



## COMMISSIONERS COMMITTEE SUMMARY

May 7, 2020 2:00 – 3:00 P.M., Eastern time

COMMITTEE CHAIR, KARINA MASON RORRIS – PRESIDING

Meeting was called to order, by Chair Karina Mason Rorris. No quorum was present to February 5 meeting minutes will be approved at the June 4 meeting.

### Questions/Answers

#### **Jackie Rhodes, Director, Professional Development**

At the last meeting, there were questions regarding the ability to vary Commissioner course offerings for those who cannot devote days to participate in training.

**Answer:** Jackie advised the commissioner fundamentals and the commissioners guide to monitoring and oversight courses as well as some strategic planning courses are offered virtually.

**Comment:** Sherry Scudder advised during the ethics course the participants appreciated the ability to perform their work in the morning and then take the course in the afternoon over the three-day period.

Jackie appreciated the feedback and noted that the Professional Development (PD) team has been testing various formats with private clients including weekend scheduling. As far as the public content, evening and weekend times have not been explored but can be.

**Question:** With the tentative in-person conference in Phoenix, an in-person fundamentals will be scheduled. She asked the committee if their preference is to have the training pre- or post-conference?

**Comments:** Phil Bernal advised he feels pre-conference, in-person works best. It may save money to have it during the conference, but it will conflict with conference sessions. Another suggestion was to have a hybrid/blended combination of pre-conference virtual day then solidify everything in person, pre-conference. Small housing authorities may incur more fees for hotel accommodations if they come for pre-conference training. During the last 10 minutes of the Ethics and fundamentals course, have the forms there to recertify onsite.

Gary Valentine suggested offerings should be tiered: Ethics and Fundamentals for beginning Commissioners and Commissioners Guide to Monitoring and Oversight for advanced commissioners.

**Answer:** Jackie wants to make learning paths for the position since we require CEUs, it is important that there are options. Both Jackie and Blake have discussed an entry and advanced bank of offerings; the advanced offerings would require an assessment/exam. Your questions and inquiries are helpful in crafting a viable product.

Ms. Rhodes encouraged the committee to submit any comments or ideas on training topics as it would be greatly appreciated.

**Comments:** Financials 101 was suggested. It was also suggested that commissioners can get the type of information during board meetings when the financials are being discussed.

## **Question/Answers**

### **Blake Pavlik, Director, Accreditation and Certification**

**Question:** How long does the course need to be to complete requirements in one day to allow pre-conference course offerings?

**Answer:** Jackie and Blake have discussed this so input is welcomed. As long as content is being satisfied, there is no problem. However, recorded trainings cannot be used for certification training. A live instructor needs to be present. Blended or an assessment with an instructor can possibly work for commissioner certification.

The Board of Ethics and Credentialing Trustees (BECT) is examining whether self-paced, recorded content be accepted as long as an assessment at the conclusion of course is completed. A commissioner's exam has been discussed as there is not an exam currently for the completion of ethics or fundamentals. It would also be great to have offerings for recertification that do not require you to repeatedly retake ethics and fundamentals.

**Question:** Brenda Honeycutt asked if the training could be broken up into video modules and take the quiz at end? If you pass, you move to the next module if not, you go back and review material until you pass. Can it be self-paced session until you are ready to take assessment/test.

**Answer:** Both Jackie and Blake feel that is a great idea. A learning management system (LMS) will enable that to happen. They will be examining some LMS offerings.

**Question:** Char Reavis asks after attending training, can the scanned badge be used to identify those who completed training and then receive notification of the CEUs received at conference?

**Answer:** Blake advised going forward at least with the national conference, they will examine a way for that to happen or at least provide it without a request or provide a link where you can access that info. NAHRO is in the process of converting to a new association management system which will make that easier to do. NAHRO does honor accommodation for special needs training participants.

## **Next Advocacy Campaign**

The goal is to send 3,000 letters on "Housing IS Critical Infrastructure" before Memorial Day. Please contact your colleagues and work to meet this goal. [Advocacy Action Center](#)

## **Subcommittee Update**

Renee Smith – Chair, Advocacy Committee– National Conference Commissioners Session Update  
Ms. Smith mentioned the group has discussed the following topics and asked for committee members interested in participating to contact her and LaTonya. Deadline for proposals is June 4. If our sessions are approved, they will be presented at the tentatively scheduled National Conference, October 7-9, 2021, in Phoenix, AZ.

1. Commissioners' Experience: Collaboration with Executive Director
2. How to Navigate through Workplace Violence and Security Options
3. Pathway Out of Poverty: Resources to Continuing Education
4. 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons Learned

## Housing and Equity- Karina Mason Rorris

Chair Karina mentioned the policy framework developed by NAHROs Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee and Approved by the NAHRO Board of Governors. Highlighted areas below are areas we are currently covering. Each committee is asked to:

1. provide recommendations to the Strategic Planning Advisory Group on action NAHRO should take in these areas and, if applicable,
2. the committee will incorporate these items into our existing goals/objectives and continue work on them into the 2021-2023 term.

If our current goals/objectives touch on some of these areas, we will note that in our recommendation and/or expand work and incorporate different aspects of topic into our current workplan. For example. we have worked on the highlighted areas below that can be incorporated into work relating to the noted topic and continued into the next term. [Click here](#) for infographic on nahro website. The Member Services Committee and the Commissioners Committee have been assigned the items below:

<u>AREA</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
1. Access to Resources	Encourage PHAs/CDCs to become access points for:  <b>1. Medical access</b> - Consider medical/dental clinics being co-located with schools with high rate of free/reduced lunch. <b>2. Economic Stability</b>
2. Social Determinants of Health	Encourage PHAs/CDCs to become access points for:  <b>1. Education</b> (incorporate work on Adult Literacy), <b>2. Social &amp; Community</b> - (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Speakers), <b>3. Health &amp; Healthcare</b> - (Self-care presentation -June), <b>4. Neighborhood &amp; Built Environment*</b> - (Zoning - August-tentative)

### Information on Neighborhood and Build Environment\*

The intent behind neighborhood and build environment has to do with understanding local planning and zoning codes, understanding the implications and limitations of master planning and community planning processes. This is so that staff and residents understand the impacts of planning decisions, inclusionary or exclusionary zoning practices, and to ensure that public housing developments are considered and engaged in local land use planning. This also includes school district planning, location of certain industries and businesses that may have a negative and/or environmental impact on their communities.

**Ongoing tasks:** Submit quotes to LaTonya regarding value in NAHRO membership from the Commissioners' perspective.

1. **What are the most valuable aspects of your NAHRO membership?**

The relationships I have developed through my membership in NAHRO invaluable! Experts from across the country that become friends is priceless.

2. **Why would you recommend joining NAHRO to a colleague?**

By joining NAHRO you have an amazing think tank at your fingertips - people on the ground doing the work and sharing their experiences & expertise.

**Comments:**

Senior Vice President Patricia Wells visited the committee and thanked them for their continued support of NAHRO and their committee to serve their respective agencies as a Commissioner. She enjoyed the input and the great training suggestions and topics. She appreciates the passion and sincerity of the committee and its dedication to get the work done.

We should be proud of the policy framework the DEIAC has produced to target areas that we can work on and help us to change the narrative on housing inequity. You are modeling the work to be done by the committees to move NAHRO and your agencies forward.

**Closing Thoughts – Chair Karina Mason Rorris**

Chair Mason Rorris thanked everyone who could make the meeting and applauds the work that is being done, in spite of the pandemic and the challenges it brings to our neighborhoods, agencies and residents.

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**Attendance:** Karina Mason Rorris, Thomas Jefferson, Sam Bergami, Phil Bernal Lucille Boss, Carleen Cumberbatch, Dina Getty, Willie Haynes, Brenda Honeycutt, Kenyon Lowe, George Perez, Char Reavis, Sharon Scudder, Renee Smith, Gary Valentine, Nicole Vazquez.

**Absent:** Fred Banuelos, Stefanie Benvenuto, Sandra Boutell, Dorothy Carty Daniel, Barb Cleland, Richard Conforti, Sheryl English, Robert Finch, Neil Flynn, Alisha Gant, Mari Hayden, Grant Henry, TomiRene Hettman, Dirk Hoek, Johnny Johnson, Adrian Jones, Michael Lacey, Richard Laferte, Henrietta Snipes, LaRence Snowden, Susan Ulrich, Vincent White, Carl Richie.

## Goal/Objective Status - May 13, 2021

**Goal A - Maintain NAHRO's position as the preeminent organization for the development and implementation of responsible housing and community development policy by vigorously advocating for legislation, regulations, core programs and innovative initiatives.**

### Obj. 1. ADVOCACY SUBCOMMITTEE - Work with Legislative Network Advisory Committee (LNAC) to actively engage in all letter writing campaigns.

- Action call: participated in goal to send 2000 letters to Congress and the White House asking for H/CD programs in the next COVID-19 emergency legislation. by July 1. (completed: exceeded 2000 letters sent).
- August 2020 – participated in goal of 8501 letters to congress during August Advocacy Campaign. (completed: exceeded goal -approximately 13,000 letters sent).
- December 2020. - Continue to answer call for advocacy letter writing.
- May 2020 – letter writing campaign 3,000 by Memorial Day – Housing IS infrastructure. (to begin)

**Goal E – Strengthen NAHRO as a thought-leader by improving communication, networking, information exchange, and knowledge transfer with and among members, partners and stakeholders, and by enhancing the experience of members and next-generation professionals.**

- June 2020 – uploaded “Commissioners at Work” - a compilation of activities at the 2019 National Conference and Exhibition in San Antonio, TX- for the NAHRO website Commissioners Resource page.
- August 7, 2020 - Collaborated with IRGE Chair, Alan Zais to provide insight on diversity, equity and inclusion best practices.
- October 2, 2020 – Collaborated with DEIAC Chair, Liz Glenn to provide insight on diversity, equity and inclusion best practices.
- February 2021 – Speakers from Rapid Results Institute and C4 Innovations provided information on a 100-day challenge to galvanize and target diversity, equity and inclusion efforts with regards to homelessness.

**Obj. 1. -COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE - Work with regions to ensure nominees for Commissioner of the Year Award.**

- 2020 - Chair encouraged regional service officers to submit worthy candidates for the Commissioner of the Year award and to enter their regional recipients for the national award. Currently have two nominations.
- Reminder of award deadline and Commissioner of the Year award article published in the [June 15 NAHRO Monitor](#), July 31 award name update, August 15, August 31, September 15 deadline extended to October 8.
- July 2020 – reminder sent to Regional VP-Commissioners to encourage regional nominations and to nominate regional commissioner award recipients for national recognition.
- October 2020 - selected Commissioners of the Year recipient. 3 candidates.

**Obj. 2 – ADVOCACY COMMITTEE -Create substantive, relevant topics and sessions for the national conference track and possibly for sessions under different tracks.**

- A list of session topics has been compiled and commissioners’ track group will resume work when warranted.
- March 2021 - 2021 National Conference call for proposals - submit sessions.

**Alternate Obj. 2: FULL COMMITTEE - Work to encourage board members and agencies to submit material for the #HousersAtWork Campaign to showcase the agency, commissioner and community work done during COVID-19 pandemic.**

- March 2021 – 1 entry.
  - March 2021 - Encourage testimonials by all committee members regarding value in NAHRO membership.
3. **What are the most valuable aspects of your NAHRO membership?**  
The relationships I have developed through my membership in NAHRO invaluable! Experts from across the country that become friends is priceless.
  4. **Why would you recommend joining NAHRO to a colleague?**  
By joining NAHRO you have an amazing think tank at your fingertips - people on the ground doing the work and sharing their experiences & expertise.

## **F. Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion as crucial to healthy communities.**

### **Obj 1: Discuss efforts that engage our agencies, residents and community to encourage diversity, equity and inclusiveness.**

- August 7 – Collaborated with IRGE Committee chair, Alan Zais addressed the committee on ways to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in housing authorities and communities.
- **Ongoing Discussion:** Efforts to focus attention on empowerment efforts: encourage our residents and community to complete the census form and to vote, attend workshops focused on government, the importance of the vote, electoral college, local activism, law enforcement, etc.

Empowerment - My Brother's Keeper Alliance, launched by Former President Obama. This program addresses gaps faced by boys and young men of color and focuses on building safe and supportive communities where they feel valued and have clear pathways to opportunity.

Scholarships - Carleen Cumberbatch noted her agency's annual scholarship program which garnered 16 applicants, despite COVID-19. Approximately 90% of the tenants are African American. Jurors will judge and \$2,500 will be awarded.

Law Enforcement- Committee member Adrian (AJ) Jones has been invited to serve on a 37-member task force, divided into four subcommittees: recruitment policy, budget/contracts, community outreach and community development and 17 of its members are African American. Chair Mason Rorris extended congratulations to AJ on this wonderful opportunity. Ms. Jones advised the newly formed group will tackle police reform by crafting a set of recommendations within 90 days for the city to adopt.

Update: Adrian "AJ" Jones updated activity of Fresno Task Force. AJ was a community development subcommittee member whose task was to reimagine a definition of a safe community that did not include police. The task force submitted a total of 73 recommendations to the city which is expected to be accepted but it is uncertain whether the city will implement. Ms. Jones' suggestion was accepted as Recommendation #68 - fund a pilot program for head of households and primary caregivers to receive their next level of education as a pathway to safe communities.

Sheryl English advised she was selected by her Mayor to join and chair an ad hoc Use of Force Committee for the Denton, TX Police Department. They are concluding their deliberations and will present recommendations to the City Council. The Chair and the members applauded Sheryl's efforts.

Voter Registration- Carleen Cumberbatch shared that she was a voter registration volunteer in DeKalb County, Georgia. Her Executive Director worked to get drop boxes positioned on housing authority properties for residents who are 60 and older, who occupy a unit and who do not have transportation to get to polling sites and awaited confirmation on that request. Drop box security issues would be handled by voting officials with cameras, etc.

- October 2, 2020 - Collaborated with DEIAC Chair, Liz Glenn to provide insight on diversity, equity and inclusion-best practices.
- February 2021 - Speakers from Rapid Results Institute and C4 Innovations discussed DEI 100-day challenges to inspire goal setting, levels of innovation, collaboration and execution required to achieve goals.

## SUBCOMMITTEES, DESCRIPTION AND MEETING INFO

<b>ADVOCACY</b> Every other month – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday Next meeting: May 20 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	
Commissioners Track Group 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. TomiRene Hellman
17. Ex Officio – Carl Richie	

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.

**Resume work to create substantive, relevant topics and sessions for the 2021 National Conference in Phoenix, AZ.**

Subcommittee will review session topics, create session proposals that benefit all levels of commissioner experience focusing on advocacy, communication, professional development and adult literacy for approval by full committee. **Deadline for session submissions is June 4, May 2021 – 4 session topics are targeted for submission.** Work to encourage board members and agencies to submit material for the #HousersAtWork Campaign to showcase the agency, commissioner and community work done during COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b> Every other month – 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday Next meeting: March 24 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
Commissioner of the Year Group Co-Chairs: Johnny Johnson / Henrietta Snipes	
7. Dorothy Carty Daniel	10. Sherry Scudder
8. Alisha Gant	11. Susan Ulrich
9. Mari Hayden	12. Fred Bañuelos
13. Char Reavis	

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

Assist in providing relevant material for research page.

Identify and recommend ways to communicate more effectively who NAHRO is and what NAHRO represents to our peers throughout the country. **See full request for marketing quotes.**

Implement communications plan.

Commissioners of the Year Group members will encourage regions to submit regional commissioner award nominees for the national commissioner award consideration. **Nominees not chosen for award will carry over to next year if they continue to be eligible for award.** Review and select yearly award recipient.