



## COMMISSIONERS COMMITTEE MINUTES September 4, 2020 2:00 – 3:00 P.M., Eastern time

COMMITTEE CHAIR, KARINA MASON RORRIS - PRESIDING

Chair Karina Mason Rorris called meeting to order and welcomed our newest member, Fred Bañuelos from MARC. Roll call was completed without a quorum.

### **Advocacy Update – Karina Mason Rorris**

Legislative Network set an ambitious goal of 8,501 letters for NAHRO's August Advocacy Campaign to Capitol Hill during August recess, every Monday throughout the month. The focus was as follows:

- August 3: COVID-19
- August 10: Vouchers for all eligible
- August 17: Increase housing supply
- August 24: Increase access to resident services
- August 31: FY 2021 Transportation-HUD Funding

Tess is pulling data together currently, however, the committee was asked to send one more round of letters, approximately 300, before the end of the week. The committee was encouraged to contact their colleagues, friends, and family to send letters. Tess was unable to make the call but extended her appreciation and thanks to you for your hard work.

[Advocacy Action Center](#) – you do not have to be a member to access the Action Center.

### **Professional Development Update – [Jackie Rhodes – Director, Professional Development](#)**

Ms. Rhodes visited the committee with an update on the newly revised online Commissioner Fundamentals course. Phil Bernal audited the course and was pleased with flow, content and interaction and felt it was comparable to an in-person offering. He suggested those who have not yet taken the course to do so. Due to COVID-19 and social distancing, the virtual offering offers safety and convenience. Jackie thanked Phil for his assessment and wanted to note the course and the commissioners' handbook were cross marketed for maximum promotion.

The next ethics course for commissioners will occur September 23 and 24. Seven of the eight regions are working with NAHRO so if you register with a regional code you will get a \$10 dollar discount and generate revenue for your region. Check with your regional service officer or regional president to get the code. In addition, Ms. Rhodes is also offering free registration to audit the Ethics course or the four-day Guide to Monitoring and Oversight course December 1, 2, 8 and 9 to ensure they meet commissioner's needs.

Anyone interested in auditing a course, please contact LaTonya or Chair Rorris.

### **Certification/Accreditation Update - [Blake Pavlik, Director, Certification](#)**

Mr. Pavlik announced that you can become NAHRO certified remotely but taking the Ethics and Fundamentals courses online. There is also a pre- and post-assessment in those trainings that can be completed online.

He also stressed the importance of not only taking the required courses for the National Commissioner Certification (NCC) but submitting the revised [certification application](#) and asked the committee to encourage their colleagues and peers as well. You may view on the NAHRO website, the [list of NCC certified individuals](#). This year, we have over 40 individuals who now have the NCC certification. To recertify, every three years, complete the equivalent of 5 hours CEU credits with any NAHRO online offerings or any other industry or certification-related training you have taken, then complete the [NCC Recertification form](#). You may complete the requirement at any time during that term.

Phil noted if you are currently a certified commissioner and you do not complete the recertification application, you will not appear on the certification list.

### **NCRC Conference Update – Chair Karina Mason Rorris**

Renee Smith, Advocacy Subcommittee Chair, invited Karina to co-chair a roundtable session during the NCRC Conference and did a great job at incorporating the Commissioners Handbook into the session. Chair Mason Rorris encouraged the committee to do the same at the chapter and regional level meetings.

One program discussed working with stakeholders and local internet providers to ensure residents had internet access by reducing the cost or debt forgiveness during the pandemic. In addition, Renee’s agency was able to receive 80 laptops so that families could work from home or to keep on track with school assignments. Karina applauded all the committee members and their respective agencies who conduct these types of programs and initiatives.

### **Subcommittee Update**

[Communication](#) 8/28 meeting minutes

### **Commissioners Committee Book Club – Chair Karina Mason Rorris**

Karina wanted to get feedback on beginning a book club. Carl Richie provided a list of 21 books that are featured on the commissioners’ resource page. He recommended to Karina *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race*- Jasmyn Ward. She would like either to begin with this book or take recommendations on the first club read. The thought is to begin reading and discuss at a Zoom or teleconference meeting. Day/time, to be determined. The idea is to foster healthy conversation that can be converted into positive actions that can transfer to our agencies and communities. Interested committee members should contact Chair Mason Rorris or La Tonya Rajah. Carl Richie advised he would be interested in participating.

### **Housekeeping - La Tonya Rajah, Committee Liaison**

**Commissioner of the Award Update** - There are now two nominees vying for the Commissioner of the Year Award. Deadline is September 30. Committee members are encouraged to nominate noteworthy candidates for this award.

**Diversity Resources** - Information offered as a member benefit and is posted on the [Commissioner Resource page](#) and on the NAHRO home page carousel.

### **Committee Thoughts**

Congratulations to Dorothy Carty Daniel for being reappointed for another five-year term to the Perth Amboy, NJ Housing Authority.

**Question:** Any members had board meeting discussions on a plan to handle evictions when the moratorium ends for tax credit properties? Phil asked and advise one of the agencies he works with has created repayment plan for back rent over three-year period. The family may pay an additional \$25 per month for the next three years that will cover the amount they owe for the last three months due to a loss of employment (tax credit properties).

Fred Banuelos advised his agency found this is more prevalent in family sites as opposed to senior sites. For the past several months, since there was a moratorium, the managers were encouraged to open a dialogue with the residents to determine the issue. Some problems were due to not reporting change of income (job loss due to COVID-19). They tried to rectify that with recertifications to get them back on track. Other residents had problems where the income was accurate, but they incurred high medical expenses. For this the agency worked with their social services coordinator to connect with the appropriate office for assistance. As a last resort, they enacted repayment agreements mindful not to burden them on top of the 30% rent that is due.

Phil asked the members to check with your boards and executive director to formulate a plan before the moratorium ends. Chair Mason Rorris thanked Phil and Fred for the dialog exchange and feels this is a necessary discussion to have beforehand.

### **Closing Thoughts – Chair Karina Mason Rorris**

During the October meeting, we will have a speaker to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion, then possible information on adult literacy from Adrian “AJ” Jones. The remainder of the meeting time will be reserved to connect and socialize. Her thought is to have this every other month. Finally, any agenda topics for November 6, please forward to La Tonya.

Having no further business, Chair Mason Rorris asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Action: Motion to adjourn moved by Dorothy Carty Daniel, second by Sam Bergami.  
Motion carried.**

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### **Next scheduled meeting –October 2**

**Attendance:** Karina Mason Rorris, Fred Bañuelos, Sam Bergami, Phil Bernal, Sandra Boutell, Dorothy Carty Daniel, Barb Cleland, Robert Finch, Dina Getty, Willie Hayne, Dirk Hoek, Johnny Johnson, Richard Laferte, George Perez, Jr., Sharon Scudder, Susan Ulrich, Nicole Vazquez, and Carl Richie.

**Absent:** Thomas Jefferson, Stefanie Benvenuto, Lucille Boss, Richard Conforti, Carleen Cumberbatch, Sheryl English, Neil Flynn, Alisha Gant, Mari Hayden, Grant Henry, Brenda Honeycutt, Adrian Jones, Michael Lacey, Kenyon Lowe, E. Renee Smith, Henrietta Snipes, LaRence Snowden, Gary Valentine and Vincent White.



# 2019-2021 COMMISSIONERS COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEES WITH TASK DESCRIPTIONS AND MEETING SCHEDULE

As of September 14, 2020

<b>ADVOCACY</b> Every other month – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday Beginning November 19 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time	
Chair: E Renee Smith	
1. Richard Conforti	5. Dirk Hoek
2. Carleen Cumberbatch	6. Michael Lacey
3. Robert Finch	7. Vincent White
4. Willie Haynes	8. Phil Bernal
5. Grant Henry	
<b>Commissioners Track Group</b> Co Chairs: Lucille Boss, Dina Getty	
9. Barb Cleland	13. Brenda Honeycutt
10. Sheryl English	14. LaRence Snowden
11. Richard Laferte	15. Gary Valentine
12. Kenyon Lowe	16. Ex Officio – Carl Richie

- Advocacy members will advise new and veteran commissioners how to access/navigate the Advocacy Action Center online and via the app - NAHRO Advocacy, conference app – YAPP

- Send advocacy letters to our legislators through the Advocacy Action Center at designated times

- Partner with Legislative Network on other ways to enhance advocacy efforts

**Commissioners Track Group** will ensure timely, relevant topics are ready for session proposals (moderate or serve as a panelist) that benefit all levels of commissioner experience with a focus on advocacy, communication, and professional development.

<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b> Every other month – 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday Beginning November 23 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time	
Chair: Nikki Vazquez	
1. Stefanie Benvenuto	4. Neil Flynn
2. Sam Bergami	5. Adrian Jones
3. Sandra Boutell	6. George Perez
<b>Commissioner of the Year Group</b> Co-Chairs: Johnny Johnson / Henrietta Snipes	
7. Dorothy Carty Daniel	10. Sherry Scudder
8. Alisha Gant	11. Susan Ulrich
9. Mari Hayden	

- Communications members will draft and/or provide article topics for the Commissioner’s Corner of the *Journal of Housing and Community Development* magazine

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

- Create/Implement communications plan.

- Work on an adult literacy strategy and begin campaign.

**Commissioners of the Year Group** will encourage regions to submit regional commissioner award nominees for the national commissioner award consideration. Formulate strategy to ensure there are nominees every year. Review and select yearly award recipient.