtailed, we are now able to offer the handbooks again for sale.

**Creation of a communications plan**

A plan was created during the 2017-2019 term. We will secure that plan for review and appropriate action by this subcommittee.

**Commissioner of the Year group**

The deadline extended to September 30. Notice has been placed in the Monitor and will run until the September 15 issue. La Tonya Rajah, Staff Liaison, briefly reviewed the judging procedure for the Commissioner of the Year group who will review, judge and select the 2020 award recipient. To ensure a viable bank of award candidates yearly, the group will select, based on their score, at least two to three runner-up candidates for consideration for the awards for the following year.

Currently, there is one nominee from SERC region. The subcommittee was encouraged to go to their respective agencies and look to their boards to nominate noteworthy commissioners for the national award. When the call for regional Commissioner award goes out and a recipient is selected, perhaps a runner up from the regional pool can be nominated for national consideration. If all eight regions participate in this manner, that is 16 entries and is a manageable number for judging.

Due to the lack of nominees received, currently there is no limit on the number of nominees that can be submitted for consideration. The subcommittee should discuss an alternate plan in the event an inordinate amount of entries are received. The regional award winners along with anyone else who meet the eligibility criteria may be nominated.

As noted in the award description qualifications, each nominee must be an individual or associate member of National NAHRO, have contributed in the areas of community leadership, advocacy, and public relations as well as to the activities of NAHRO and cannot be employed by the Housing Authority and serve as Commissioner simultaneously.

**Having no further business, Chair Vazquez called for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn moved by Mari Hayden, seconded by Thomas Jefferson. Motion Carried.**

**Next meeting: Monday, September 28, 1:00 – 1:30 p.m.**

**Attendance: Nikki Vazquez, Sam Bergami, Dorothy Carty Daniel, Mari Hayden, Johnny Johnson, Adrian Jones, George Perez, Sherry Scudder and Susan Ulrich**

COMMUNICATIONS MEMBERS	
Chair: Nikki Vazquez	
1. Stefanie Benvenuto	4. Neil Flynn
2. Sam Bergami	5. Adrian Jones
3. Sandra Boutell	6. George Perez
Commissioner of the Year Group members	
Co-Chairs: Johnny Johnson / Henrietta Snipes	
7. Dorothy Carty Daniel	10. Sherry Scudder
8. Alisha Gant	11. Susan Ulrich
9. Mari Hayden	

1. Draft and/or provide article topics for the Commissioner's Corner of the *Journal of Housing and Community Development* magazine.

2. Assist in updating Commissioners Resource page;

3. Identify and recommend ways to communicate more effectively who NAHRO is and what NAHRO represents to our peers throughout the country.

4. Communicate NAHRO membership information and showcase Commissioners' Handbook at the Mentors Booth & First Time Attendees;
5. Implement communications plan.
6. Commissioners of the Year Group will encourage regions to submit regional commissioner award nominees for national commissioner award consideration, formulate strategy to ensure there are nominees every year, and review and select yearly award recipient. Mentor, LaTonya Rajah, Committee Liaison

### **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: Dorothy 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/plug 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.