



National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials

630 Eye Street NW, Washington DC 20001-3736

(202) 289-3500 Toll Free: (877) 866-2476 Fax: (202) 289-8181

MINUTES BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING November 9, 2020

President Sunny Shaw called the Zoom meeting to order at 1:00pm. Board liaison Sylvia Bowen called the roll. A quorum was established.

President Shaw welcomed Board members and asked CEO Todman to introduce members of the NAHRO team. Regional Service Officers and guests were acknowledged and invited to address the Board.

President Shaw called for approval of the minutes of the October 20, 2019 and February 24, 2020 meetings.

Action: Motion by George Guy; seconded by Diane Cohen to approve the October 20, 2019 and February 24, 2020 minutes as submitted. Motion carried.

President's Report

Club 21, an hoc group that was formed more than a decade ago to read/discuss books and screen documentaries annually at the national conference, has been embedded into the portfolio of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEI) as a subcommittee. Tiffany Magnum, Fresno Housing Authority, and Betsey Martens, a NAHRO past president and one of the co-founders of Club 21, will lead the group.

President Shaw reported small agencies are under-represented within the NAHRO leadership, although 60% of the association's agency members are smaller agencies, and that we need to work on this imbalance. To ensure that voices and perspectives of staffs of smaller agencies are heard, we encourage regional presidents, who are empowered to appoint members to serve on national and advisory committees, to appoint a representative from a small agency (500 units or less) to serve on each committee. Senior Vice President Wells voiced her support of this.

Senior Vice President's Report

Senior Vice President Wells has participated in conferences and events that were sponsored by regional and state chapters over the last several months. She shared it was empowering and enlightening to learn there is a desire to be as engaged with NAHRO, as NAHRO has a desire to engage with small agencies. She noted that small agencies make use of the information provided by NAHRO in their smaller communities where resources are different.

Senior Vice President Wells expressed appreciation to officers with whom she worked to review nominations for NAHRO's Outstanding Professional of the Year award and to all juries and awards selection committees for their work. We will celebrate a wonderful cohort of industry professionals who are doing amazing work in their individual communities during NAHRO's online conference.

CEO Todman's Report

NAHRO is strong financially and we are doing well. We are performing under budget without relaxing any of our stellar member benefits. We also have an unqualified 2019 audit report and no management letter. The Professional Development team quickly transitioned from in-person sessions to virtual learnings, and we will continue to offer distance learning opportunities next year. The summer conference was a success financially, and we are poised to have a successful national conference next week. Ms. Todman urged members who have not yet registered to do so. We have not yet cancelled the in-person 2021 Washington Conference, although we expect that it will be a virtual event; we have not yet scheduled our re-imagined summer event; the national conference is scheduled October 7-9 in Phoenix, AZ.

NAHRO's new website, which is less than a year old, continues to evolve; Board members were encouraged to let us know how we can improve it. We are examining several other association management software systems and hope to select a vendor by the end of this year. Members were slow to respond to electronic membership renewals. However, we have seen an increase in responses to renewal notices that were sent via postal mail. We have developed a plan of action to encourage agencies to renew their membership.

Our search for ways to diversify revenue sources have resulted in three engagements that we will embark upon next year:

We will work with the American Institute of Research (AIR) on its HUD contract to prepare landlord marketing material-Housing Choice Voucher landlord information.

We will help the Project Based Contract Administrators Group navigate materials on the Hill and at HUD. The group is comprised of eight agencies that administer project-based rental assistance contracts on behalf of HUD.

The Wells Fargo Foundation has awarded NAHRO a grant to bridge the gap between the rich body of existing research on housing and equity with the affordable housing industry. NAHRO will bring researchers and practitioners together to share their knowledge, create an equitable housing toolkit, train housing agencies, and identify policy and regulatory recommendations.

Lots of changes are about to come with the election results and with a Biden and Harris administration. Change is good for the business of NAHRO because we need to not only influence change also help our members navigate change.

Board members were given the opportunity to ask CEO Todman questions related to her report. In response to a question regarding whether or not NAHRO distance learnings will become part of NAHRO's business model moving forward, Ms. Todman responded because of the success of this year's distance learnings, we will continue to offer. We will also honor requests for in-person offerings. It was pointed out that in a presidential transition year, it is tradition for the Board to meet in early January in Washington, DC for a strategic conversation about priorities of the new administration and to talk with both key industry, congressional and federal agencies' players.

Ms. Todman responded she, President Shaw and Senior Vice President Wells have not yet had a conversation about such a gathering, and of course they will do so.

President Shaw presented the Memorial Resolution, called for a moment of silence in honor and memory of industry colleagues who have deceased since October 2019, and a motion to approve the [Memorial Resolution](#).

Action: Motion to approve the Memorial Resolution by Jackie Newman; seconded by Kathy Walter. Motion carried.

President Shaw referred the Board to the [Resolution of Appreciation to Sponsors and Exhibitors](#) and called for a motion to approve the resolution as presented.

Action: Motion to approve the Resolution of Appreciation to Sponsors and Exhibitors by Clif Martin; seconded by Steve Merritt. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (B&A) Clif Martin-Vice President Budget & Administration Committee

2019 NAHRO Audited Financial Statements and 2019 Governance Letter

Background

The B&A received and approved the Audit Report and Governance Letter in April. The results were very positive, both on the 2019 financial outcome and no adjustments or recommendations for improvement. NAHRO ended the year with a net budgeted surplus of \$801,267 for the year ending Dec. 31, 2019.

Motion by Clif Martin; seconded by C. Sean Gilbert that the Board of Governors accepts the Audited Financial Statements and Governance Letter for the FY2019 year ending December 31, 2019 as recommended by the Budget and Administration Committee.

Discussion

A member inquired about NAHRO's policy relative to accumulation of sick leave because the notes on the consolidated financial statements reflect \$170,436 reserved for sick leave. COO Wellard responded. There is no maximum limit for accrued paid sick leave for employees hired 3/2000 or before. There is a cap on sick leave accumulation for employees hired after 4/2000, which is 90 days. Employees are not compensated for any unused paid sick leave at their termination of employment.

Staff was asked to explain the \$258,060 forfeited cash associated with the retirement plan. CEO Todman advised for several years, there were over- and-under payments related to the retirement plan.

Action: President Shaw asked the Board to act on the motion on the floor. The motion was adopted unanimously.

Proposed 2021 Budget

Background

Each year, the NAHRO staff prepare an annual budget, forecasting revenue, expense and net surplus or loss. On October 28, the B&A Committee reviewed the proposed 2021 budget with staff and recommends its approval by the BOG.

Motion by Clif Martin; seconded by Steve Merritt that the Board of Governors approves the proposed 2021 budget with total revenue of \$6,039,654; total expense of \$6,027,729, and a net surplus of \$11,926 as recommended by the Budget and Administration Committee.

Board members commended staff for presenting a thoughtful, realistic and well-developed budget and also for exemplary work during the pandemic, which has resulted in NAHRO being in a strong financial position; particularly, conferences, member services and professional development teams.

Action: President Shaw asked the Board to act on the motion on the floor. The motion was adopted unanimously.

STRATEGC DISCUSSION: *HOUSING AND RACIAL EQUITY*

Staff provided the Board with a [Housing and Racial Equity discussion](#) framework that was developed by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEI) and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee. The framework identifies key areas of focus where we have existing policy and also areas where we need to develop policy. CEO Todman cited the new areas: (a) zoning, the role that zoning should play inside of NAHRO's policy work; (b) criminal justice reform; (c) property taxes, given the impact of property taxation rules across the country on the quality of local schools; (d) creative approaches to home ownership, given the gaps that exist and whether or not we should provide zero percent interest rate loans to specified populations.

Summary of Individual Comments in Response to the Framework

Zoning

Zoning and land use laws impact the quality of communities and the lives of our residents. Local zoning and land use policies reflect politics and policies of a local jurisdiction, and they have been used as a tool since enacted in 1910 as a way to socially engineer communities and therefore segregate them. Land use and zoning laws determine where we live, where our children go to school and therefore what resources and amenities are available to them. Low-income people are deprived of access to equity—there are health, education, and wealth gaps. These issues drive the work that we do and where we can create new communities; drives the cost of housing and deter. Our members could benefit from learning about zoning and how to engage in zoning and land use laws, practices and processes. As part of educating and elevating our members, zoning and land use should be incorporated into technical assistance offerings, as well as educational exposure.

The re-launch of Club 21 will begin with a discussion and video, segregation by design, and a paper authored by Betsey Martens that delves into the history of the public housing industry and how the neighborhood composition provision became a tool in which to maintain racially segregated communities and create new segregated communities.

The neighborhood composition provision advises that HUD assisted housing preserves the existing neighborhood composition thereby retaining and maintaining segregated communities vs encouraging siting HUD assisted housing in communities of opportunities with better and more integrated schools and more stable and less racially impacted neighborhoods.

Criminal Justice and Returning Citizens

Re-entry impacts housing and the people whom we serve. Housing is not just a place where people are sheltered, but a place where families are raised, seniors age, and also where individuals should have access to support and systems they need in order to lead successful lives. We are not just landlords, we are community developers and as such we have a heavy lift in shaping the lives of people we serve. We could serve them much better if we think holistically in the housing space, look at partners we need to be successful in these elements that clearly shape self-sufficiency, shape productivity, and shape re-entering into our society in a way that contributes versus being dependent.

Regulations state that a housing authority shall have the discretion to establish standards for criminal activity. They do not state what an agency must or should do. Many agencies are not aware of this and have not evaluated nor discussed standards for several years. Directors have the power to make a subtle change that will have a catalytic change over time. We need to exert this power and think about persons of criminal backgrounds who have been screened out because of bad belief systems, lack of education and fear of using power for the good. We should be mindful of what our decisions are doing to huge class of people.

It was suggested that we make the tie between housing and workforce development. There will be (hopefully) much new funding for job, skills, and vocational training. Our member agencies could really impact historically underserved communities if we demand.

A Board member expressed concern that NAHRO was instrumental and engaged in the passage of the Housing Acts of 1937 and 1949. While well-intended, these acts resulted in collateral consequences that disadvantaged people of color. A process of addressing these inequities, rooted in atonement and commencing with an apology for NAHRO's complicity in supporting policies that resulted in these inequities would constitute a powerful demonstration of how this organization should move forward.

Another Board member expressed that we should re-examine several of the core principles of the 1937 Housing Act, which are states' rights and home rule. The Federal government has devolved responsibility to states, and states in turn passed that on as they saw fit to birth public housing authorities in counties and local municipalities. Our messaging should be explicit; people feel differently about federalism and states' rights. NAHRO should become state-centric because our work must be done at the state level. We should not rely on Congress as much as we do. Lots of things institutionalize discrimination and segregation and we need to figure out how to stop it - most quickly by what we can control as public housers.

President Shaw thanked Board members for sharing their thoughts on these issues, which we will draw on as we continue our discussion on these issues.

President Shaw then invited standing committee chairs, BECT chair and advisory committee chairs to present brief remarks on the work of their committees. They presented highlights from their written reports.

Regional Presidents were unable to present oral highlights due to lack of time. President Shaw asked everyone to read their reports. Regional Presidents have struggled to make sure their organizations remain financially strong, and that they too were equally impacted by the cancellation of their conferences. She commended them for their work and continued support of NAHRO.

Future Conferences: Washington Conference: February 28 – March 2; National Conference & Exhibition: October 7-9 – Phoenix, AZ

President Shaw called for new business. There was none. She then called for a motion to adjourn.

Action: Motion to adjourn by Jackie Newman and seconded by John Mahon.

It was suggested at the next Board meeting we discuss engaging HUD leadership in asking them to make right the dangerous wrong of their op-ed from HUD Secretary, which has placed a lot of our practitioners in danger. It is difficult to work and support men and women of all different political beliefs and backgrounds, race and creeds to have an op-ed not go challenged like the op-ed from mid-August from the Secretary of HUD, which directly counters HUD's own program.

CEO Todman responded that the op-ed (August Wall Street Journal) did have responses from the affordable housing industry. NAHRO is poised to tell the future leadership of HUD that we need them to walk that back.

Action: President Shaw asked the Board to act on the motion on the floor. Motion to adjourn carried.

Members Present: Sunny Shaw, Patricia Wells, Lisa Ann Garcia, Denita Johnson, Clif Martin, Karina Mason Rorris, Stacy Spann, Sally Stang, and Alan Zais (also NCRC at-large). **Past Presidents:** Carl Richie, Steve Merritt and Preston Prince. **Advisory Committee Chairs and BECT** Elizabeth Glenn, Jennifer Keogh (also NCRC PP), Senghor A. Manns, Andy Rodriguez, Richard Herrington, and Mark Thiele (also SW at-large), **BPC:** Cynde Smith. **NERC:** Anthony J. Vasiliou, Diane Cohen, Randy Waters, and Joseph D'Ascoli. **MARC:** John T. Mahon, Marsha Parham-Green, Kathy Walter, Vernon Lawrence, and Diane Haislip. **NCRC:** George Guy and Jackie Newman. **SERC:** Mark Taylor, C. Sean Gilbert, Michael Wong, Shaundra Clark, and Susan Johnson-Velez. **SW:** Tonya Mabry, David Lange, David Gates, and Michael Gerber. **PSW:** Barbara Kauss, Rob Fredericks, and Suket Dayal. **PNW:** Saeed Hajarizadeh, Jillian Patterson, and Lisa Stevens. **MPRC:** Peter Lifari, Duane Hopkins, and Julie Brewen. **HDLI:** Ricardo Gilmore. **Parliamentarian:** G. Matthew Pike. **Staff:** Adrienne Todman, Board liaison Sylvia Bowen and the entire NAHRO Team.

Board of Governors

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Excused Absences:

Absent: PNW: Cupid Alexander; **MP:** Joan Smith