

2021-2023 Commissioners Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST

Omni Shoreham Hotel, Diplomat Ballroom, West Lower Level 1B

Staff Liaison: La Tonya Rajah – lrajah@nahro.org

<https://www.nahro.org/about/nahro-leadership/national-standingcommittees/commissioners-committee/>

Lucille Boss, Chair – Presiding

Adrian “AJ” Jones, Vice Chair

Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. and roll call resulted in a quorum.

Motion: Thomas Jefferson moved and AJ Jones second motion to approve Minutes from 9/21/22, 11/7/2022, 1/10/23 meetings. Motion Carried.

Chair Boss asked the committee vice chair and subcommittee chairs to share what prompted them to serve as a commissioner both on the local level and on the NAHRO national committee.

Commissioners Committee Vice Chair: AJ Jones

As a former housing agency resident with a high school diploma who participated in the FSS program, AJ went on to receive a Bachelors’ and Masters’ degree and purchased her own home. She was asked to join the housing authority board because she was a resident. She joined the board, because as a resident with a high school diploma there was a need to bring first-hand resident issues to the board and to empower other residents. Her major issues of concern both on her local board and as a commissioners committee member are: higher education for head of households and primary caregivers and create balance across the country.

Subcommittee Chair, Communication - Char Reavis

Ms. Reavis serves because she feels residents need a voice and she works to encourage residents to speak up and out and to ensure the resident perspective is represented.

Subcommittee Chair, Advocacy - Renee Smith

Her parents taught her at an early age to serve, to give back, and to provide a voice for the voiceless. Outreach and serving is Ms. Smith’s practical and spiritual gift. Serving on the regional and national NAHRO committees afford the ability to collaborate, to learn about the commissioner and their role, and how they function throughout the country. She also serves as a change agent to erase generational poverty and empower residents to take advantage of the programs available to better their lives.

Commissioners Committee Chair, Lucille Boss

Thanks to the City of Santa Barbara’s housing program, she was able to become a homeowner. Ms. Boss works to ensure everyone else has that opportunity and the community members have the support they need and have their basic needs met.

Commissioners Committee Survey - [Responses](#)

- Received responses re: diversity and equity and inclusion access and justice in the communities and toolkit suggestions.
- Committee re-examined the objectives and next steps each subcommittee wishes to accomplish for the remainder of the 2021-2023 term. See [Updated committee/subcommittee objectives Progress Report](#)

Advocacy | Renee Smith

- Completed, plan to repeat: letter writing campaign to Congress for additional funding. (will continue into next term)
- Completed, to be scheduled: Advocacy training module (online); awaiting implementation by professional development dept. When it is launched, Ms. Smith would like the committee to critique/audit the module.
- Advocacy should view advocacy from the local/regional perspective and how to partner with others to push the message on housing, best practices, etc. as well as from the national perspective.
- Work to cultivate relationship with elected representatives if not already established.
- Create messaging and vet to include the resident perspective.

Communication | Char Reavis

- Completed: Commissioners resource page, accessible to members and non-members including the commissioners at work video.
- Not yet begun: Create a flyer to forward to regions/chapters and state association president.
- In progress: More collaboration with member services – showcase commissioner offerings, provide flyers on commissioners mentors.
- In Progress: Articles on commissioners mentors; what website tools can be used and accessible to everyone.
- Completed, plan to repeat: Fine-tuned the Commissioner of the Year award criteria and eligibility info.
- Not yet begun: Communicating stories, via the NAHRO Monitor, and other vehicles.
- In progress: Joint work with DEIAC continue to collaborate on the Housing America (calendar feature).

Comment: Work with LNAC to create a modified letter template for commissioners for review by the commissioners communications subcommittee.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion | Zella Knight

- Ongoing: Working with DEIAC: Ms. Knight will meet at regularly scheduled time with the subcommittee to discuss talking points – elevator pitch, how your agency connects with school boards or other groups. Work on those talking points and be prepared to discuss at meeting.
- In progress: present pitch during fall conference to non-traditional partners.
- In progress: Joint work with DEIAC continue to collaborate on the Housing America (calendar feature).

Leadership Remarks

President, Patricia Wells – She thanked the committee members for time and service, despite the pandemic: to communities, agency, colleagues and residents. The industry is nimble, and working to get results. Commissioners are a volunteer to govern, lead and represent your residents.

Senior Vice President, George Guy – Servant leadership is what commissioners do to champion the work done for residents and what programs and policy that advances their lives and community. Question for consideration: How does the committee see and make themselves available to new commissioners?

Chief Executive Officer, Mark Thiele – Request to take advocacy perspective to the Hill and ensure they know what Commissioners are doing and accomplishing with each agency, communities and the residents we serve.

All leaders applauded the work of the commissioners and the ambitious schedule they under took to work on objectives.

Questions: Being mindful that budgets and economy are really being stretched at this time, it is difficult for agencies to pay for commissioners, and national commissioner members, to attend conferences. Is there a way to offset that cost?

Answer: CEO Thiele concurs and knows it especially impacts small agencies. He feels there is an opportunity and will explore particularly for the small agency resident commissioners.

Questions: Can we coordinate conferences between chapter, regional and national conferences to assist in scheduling and price?

Answer: That is on the radar. NAHRO is working to control and identify communication traffic but also provide timely information.

Note: The Commissioners Committee has a Commissioners Mentors list that can be provided to the First-Time Attendees overview is a handout at the National Conference Exhibition and is on the commissioners resource page that is accessible to members and non-members.

Update

Legislative Affairs, Tess Hembree

Ms. Hembree advised staff drafts the Legislative and Regulatory Agenda Steering Committee vets it.

Ms. Hembree is pleased many of the committee members will be going up to the Hill as that voice is particularly important. She provided information on the Capitol Hill routine with Hill staff, Capitol Hill police checkpoints, and recommended allowing plenty of time to go through security, etc.

She spoke about the appropriations process and opportune time for Commissioners to tell representatives how important funding is for the programs that matter in each community. The House is now controlled by the Republicans, by a narrow margin, and the Democrats control the Senate, and this dynamic will affect their ability to pass the FY 2024 budget.

Comments: Steering Committee should include resident commissioners to ensure the resident perspective is incorporated into the agenda. Ms. Hembree acknowledges those comments and has more resident engagement on her radar as she works to bring on two additional staff into her department.

Survey Results

Comment – How should we move forward understanding we only received 10 responses and the committee had input on how the survey should be configured and what data would be necessary to gather to give us the national baseline? Do we scrap it, reconfigure it, use the data gathered? It was noted that other priorities simply superseded the survey. Questions arose whether to turn in what was completed on the survey or wait until the entire survey was completed or whether more diligence was needed to get staff to get the data requested.

Perhaps the survey's purpose and importance was not made clear to Executive Directors. – that the data collected will assist the national committee and could possibly be used by agencies to improve or begin processes that could provide more information and collaboration among the agency staff, resident and community.

Tiffany Mangum – Elevate, IEA (EIEA) Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEIAC) participated in the survey and noted 100 data points in the survey. In collecting some of the data, some agencies may not have the data or the resources to capture the data and complete the survey. Is there an opportunity to determine what do our organizations have? Ms. Mangum felt the

questions were great and would love to work with the committee to assist in securing the information in a way that can assist some of our agencies and staff.

Suggestion: Suggest to President Wells and CEO Thiele that a portion of conference receptions be dedicated to welcome new commissioners and first-time attendees that allows visibility to commissioners and access to commissioner mentors.

Comments: Resident Commissioners are no different than any other commissioner and are extremely important resources to tap into regarding the resident's perspective, concerns and suggestions. Should a resident commissioner wish not to be identified as such, make that point known to your agency. Perhaps the committee can create a model for others to utilize so that everyone can tap into that expertise and knowledge that a commissioner who is a resident has.

The Executive Director reports to the Board. If there is something is requested or required, the board has the authority to ask for it and, if feasible, to get.

Commissioners Communication

[NAHRO Leadership Volunteer Form](#) - It is time to complete the leadership volunteer form for the 2023-2025 biennium. **DEADLINE is March 31, 2023**

Regional Reports – Upcoming Conferences

NERC - Sam Bergami/Nikki Vazquez –Conference- June 25-28, Portland, ME – Rhode Island training with 16 commissioners trained.

MARC – Dorothy Carty Daniel – Conference – May 8-10, Wilmington, DE

NCRC - Joe Grisson – Conference – April 18-21– La Crosse, WI

SERC - Carleen Cumberbatch -Conference – June 26-28 – Orlando, FL

SWRC – Willie Haynes - Conference, June 27-29, Albuquerque, NM

PNRC – Char Reavis – Conference – April 24-26, Portland, OR

PSWRC -Lucille Boss- Conference- May 22-25, Anaheim, CA

MPRC- Phil Bernal – Conference - April 26-27, St. George, UT

Adjourn

Meeting Materials/Resources

- NAHRO Commissioners Survey [Responses](#)
- [Updated committee/subcommittee objectives Progress Report](#)
- Commissioners Mentors (as of [August 20, 2022](#))
- Commissioners Committee Survey [flyer](#)
- **New JOHCD schedule** - twice-yearly. The first issue -July, second in December. Article deadline: mid-June and mid-November respectively.
- **NAHRO survey results – commissioner- related excerpts (handout)**

- *Available online only:*
 - Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC) Goals & Objectives ([link](#))
 - JOHCD Articles - [Race, Equity and Housing: NAHRO's Response](#)
[Bringing Equity and Inclusion into the Heart of NAHRO: the LGBTQ+ Subcommittee](#)

 - [List of Upcoming Trainings for Commissioners](#)

Attendance:

Chair: Lucille Boss
Vice Chair: Adrian "AJ" Jones
NERC: Sam Bergami, Nikki Vazquez
MARC: Fred Banuelos, Dorothy Carty Daniel, Angela Reed
NCRC: Joe, Grisson, Renee Smith
SERC: Carleen Cumberbatch
SWRC: Gary Allsup, Willie Haynes
PNRC: George Perez, Char Reavis, Joycelynn Straight
PSWRC: Zella Knight
MPRC: Phil Bernal, Thomas Jefferson

Guests: Tiffany Mangum, Jake Joseph

Absent:

NERC: Richard Conforti, Neil Flynn
MARC: John Benton, Richard Laferte, Bobby Wilson
NCRC: Alanna Conard, Grant Henry, Delois McKinley Eldridge, Gary Valentine
SERC: Brenda Honeycutt, Johnny Johnson
SWRC: Susan Ulrich
PSWRC: Homer Hall, Gregory Hartwig, Dirk Hoek
MPRC: Barb Cleland, Cody Schuler