

# AHAC: Meeting 02-25-2025



AHAC INTERNAL	PUBLIC
Commissioner Arnold Gaines KeAndrea Davis Vernea Jones Leslie Olsen Phil Thompson Erin O'Brien Donnella Clarke (Staff) Kimberly Hinton(Staff) Covasky Brutus (Staff) Marit Woods (Staff)	Brenda Hayes Peter Bauer Christina Bradwell

KeAndrea Davis: The time is now 5:39, so let's call the Board of Housing Advisory Committee meeting to order. Next, we'll have the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Roll Call...

Kimberlee Henton: Welcome Commissioner Arnold Gaines. I'm here. KeAndrea Davis. Present. Vernea Jones. Present. Leslie Olsen. Yes ma'am. William Talley Jr. Phil Thompson. Here. Erin O'Brien. Here. Trevor Banks. Chad Ingram. Thank you.

KeAndrea Davis: Okay. Can I bring it up now, or no? Yes. Um, we have to consider the absences for William and Chad.

Donnella Clarke: Chad sent me his resignation.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Yeah, Chad's not on the board.

KeAndrea Davis/Kimberlee Henton: Uh, okay. William, I think, he's no longer on the board either. Yes.

Erin O'Brien: Okay. Under the rules of attendance. Yes.

KeAndrea Davis/Donnella Clarke: So, you all go back out to get more people? Yeah. Okay. Search is on.

KeAndrea Davis: All right. Moving on to the approval of minutes. I guess the last meeting we had was December 17, 2014.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines/KeAndrea Davis: Very good. More people. Old people? More people.

KeAndrea Davis: OH, join the club. Um, can I get a motion to approve any deletions or corrections to the last minutes? Motion to approve. Second.

KeAndrea Davis: All in favor. Aye. Now we will have comments from the public.

KeAndrea Davis: Any person who wishes to comment on any subject on this agenda may be heard at this time. Please sign the sign-in sheet in order to speak. Please limit your comments to no more than five minutes as this section of the agenda is limited to 30 minutes.

The affordable housing advisory committee will not be able to take any official action under the comments from the public section. I can't really read the names because it's a sign. So, can we just start in order from over here? Ma'am, would you like to speak? Can you say your name for the record as well? Yes.

Brenda Hayes: I'm Brenda Hayes. And I'm a, um, I'm here because I care. And I'm here because I'm a grandmother of a developmentally disabled young adult who's now 26.

And we've had her since 2014. I'm also a widow of a Vietnam veteran who died from Agent Orange. And I'm sad and shameful as I was telling him how widows are being treated and also our young adults with developmental disabilities.

The bottom line is we don't have anything. And I live across the pond or down the road or whatever y'all say up here because I was from Virginia. The bottom line is I'm not from Fort Pierce, but you were still close enough in my backyard for me to care.

And a lot of our kids that we know, they're not kids anymore. They've all grown up on us. The bottom line is they live here.

And they live also down further. But we're all a community, even though we say we're Fort Pierce, Fort St. Lucie, city of Fort St. Lucie. Because I'm of St. Lucie counties, but also to have a dance when the city doesn't have one.

They need to step up to the plate. So, I came to find out what you guys are doing. And because I went to a meeting the other day to see what those guys were doing.

And the bottom line is I would like to see some maybe collaboration and sharing of ideas. I just saw something where they built 37 houses for the homeless in, I think, on the beach or whatever. And I said that didn't seem too bad, homeless on the beach.

But if they can do it, we can do it too. And the bottom line is just too many, and especially veterans that are homeless. I know we've got a motel coming up that are supposed to be housing them.

And I'm really looking forward to that. But our young adults with developmental disabilities, there is nothing in Florida. And I don't know if you all know this or not, but the Olmstead Act of 1999, I think it was 1999.

I thought it was 2007. But the bottom line is Florida is in violation of it. They were sued by the Department of Disability Rights a couple years ago.

And they had to get them out of institutions. We have a tsunami here now. It's not coming.

This will be the first generation that will surpass, outlive their parents, grandparents, or caregivers. And Florida is like this, ostrich in the sand. They say they have something, but when you read it, the 22 lawyers got involved, which I'm not sure what they do all day up there.

The bottom line is, and they made it so it's like if, then, but, maybe. Who wants to live like that? There's no collaboration with our housing authorities. The new commissioner, before Mr. T took place, the bottom line is he said he was going to make some changes to Section 8 housing certificates for people with disabilities.

And the bottom line is, I don't know what, but the bottom line is we need more collaboration with our communities, with the housing authority. If we have to get the regions and the feds involved, that's what we need to do. But it's not happening. So, I'm here to say I ain't going away. God will give me some time left on this earth. I did 45 years of my husband's, I did 10 of his 20 in the Army, and I stayed with him for 45 years. And people, they usually go through two or three wives at least. PTSD, depression. And people ask, why do you stay so long? How did you make it? I say because I'm meaner than he is. That's what I say. The bottom line is he pushed; I pushed back. And I'm pushing back on the system now.

Okay, the bottom line is enough is enough. And it's going to take all of us to get it together, all of us. Because they're all our kids. This is a mental health issue. They need social skills. They need life skills. And it's not even continuing education because they probably never got it in the school system. But the ahas are different for developmental disabilities. And this is not my first rodeo. Her mother has developmental disabilities. So, I've been doing this now for 55 years and dealing with the system. So, it's going to take all of us. And I'll tell you this. One young man told me many years ago who had a traumatic brain injury, he said, Brenda, you don't know what I go through trying to find help. You don't know.

He said, but in a split second, it can happen to you or your loved one. And that's true. In a split second, it can happen to you, your loved one, your grandchildren, whatever. So, you have to remember that. Again, I'm hoping that all this flabbergasted change that's going to be taking place and tripling down here is going to make us come together as a community more. Because that's what we need. We're all family. Thank you.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines/KeAndrea Davis: Madam Chair. Yes, ma'am. When she signed her name, did she sign, did she leave her phone number? No, ma'am. No, sir.

Brenda Hayes: I'm Sorry. Brenda Hayes. I am a little hard of hearing.

Donnella Clarke: I'm Donnella Clarke, and they were requesting your information, but I said I had just spoken to you. And I have your email address.

Brenda Hayes: Oh, thank you very much. We'll read the report when I get home.

KeAndrea Davis/Peter Bauer: Looks like Pete. Peter. Go ahead. Thank you.

Peter Bauer: I'm just here as a concern. Yes. Peter Bauer. B-A-U-E-R. I'm here as a concerned citizen and a resident of Fort Pierce for 18 years. I can't believe it's that long.

Anyway, I'm just here to listen, so thank you very much for your attention.

KeAndrea Davis: Would you like to make a comment?

Jillian Jeffrey: Not really. I'm just here.

KeAndrea Davis/ Jillian Jeffrey: I'm sorry. We need you to state your name. Oh, I'm sorry.

Jillian Jeffrey: I'm Jillian Jeffrey. Okay. And I'm just here trying to find out what, you know, governance it is that you do. And, you know, I just want to know what it's all about. I saw it on my phone, and I'm interested in housing, you know. I'm just wondering. It's my first time here.

KeAndrea Davis: Thanks for joining us. No one ever comes to our meetings. Most people we've ever had.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: We need your input.

KeAndrea Davis: All right. You desire to make a public comment?

Christina Bradwell: Yeah. Okay. I'm Christina Bradwell. I've been a St. Louis County resident all my life. I'm 37 years old. I've worked at St. Louis County Community Services for years. I've done Lincoln Park Main Street. I've done a little work here as well. I'm here because I'm a young adult. I've tried to do the workshop, the homeowner's workshop, about two times. Got a little discouraged. So, I'm going to try one more time. And I just want to be here. I'd like to continue coming to see some action. I've heard enough talk. So, I'm a person of action. And hopefully we can get more people like myself to attend these meetings. People who care. I'm also here because I care.

KeAndrea Davis: Thank you. Anyone else desire to make a public comment? All right. Public comment is now closed. We will move to public hearing. Approval of Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Report for Regimization. I believe everyone has a copy of the report. Okay. We didn't vote on this at the last meeting. Okay.

Donnella Clarke: This is the public's adoption of that report. Okay. We just want to make sure that everyone is all hearts and minds are clear and everyone participates.

Kimberlee Henton: Proper public hearing. Or avoid those situations.

KeAndrea Davis: That was required? Yes. Okay.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: We can talk about this.

KeAndrea Davis: Yes. All right. I'm happy. There's no action that needs to be taken.

Leslie Olsen: We have to adopt it. We need a motion. Since we have members of the public here, Madam Chair, maybe we should take a moment to say what we're doing. If you wouldn't mind. I'll talk about it. All right.

So, this is the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee's annual report to provide proposed strategies to the City Commission to help reduce the cost of housing and to provide more affordable housing under the HUD guidelines for our residents. And so, we looked at expedited permitting for affordable housing, fee waivers for affordable housing, flexible densities where you can get more density, more units on a parcel if you provide affordable housing, reservation of infrastructure capacity. I'm not going to explain that.

It's too boring. Parking and setback requirements, minimizing those to reduce the cost to build affordable housing, accessory residential units, so the granny flats or accessory dwelling units they might be known as. We made a recommendation that the commission consider adopting a code that would allow for people to put those in their backyards so that they could provide more housing either to family members or to rent them out.

And allows those families to build wealth by having extra income and providing more family flexibility. I believe the city has already adopted this. This was probably the biggest. This was the action that we really did participate in for this round. So, the planning department put together an ordinance. Also known as Canada Native Residential Development. It kind of allows some wiggle room with planning and development for special and court periods. There's infill lots and different. They don't meet the size requirements for a normal building.

So, this ordinance allows some creativity. We supported the planning department in submitting this ordinance to the commission and the ordinance was approved. So, it is our hope that now that this was approved in September, this year we'll see actual use of the ordinance and see more creative housing options come in the city of Fort Pierce.

Madam Chair, I think that that ordinance was not only focused on accessory dwelling units as indicated here. It also hit a number of other things like parking and setback requirements, flexible lot configurations, and supportive development near transportation hubs. It hit really all of those. It was a really good, wide-ranging ordinance. Anyway, I just thought I'd give a word. Okay, thank you.

KeAndrea Davis: Anyone else have comments? Yes, thank you.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines : Y'all welcome.

KeAndrea Davis: It seems like the Commissioner was pretty excited. I mean, I don't remember much pushback. No good. Thank you, Mr. Gaines, for being here.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: No, because this is one of my pet projects. So, when Pete and the director came up, you know, I tried to shut everything down before they could start asking questions. And to say this is, if you go back and watch the meeting, this is something that we needed to do a jump on. And one of the things that the public is here that we did mention in talking about the setbacks and the creativity and all that, what that really means is the tiny homes, the container homes, anything we can come up with to put on the property. Like you were talking about, anything we can come up with to put on the property. We have unhand-cuffed landowners to try to come in and work with us.

I think we have, what, three that have come through or two have come through the planning that he's looking at now. I don't know. And I also got the commission to vote on the city putting one out so we can show what we're trying to do. I don't know what it is, but I know it was voted for. It was voted 5-0 that we're going, you know, we don't want to go into the construction. Don't worry. We ain't getting into it. You can have that. We ain't getting into it. But we decided to take one of the city-owned lots and put our mouth, you know, put our mouth. That's an example. That's an example to show what we're trying to do and what we want. So, I don't know where that is, but I know it was voted 5-0. And I know money was set aside for that project. So, we're just waiting for people to come in with their ideas.

I've been trying to push people to come in with their ideas so we can get it up because once one goes up, and everybody see what we're talking about right now is just on paper, but once one goes up, it's going to take off. It's going to take off.

KeAndrea Davis: Is it possible that we can get an update from planning to see the status of how what's the progress since the ordinance was adopted? And I would also wonder about marketing as far as what the city has agreed to do. How do we put that out to the community or the development community to say, hey, this option is available. Come build or come use it. We have a lot of stuff on paper, but people don't know.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: I can tell you what my seat has been doing. I've been out beating the bushes trying to get people who I know right around district one, finding owners that I know own these properties that are just sitting there making contact with these properties and say, look here, we have changed the rules. You can use your property under the Affordable Care Act, Housing Care Act that the governor is so heavy on because he is on affordable housing.

And right now, he's looking for any little thing to put a feather in to get heat off him with all this. I'm just telling you how I did. And so, there's money out there, but you have to come in ready to go and the planning department will sit down with you and help you do what you have to do.

They'll sit down. If you have the idea, if you have an idea in your head and make an appointment with the plan department, they'll put their book out and they'll show you exactly what you can do with your property and whatever. And that was the biggest setback, change the property.

Now I'm also in talks with the county because even though we reduced some of our stuff and fees and all of this stuff, the county is still in it with their stuff. So, I've got to hear a couple Commissioners. I'm not going to call their name until I want them to be the ones that are going to do it.

But I've got their ears to say, hey, look at this project and jump aboard because there's something to roll with that we can go throughout. Because I tell everybody all the time because they get twisted. Fort Pierce is still in St. Lucie County. For some people, it's not a part of St. Lucie County. But it's still part of St. Lucie County. So that's what that's what I've been doing.

I can get; I could ask about advertisement. That's a good point. I don't know the answer to that yet. But I think I thought the planning department was supposed to put something out. But I don't want to put that on there. I think it was supposed to be some type of media blast to go out. I don't know.

KeAndrea Davis: Any other comments from the committee? We would usually answer questions afterwards. This is it's not the time for I don't know if you all want to take. Okay. So, we would have to ask after the meeting is over. What are your questions? Okay.

Erin O'Brien: I was going to say, I like your idea of tracking information. That's it. Now a list of items. I was just kind of brainstorming. That may help us track for court, maybe by quarter, just so the burden is not too much. Monthly.

So, like total number of applications submitted to PNC planning, zoning, number of applications requesting it. But I didn't review for affordable housing. You want to know who's actually applying for that. Average review time.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines/ Leslie Olsen Olsen/KeAndrea Davis: It's not many, but it's better than zero. I know it's not zero.

I know. I want to say Kevin told me it was three and I was allowed to be for the innovative residential, which may or may not be affordable housing, but it would be

Erin O'Brien: it would be curious to know who's asking for expedited for review for, for the affordable housing. Right.

Right. Using utilizing that. And then who's utilizing the innovative community of development ordinance Commissioner Arnold Gaines Arnold Gaines Commissioner Arnold Gaines Arnold Gaines Arnold Gaines: to answer your question.

I'm pretty sure the three that are in there are for affordable housing. Oh really? That's, that's why we did. That's why we try to, right.

That's why we try to make sure to get it, you know, when they go out and get ready. So, I think that's great. Actually, ADUs. Who's applying for those?

Leslie Olsen: Yeah, that would be really interesting to see.

Erin O'Brien: I'd also like to know the, the amount of impact fees that are being reduced or waived. Cause I know right now.

Leslie Olsen: but that would be for everybody. Not just for affordable housing.

Erin O'Brien: But I think there's some stats that we could track for quarter just to see how this is going and see maybe where things are still getting stuck that we could kind of. Yeah.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Somebody got to come in front of us to present this report, right? Like standing in front of us. Hey, commission, that'd be a good thing to know. We got a freeze on, but once you guys think about for this program to get this up, up and running, what else can you cut? We'll keep it in place for housing. However, you want. However, you want to see it. Is, is one thing saying it here to me? Yeah. So much up there. Cause I got to do, do yes. I need you guys to say it. And then once you say it, I can take it right with you.

Leslie Olsen: I was ready to speak on the 21st. I had something else to talk about.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: I have nothing to do with it. I don't control the gavel.

Erin O'Brien O'Brien: But other things like the, can the city give lots, not give, but like loan of property to affordable housing developers and just have a zero interest. I mean, there's some things, I don't know. I don't know how the property aspects work.

KeAndrea Davis: but we will probably need to figure out where that fits. If we are going to present it, where it would fit in one of our 11 strategies. And maybe that could be something that we look into on the next round of yeah. There's some power in that.

We're like, I didn't say it wants people to come in with developers that come in with a plan and partner with the city. Yeah. Well, with an idea, I like that because I recognize that, you know, it's not, it's not free. It's, you know, but what can, what creative ways can we entice people to come in and say, hey, build here. We need this. So, I'm down for putting that start that. So, when we go on the next round of building, next strategies, we can look into it.

Phil Thompson: There's not, there's not a lot of city owned property that's continuous. It's sporadic. They're all spot bots. So, it's tough to put an assembly together. We've talked about that in the other, in the other committees, but private, there's a lot of private landowners that have sizable tracks and it'll get on board with it. It'll come, but it has to get out there.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: I can ask you a question about the city giving away property right now we ain't giving away nothing. That's the headaches I'm dealing with right now with property and other stuff that has come. We have people giving us stuff back, but I'm not going to say no to that right person comes in with the right idea and plan, I'm pretty sure that they can persuade the five of us up there or persuade three of us up there to get those three votes to go that way. But right now, I don't see it happening, especially, I don't see it happening until we get a City Manager in here, a permanently, and that city manager has a chance to look at everything and go from there. So, I'm not going to say take it off the table, just put it on the back burner.

Erin O'Brien: That's the standard process the city has set up. I'm thinking outside the box. What else can we do for affordable housing outside that process? Because I understand that's on hold.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Me and Director Freeman have talked about the same thing you're talking about, but we're trying to, you can't get everything you want, trying to creep as much as we can.

KeAndrea: All righty. So that is our report. Do we need to vote again?

Phil Thompson: Madam Chair, I make a motion to accept the report, the committee report at the public hearing for a deficient rate.

Committee Members: I'll second that. All in favor? Aye. Moving on.

KeAndrea Davis: This public notice was just there. Any new business?

Erin O'Brien: I've had a random thought, but it doesn't necessarily apply here. I mean, it does. There's a question about ship funding that really can't be made to file, but I know it's based on population size, but I see there's a difference between population size and need, and I wonder why those two can't be put together for calculation based on whether it's median income of the area or housing price or something else along with the population. I just had that thought today.

Leslie Olsen: Wait, is that state or federal?

All Committees Members: State.

KeAndrea Davis: They set it, right?

Donnella Clarke: Yes. And then I believe that there's a formula based on size per capita where they provide funding based on that. And my goal was to come in and try to work with both the state and our federal partners to show that there is need. However, I've been pushed back on a

little bit with regard to the strategy that they used to calculate how much money and how much funding they're sending to smaller cities.

KeAndrea Davis: What do you mean? Okay, I'm going to get real, real. What do you mean? Because that's the committee. That's really, we're the advisory committee, and we're the citizens. So, the staff's getting pushed back.

Donnella Clarke: Well, I wouldn't necessarily say pushed back. I was just given education about how they actually calculate it.

KeAndrea: We need a lobbyist, too.

Leslie Olsen: I mean, I think that's something that maybe we can speak to our legislative delegation about. We had them there at the housing summit last week.

KeAndrea Davis: You can do it. We can do it. It's just it may not come from the inside; it may come outside. And I've seen it done in the city that I work for. The noise comes from the outside, and then that makes Tallahassee start saying, oh, wait, Fort Pierce, we need it.

You know, they're not always listening to inside. So that's why I'm asking the question.

Leslie Olsen: Yeah, I think it's an interesting idea. Maybe we could, as a committee, maybe at our next meeting, work on drafting a letter to our legislative delegation that represents the City of Fort Pierce and send it to them and see what they say. And if they don't respond, I'll text them.

Erin O'Brien: There's probably other jurisdictions or cities that have a similar issue. And we could share that letter with them and say, hey, put your letter down and send it to your representative. There's a whole crowd of people speaking up.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: All right, guys. Great idea. I signed up on it. When we got to go to Tallahassee? Coming up soon, right?

Leslie Olsen: Oh yeah. I don't know. I think it's a little late for the session.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Actually. I'm going to Tallahassee soon, guys, to fuss with everybody up. And that's number one on Commissioner Johnson's list, what you just said, by looking at Fort Pierce and taking it outside to surrounding areas. So, I'm going to stand in with him. I'm going to stand in with him when we fuss. And we've already opened up Senator Harrell. She wants to listen to what we say. And Dana says she will stand up with him.

Lesli Olsen: How about Toby?

KeAndrea Davis: So, the more we need all sides involved in one area, we appreciate your voice.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines : Hold on, let me clear the record on that, because I forgot. I don't know if Curtis is working on him. I'll say it that way. So, I don't know what Toby. Toby hasn't talked to me. So, I don't know what he's going to do.

Lesli Olsen: If it's helpful for you to take a letter from our committee to give to them, perhaps we can work with Donnella to come up with the content of the letter that would make sense,

like something that is professional and related to facts. And then if we could, I'd be happy to come in for a special meeting to vote on that and have the chair sign it.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Whatever, whatever. It's the end of this month, beginning of March.

Leslie Olsen: Okay, well, I mean, it's probably enough time to, it would have to be a special meeting. Is that enough time, Donnella, to come up with something that you think would be useful? And then we could each look at it independently. You can send it to each one of us independently. And then we can find a time we can all get back here and vote.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: I hate to use this word, but any ammunition you guys can give us we going in there to fight for our city, so you all save some bill money to come get me out of there.

KeAndrea Davis: No, no, we both, we both, this is our past family.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: I say that, I say that, it sounds like I said that jokingly. There'd be some heated conversations. I know you know, there'd be some heated conversations up there and, you know, sometimes the people in Tallahassee forget that they come from little cities and they get up there in the capital and they think that they can say and talk to you any kind of way sitting across the table because they got these big offices and whatever. But I say what I say. But we going out there to fight and for, I think it's a good thing that Senator Harrell is over here because that's who our kids got. She has a lot of power. She has a lot of power.

Lesli Olsen: She's, she's little, but she's mighty.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: She has a lot of power, that little red dress means a lot. Y'all think, y'all see she walking around, she's about that big. She walk around, she has a lot of power up in Tallahassee. So that's our key to getting to the people we need to get to.

KeAndra Davis: And full transparency, I probably won't be at a special meeting. So, I'll sign it or whatever I can do, but I just need to get a quorum together. Yeah, everybody else is going to have to show up and I'll participate virtually, but I know I can't vote. So.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Congratulations again.

KeAndrea Davis/Donnella Clarke: Thank you. All right, any other new business, old business? All right, committee and staff discussion. I guess I'll just ask that we officially, are you removing the other two people from the roll after this meeting? Okay, and how many spots are open? We were already down one. Yes, so is it three?

Donnella Clarke/KeAndrea Davis: Yeah. Nine, I think it's a total of nine. Okay.

Phil Thompson: Madam Chair, those spots, are they, have to be a particular person, a particular, no, we had to have individuals from different parts. What are we missing? Can anybody, can anybody, can one of these people in the audience right now apply?

KeAndrea Davis: Well, Chad um....

Donnella Clarke: the committee, the report lists the committee's composition. So, it's letters A through K. So, anyone here who has a copy of the report can designate any of these titles and ensure that they meet the criteria. And we can follow up with them right away.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Will do.

KeAndrea Davis: And then we have to meet at least six of the following.

Leslie: Yeah, and we have seven of them on there right now. And if you switch me to employer representative and we'll meet. So even if they're just, they can be anything on this list.

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: Okay. I just asked that for people sitting in the audience. The more help we get, the better this committee will be.

Jillian Jeffrey: Are you speaking to us?

KeAndrea Davis: Yes, do you have reports that they can have?

Marit Woods: We have extras here.

KeAndrea Davis: Yes, on the first page, for those that want to join the committee. Here's the flag. We'll find somewhere for you.

Jillian Jeffrey: Yeah, that's, yeah, I saw that.

Committee Member: Motions to adjourn?

Leslie Olsen: Second

KeAndrea Davis: This meeting is officially adjourned.