



## 2023-2025 – Commissioners’ Committee Minutes

April 7, 2024, 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Washington Conference

Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Capitol A – Lobby Level

400 New Jersey Avenue, NW Washington, DC

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### Presiding: Renee Smith – Chair

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Renee Smith, Chair, welcomed the committee and roll was called which resulted in a quorum.

**Action:** Motion to Approve 1/2/24 and 4/7/24 minutes moved by Sam Bergami, second by Gary Allsup. Motion Carried.

#### **Remarks**

**President George Guy thanked** the committee for commitment and time to your agency, residents and community. With regards to the strategic plan, the focus is intentionality, collaboration, and collective impact. President Guy noted that the strategic plan will go before the Board of Governors for approval during the conference.

The following groups and task forces were created:

- Housing and Education Task Force
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Task Force
- Committee on Homelessness
- Education Advisory Committee
- Conference Planning Committee
- Women’s Network – empower, inspire, train

President Guy noted if any committee member is interested in serving on these task forces and committees, please let Chair Renee Smith know. Finally, President Guy asked the committee while doing our work to keep these items in mind: Don’t be afraid to talk about poverty, people, and community you serve.

**Senior Vice President Sean Gilbert** also thanked the committee for serving your community. He knows you will fight for your communities and provide true stories to bring the message home for funding when you go to the Hill and meet with your representatives. You are a constituent and they need to hear from you. We need your support to bring the message home for thriving communities and programs that make a difference in the lives of our residents.

**CEO Mark Thiele** appreciates the committee. He also believes in the power of “juntos,” which means together. This leadership has ambitious goals. He looks forward to seeing the committee’s goals and measurable outcomes.

#### **Launch of the Committee Champions**

To encourage additional support and participation in committee related work, Chair Smith and Vice chair Fred Banuelos established committee champions. Two champions a quarter, from any region. A champion will meet at least two of the criteria below:

- Attend a state or regional conference and report back to the commissioners committee;
- regional vice presidents can provide updates to the regional conference on national commissioners committee activity;
- Serve as a committee liaison to legislative network, diversity equity and inclusion, or professional development; for both virtual and in-person meetings if possible);

- Get a legislative contact within a quarter;
- Attend a local housing authority sponsored event and submit that activity to La Tonya to showcase on the NAHRO commissioners' resource page;
- Become a National Certified Commissioner (NCC); and
- Moderate or serve as a panelist in a National Conference commissioner track- session.

\*Committee liaisons visit other standing and advisory committees during breakout portion of the in-person meeting, when available. When committee reconvenes, advise provide highlights of what was discussed/ learned from other standing committees.

Chair Smith acknowledged Willie Haynes and Carol Branham as Committee Champions for Quarter 1 who were given a NAHRO t-shirt and houser journal.

### **Subcommittee Breakout Highlights – Full committee must select at least 3 - 6 measurable outcomes from the subcommittees.**

#### ***Advocacy – AJ Jones, Chair***

**Goal 3** – Champion and advocate for innovative and resourced housing and community development policies and programs.

1. Task: **Resident empowerment**

Timeline: 50% of current residents

Roles/Responsibilities:

Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

2. Task: **Encourage our respective agencies to increase letters**

1. Timeline: 25% yearly - 100% by year five

2. Roles/responsibilities:

3. Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

3. Task: **Increase commissioner certifications with our respective agencies**

1. Timeline: by 10% yearly

2. Roles/responsibilities

3. Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

#### ***Communications – Jake Joseph, Chair***

**Goal 1** - Enhance innovative and comprehensive resources to increase professional expertise, skills, and integrity of housing and community development professionals.

**Goal 2** – Optimize the flow of funds, time, technology and other resources while adapting to changing circumstances to maximize resiliency and efficiency.

**Goal 3** – Champion and advocate for innovative and resourced housing and community development policies and programs.

1. Task: **Evaluate the distribution/accessibility to the Commissioners' Handbook** and the online Commissioners Resource Page in partnership with the NAHRO Communications Department. Print/electronic or both. Ensure the appropriate communication vehicle for our members. As in the past, when completed, all committee members will receive a copy of the handbook (online or hard copy).

1. Timeline:
2. Roles/responsibilities
3. Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

2. Task: **Documenting/refreshing procedure with a communication plan/handbook timeline**, and the online commissioners resource page.

1. Timeline:
2. Roles/responsibilities
3. Resource

*Measurable outcome:*

3. Task: **Re-evaluation of commissioners' handbook** and online commissioners resource page content to include virtual meeting best practices, etc., tie in DEI framework to agency board composition.

1. Timeline:
2. Roles/responsibilities
3. Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

4. Task: **Board competencies assessment** and what tools were used to gather data.

1. Timeline:
2. Roles/responsibilities
3. Resource:

*Measurable outcome:*

### ***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Vice Chair, Angela Reed***

**Goal 1** - Enhance innovative and comprehensive resources to increase professional expertise, skills, and integrity of housing and community development professionals.

**Goal 4** – Amplify and unify the vital work of NAHRO's national, regional, and state members in your communities.

Task: Increase on demand content

1. Timeline:
2. Roles/responsibilities
3. Resource

*Measurable outcome:*

**Action: Motion to create a governance subcommittee.** Gary Allsup, second by Sam Bergami. Motion carried.

## **Governance Subcommittee - Gary Allsup volunteered to serve as Chair.**

Subcommittee description, goals, and tasks to be determined.

Members: Johnnie Jackson, Sam Bergami, Renee Smith, Carl Richie – Ex Officio with assistance from Wilbur Roberts, Travis County, TX.

Committee measurable outcomes should be ready for the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee by May 15 – full committee is expected to meet May 6.

## **Reminder- Commissioner Corners E-learning – Free opportunity for members**

Join Chair Renee Smith for an informal session to learn from your peers and share your commissioner experience with others. Renee will present various situations that a commissioner may face and together, participants will work with their peers to brainstorm how to handle the situation. Sessions will occur once per quarter. Next session: April 23, 1:00-2:30 p.m., ET

## **Discussion – Work with DEIAC**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEIAC) Chair Tiffany Mangum addressed the committee regarding background on the discussion sheet provided to the committee. (attached).

## **BACKGROUND:**

In 2022, it was announced that our 2024 national conference will be in Orlando, FL. At that time, growing concerns arose around some of the Florida legislative policies which were anti-immigrant, anti-black and anti-LGBTQ+. Several NAHRO members including the immediate past commissioners committee chair approached the former DEIAC Chair, Elizabeth Glenn, expressing frustration and growing concerns regarding the national conference being held in Orlando. The concerns regarding Florida are not only legislative, but also issues regarding personal safety and well-being. Harassment and violence have been experienced by certain groups, some NAHRO and non-NAHRO colleagues.

The decision to move forward with the national conference in Orlando, FL was based on contractual obligations. Understanding this, additional discussion ensued and DEIAC wanted to make NAHRO leadership aware and conscious about the growing concerns. Having begun discussions with DEIAC on these issues, the most recent iteration of this template is attached for the committee's perusal and to be completely transparent regarding the discussion.

Our past and present leadership has made tremendous efforts to address these concerns in a very progressive way. One of those ways includes establishing a Conference Planning Committee (CPC) previously mentioned by President George Guy. The CPC, is a diverse body of NAHRO members that work to ensure that members who visit Orlando are safe.

Ms. Mangum advised the CPC will look for an inclusive culture (race and ethnicity) in all NAHRO conferences and platforms so that all members feel that they belong. She noted some elders have raised concerns about accessibility/mobility concerns so they, too, can enjoy the conference fully. Other activities include ways to enter the Orlando community, serve with others who are doing great things, and bring our NAHRO presence to the community to enhance it.

She notes that steps are being made to address some of the concerns are an ongoing conversation and we welcome your feedback on the template. The DEIAC will continue to have conversations with the NAHRO leadership to give a voice to these concerns which means a resolution may not be needed if the issues can now be addressed by other means.

**Note:** The Commissioners Committee have members who also serve on the DEIAC, are members of the committee's DEI committee. The Committee works to support efforts to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion. As a supporter of DEI issues, should this discussion form into a resolution for BOG consideration, the DEIAC, an advisory committee that does not have BOG voting rights, will need a sponsor (any standing committee) to make the motion. The Commissioners Committee, a standing committee, does have BOG voting rights, and can sponsor the motion.

### **Questions/Concerns**

Chair Renee Smith noted transparency is key so to dispel any confusion, we asked DEIAC Chair, Tiffany Mangum, to provide background, the most current iteration of the discussion, and to ensure we are kept abreast of any additional NAHRO leadership, DEIAC, and Commissioners Committee discussion on the issues mentioned.

**Q:** Is there a timeline when this resolution needs to be passed or is needed?

**A:** First the DEIAC will determine if the Conference Planning Committee and others who can address the issues are working to address the concerns mentioned in the document. If so, that will continue.

If not, perhaps a small task force with our DEI subcommittee and the DEIAC's Policy and Partnerships Subcommittee can provide additional suggestions and can work to determine the iteration or any additional work needed to create the best iteration of the document that both groups can agree on, then forward and support as a BOG resolution.

In the interest of time, Ms. Mangum noted that anyone who wished to speak to her, or any member who also serves on DEIAC, may do so separately.

Tiffany Mangum, DEIAC Chair – [tmangum@fresnohousing.org](mailto:tmangum@fresnohousing.org)

Fred Banuelos - [fred.banuelos@fhlb-pgh.com](mailto:fred.banuelos@fhlb-pgh.com)

Jake Joseph – [jakemiles.joseph@gmail.com](mailto:jakemiles.joseph@gmail.com)

Zella Knight - [zk8ed@yahoo.com](mailto:zk8ed@yahoo.com)

Having no additional business, the meeting adjourned.

**NEXT FULL COMMITTEE MEETING: May 6, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., ET**

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**Attendance:** Renee Smith, Fred Banuelos

NERC – Sam Bergami, Jake Joseph

MARC – Dorothy Carty Daniel, Johnnie Jackson, Angela Reed

SERC – Carleen Cumberbatch, Fermika Smith, Henrietta Snipes

SWRC – Gary Allsup, Carol Branham, Willie Haynes, Emmett Robbins, Susan Ulrich

PSWRC – Adrian AJ Jones, William Mayes

PNRC – Jan Murphy

MPRC – Lizette Mill, John Morgan

Ex Officio -Carl Richie

## SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

| ADVOCACY                    |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| CHAIR: AJ Jones   CO-CHAIR: |                   |
| MEMBERS                     |                   |
| Gary Valentine              | Alanna Conard*    |
| Anthony Sawyer              | Susan Ulrich*     |
| Joe Grisson                 | Thomas Jefferson* |
| Dirk Hoek                   | Carl Richie       |
| TomiRene Hettman?           |                   |
| Willie Haynes               |                   |

| DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION             |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| CHAIR: Zella Knight   CO-CHAIR: Angela Reed |                           |
| MEMBERS                                     |                           |
| Carleen Cumberbatch                         | Dorothy Carty Daniel      |
| Angela Reed                                 | DeLois McKinley- Eldridge |
| Emmett Robbins                              | Henrietta Snipes          |
| John Morgan                                 |                           |
| TomiRene Hettman?                           | George Perez*             |

| COMMUNICATIONS   |                |
|--|----------------|
| CHAIR: Jake Joseph   CO-CHAIR:                             |                |
| MEMBERS  |                |
| Lizette Mill   | Lolita Grant*  |
| Phil Bernal  | Fermika Smith  |
| Carol Branham  | Jan Murphy     |
| Joycelynn Straight   | Miguel Garcia* |
| Commissioner of the Year jury Group – Chair Johnny Johnson |                |
| Governance Group* – Chair Gary Allsup                      |                |
| Sam Bergami  | Carl Richie    |
| Wilmer Roberts (guest)<br>Travis County, TX                | Renee Smith    |
| Johnny Jackson   |                |
| *New group   |                |

## QUICK NOTES - Measurable Outcome Information for Committees

NAHRO's Strategic Plan development has been moving forward with **Intentionality** and **Collaboration**.

NAHRO Committees are tasked with the creation of Measurable Outcomes that will amplify and enhance NAHRO and its members **Collective Impact**.

Each Committee will develop Measurable Outcomes that incorporate and use the following information:

**NAHRO's Values:** Knowledge – Leadership – Professionalism – Collaboration – Equality – Fairness – Opportunity – Sustainability – Innovation

**NAHRO's Proposed Vision:** Thriving communities with affordable homes for all.

**NAHRO's Proposed Mission:** To advance the creation of strong, sustainable, equitable, and affordable communities through advocacy, professional development, and empowerment of our diverse members.

### **NAHRO's Proposed Goals:**

- Enhance innovative and comprehensive resources to increase professional expertise, skills, and integrity of housing and community development professionals.
- Optimize the flow of funds, time, technology, and other resources while adapting to changing circumstances to maximize resiliency and efficiency.
- Champion and advocate for innovative and resourced housing and community development policies and programs.
- Amplify and unify the vital work of NAHRO's national, regional, and state members in our communities.

**Task:** Create 3-6 Measurable Outcomes over the four goals. ( 3-6 total Measurable Outcomes – not 3-6 Measurable Outcomes per goal). Each Measurable Outcome should include a timeline, roles, responsibilities, and anticipated resources.

- **Timeline** – think short-, medium-, and long-term. Measurable Outcomes can take up to 5 years to achieve.
- **Roles & Responsibilities** – include other NAHRO committees and outside stakeholders that are needed for success.
- **Resources** – what resources will be needed for the Measurable Outcome to be successful.

SPAC asks that each Committee and its members bring your collective knowledge, experience, and expertise (both personal and professional, both individual and gathered from others including from your agencies and other leadership roles) to the discussion and development of Measurable Outcomes.

## **Discussion - Affirming NAHRO's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at all Conference Locations, Events, Activities and Sessions**

WHEREAS, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) plays a critical role in advocating for affordable housing and community development in the United States; and

WHEREAS, knowledge, leadership, professionalism, collaboration, equality, fairness, opportunity, sustainability, and innovation, are core values of NAHRO; and

WHEREAS, the Equity Policy Framework was accepted by the NAHRO Board of Governors in February 2021 and lays out a unified policy strategy for the first time in NAHRO history,

WHEREAS, diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential principles that support and guide our core values and decision-making processes of our organization; and

WHEREAS, selecting conference locations and all procurement decisions that prioritize diversity and inclusion is crucial in ensuring equal access and representation for all attendees; and

WHEREAS, we understand that the State of Florida has been contracted as the location for the upcoming 2024 NAHRO National Conference, which was originally procured for an earlier date, and delayed due to the impacts of the nationwide COVID-19 pandemic;

and

WHEREAS, the selection of Orlando, Florida raises concerns with regards to enacted legislation and its alignment with NAHRO's values and priorities of diversity, equity, and inclusion as demonstrated by the following:

1. Limited representation: Florida, while renowned for its tourism industry and attractions, has faced criticism regarding the lack of diversity and inclusive practices in its local community development initiatives.
2. Racial disparities: Reports indicate significant racial disparities in housing access, affordability, and opportunities in the Orlando metropolitan area, highlighting the need for more inclusive policies and practices.
3. LGBTQ+ inclusivity: Despite being a popular destination for various travelers, Orlando has faced mounting scrutiny regarding the implementation of inclusive policies for its LGBTQ+ residents, which raises concerns about the commitment to access, equity, equality, and inclusion.
4. Socioeconomic diversity: Orlando is characterized by income disparities, and its selection as a conference location without clear efforts to address these disparities may impart a message contrary to NAHRO's principles of equitable and inclusive community development.
5. The proposal and the enactment of statewide policies, including, but not limited to: various anti-DEI higher education reforms (Florida HB 999/SB 266), Stop-WOKE Act (HB 7), and other legislation considered to be dangerous and hostile towards individuals and representative groups within NAHRO and/or community members living within our affordable housing communities.
6. A growing concern for the overall safety and well-being of many of our colleagues, specifically our membership identifying as BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+.
7. Travel Advisories: Recent travel advisories for Florida, may impact the safety and well-being of our members and attendees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Commissioners Committee along with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEIAC), call upon NAHRO Leadership to:

1. Acknowledge the concerns raised regarding Orlando and the greater state of Florida's limited representation, racial disparities, LGBTQ+ inclusivity, and socioeconomic diversity.
2. Prioritize the implementation of expanded accessibility measures to afford the inclusion of all members in National programming through live streaming or other virtual means. This commitment to inclusivity will cater to members who express concerns about their safety when traveling to National conferences and convenings; members from smaller agencies who may face resource limitations that hinder their ability to travel nationally; and those with limitations that prohibit such travel. Moreover, it will afford members and commissioners, especially commissioners with lived experience, to actively participate in the overall programming, while also providing them with valuable opportunities to deepen their understanding and engagement with NAHRO's programming.
3. Reassess future conference locations to prioritize cities that demonstrate alignment with NAHRO values, including diversity, equity, and inclusion, considering factors such as community development efforts, inclusive policies, legislation, and proven records of fostering equal opportunities.
4. Engage in open dialogue with NAHRO members, stakeholders, and the wider community to address the concerns raised, and develop strategies to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organization and its affiliates.
5. Prioritize conference programming and content that reflect the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, including diverse speaker representation, workshops on overcoming disparities, and discussions on inclusive community development practices.
6. Collaborate with local organizations and community leaders in and along with NAHRO member and affiliate organizations throughout the State of Florida, actively promote and support initiatives to address the identified concerns, and strive to create a more inclusive environment for all participants and stakeholders.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee supports this document as a commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of community development and housing initiatives, and we support the enactment of policies and practices that align with these fundamental guidelines and principles.