

AHAC: Meeting 12-17-2024



Meeting
12-17-2024.mp3

Present:

Arnold Gaines

KeAndrea Davis

Phil Thompson

Trevor Banks Jr.

Erin O'Brien

Grant Division Staff

Commissioner Arnold Gaines: This means enough because we didn't notice it, right?

KeAndrea Davis: Okay, today is Tuesday, December 17th, twenty-four. The time is now five thirty-six affordable housing advisory meeting. Meeting to order, we stand and have a United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

KeAndrea Davis: Commissioner here. Yeah, yeah.

Chatting room. Bernie Jones. Liz Wilson.

Bill Thompson. Trevor banks junior. Present.

Erin O'Brien. Here. Kimberly Hinton.

Present. Donnella Clarke. Present.

Covasky Brutus. Present.

Marit Woods. Present.

KeAndrea Davis: now we'll have a couple of minutes for everyone to have an opportunity to review the October 3rd, 2024, minutes. Get a motion to approve what you can approve within their collection. Oh, and this time we'll have comments from the public.

Seeing none, we will move on. And now it's time for new business, the approval of affordable housing. Advisory, I mean, I'm sorry.

Yeah, the advisory committee report. We've all been provided with their reports on essential strategies. Prepared by Miss Clark.

Donnella Clarke: Thank you.

Ms. Davis: Well, we just added the item that went before the time. I mean the commissioner already?

Ms. Clarke: The format of the report has changed, it has been updated. Our city attorney recommended that we hold a special meeting to make sure we properly notice these updates and provide your goals for the last time you was here in October. I, in error, said that folks could review the report and send me their votes via email separately, and that was not sufficient. So, we want to make sure that we'll have an opportunity to make your voices heard, reporting and that we are satisfactorily providing the public with responses.

KeAndrea Davis: Thank you. Mr. Gaines: Mr. what was my vote by email? What can we follow the statue or turn it back?

Ms. Clarke: Yes, the statue Yeah, that's for them. Yes.

Ms. Davis: The Statue of the AHAC says we must make an affirmative vote in the meeting and in October we did not?

Ms. Clarke: It must be recorded. Ms. Davis: In a public meeting.

Ms. Clarke: Yes.

Ms. Davis: The AHAC statue says it?

Mr. Thompson: I'd like to make a motion to approve the report.

Mr. Gaines: Second.

Ms. Davis: Can you call the role so you can get an affirmative vote from each of us.

Ms. Henton: Arnold Gaines? Yes

KeAndrea Davis? Yes. Phil Thompson? Yes.

Erin O'Brien? Yes. Trevor Banks, Jr.? Yes. Ms. Davis: Motion passes.

Ms. Davis: Unanimously. Okay. Mr. Gaines: Yeah, for the record, can somebody put on a record we have quorum for this meeting? Ms. Davis:

We call the role, all 5 of us are here. Five of the 7 members are present, we do have quorum.

Mr. Gaines: Thank you. Thank you.

Ms. Davis: Moving on to item number 7. old the business now, I'm hearing that moving on to a committee and staff discussion.

Ms. Clarke: I was made aware today that your terms. were Up.

Ms. Davis: Who made you aware of this? Just curious. City Attorney?

Ms. Clarke: Our acting City Clerk

Ms. Davis: I don't want to be recorded Ms. Clark: So, will you individually be willing to participate in the ongoing process of a 2nd term for this committee? Mr. Gaines. Yeah, I've already accepted. Yes. Ms. Clark: Okay. Ms. Davis?

Ms. Davis: Sure. Am I allowed?

Ms. Clarke: Of course, you are.

Ms. Clarke: Mr. Thompson?

Mr. Thompson: Yes

Ms. Clarke: Mr. Banks?

Mr. Banks: Yes

Ms. Clarke: Ms. Erin O'Brien?

Ms. O'Brien: Yes Ms. Clark: I appreciate you all. Wait, I do that.

Okay. No, I appreciate you all saying yes. Affirmatively.

Mr. Thompson: Do we need to put the applications back in?

Ms. Clarke: I don't believe so. They reach out to you. The city clerk's office will reach out for financial disclosures and all of the things that you guys did before at the committee as members.

I believe Trevor and Erin were the only ones who didn't complete. Their initial terms, so I just want to make sure that I had their votes on record as well.

Ms. Davis: The term is for 2 years.

Ms. Clarke: Yes, mam

Ms. Davis: No matter what commission moves, change seats. Right?

Mr. Thompson: It's been 2 years already.

Ms. Davis: So, for us, it's 2 years, but for them, it wasn't 2 years.

Ms. Clarke: They came in April. Ms. Davis: Okay, so my question, I was going to ask about absences and if you've already...

Ms. Clarke: It's a maximum of 3.

Ms. Davis: Right, we have members that have been absent for I don't know. We have never taken consideration of absences and I'm with some things that I have.

In chambers, we openly approved absences. If they're excusing that, I don't know if you all do it in house.

Ms. Clarke: Staff have been taking note of certain member have not been here. and reported absences to the clerk office for their records.

Ms. Davis: Do we put the application back out for new members?

Ms. Clark: They will be doing that in January.

Ms. Davis: Okay. I mean, this is the only board that I don't, never mind.

Mr. Gaines: Thank you. Ms. Davis: Motion to adjourn? Anyone?

Mr. Thompson: Second.

Mr. Gaines: who is going to present this when we go downstairs?

Ms. Clarke: I will.

Mr. Gaines: Do you need our support?

Ms. Clarke: Sure, it would be nice to have your support.

Mr. Gaines: It would be nice for everyone that can come to come. Do me favor.

Ms. Clarke: Yes.

Mr. Gaines: Ask the other 4 members what they want us to do.

Ms. Clarke: 4 members?

Mr. Gaines: Other 4 members, ask the question, put it on record. I explained everything. I know we have 11 things we must follow by the statute. And not to make you get up there on time, but you might want to read it.

Ms. Davis: Can I interject? I think this year is different because you have already approved the ordinance, right?

Ms. Clarke: Yes.

Ms. Davis: So, we don't have much of a presentation because all we're presenting is the ordinance that your commission has already approved. We don't have anything. Oh, how do we move forward? Mr. Gaines: What do you want us to do?

Ms. Davis: Oh, yeah.

Are you all having a consultant come back to, like, last time to tell you what the current state of affordable housing is?

Ms. Davis: Thank you, Commissioner.

Mr. Gaines: For affordable housing we started out. Um, strategic plan, how that works is the person that does the strategic planning, reaches out to every commissioner and the mayor individual.

And he goes through what we accomplished, what we didn't accomplish, what we need, what we didn't need. And then what he has is each commission and their top five priorities and he put everything together. So, when we come together, when we meet. My number two priority is...What are we going to do for the house, everybody here, Travis, you know, you should probably know what my number 1 is. My number 1 is the youth, that's always my # 1, but I think that's where we should be spending most of our money, providing for the youth. My number 2 is affordable housing. So, thank you guys' reason there is a method to my madness. The reason I'm asking you to do this is because we're going to strategic planning and I'm going to make affordable housing. Somehow, we number 1 on our list when we come out of our strategic planning, because I'm trying of kicking the can down the road and it's time to do something and the 2 little project that we have on the books are not, so that's why I want I want them to put it on record so we all can hear and then we can go from here.

Ms. Davis: When is our next meeting?

Ms. Clarke: I believe I wanted to have that discussion with you all. We had discussed every other month. I believe that's what we agree on. I wanted to know if that is still ok with you all.

Mr. Gaines: Don't mean to cut you off, until we get some direction. From us, I'm not always in my turn and that's kind of what I told him. I think we're going to report, but you also got to tell the board what you wanted to do. Mr. Thompson: Put it on the agenda.

Ms. Davis: I would like to see . How well, the ordinance does, since it's been implemented and what happens at, like, given that. Sometimes cook, because I think they're putting in what July August.

Ms. Clarke: It actually went...

Ms. Davis: I don't remember

Ms. Clarke: September

Ms. Davis: because I didn't make it, but just maybe Mr. Browning can give us an update. Sorry, what's his name? His name is Kevin. I'm sorry.

Ms. O'Brien: Can we ask for stats from permitting on who's applied for the ordinance? I don't know where that information. We're the best places to go for planning or building? As for everything, anything you think we need.

Mr. Gaines: Ask for everything, and if I found out, I'm upset right now, but everything, because what I don't want is for everybody's rushing here every other month at 5:30 trying to be here. But just to have a conversation and say, I have time for that. And just to have a conversation and say we met. I don't have time for that and I know for a fact that in the city of Fort Pierce, affordable housing should be the top of the list because we need it.

Ms. O'Brien: There's a huge opportunity. There's so much that can be done here. It's just like, we need to jump in and start doing this.

Ms. Davis: So, hopefully that ordinance will find some type of creative, I mean, I thought it was a creative way to kind of push the envelope for it, but I was just like, this means that's like, a six-month update.

Ms. O'Brien: Even quarterly would be good because there's so much that happens. There's so many permits. Just a matter of filtering out which ones apply.

Mr. Gaines: Anything this board wants me to say to my other board members when I get my chance to speak anything, but just we both, we, we be united and go through the report. So, I don't mind, you know, I don't mind. Got you.

So, if there's anything, yeah, or anything we need, I'll do that. Let me do that. Maybe you can get.

Ms. Davis: Just direction, ask what is the, commission goal? I guess you'll do that in strategic planning, but what do you want to see for the city moving forward and what specific even if they look at the incentive strategies? Is there one that they want to focus on and have us explore?

Mr. Gaines: Madame Chair, I said, I'm sure I said that last meeting when I had to do my, I had to do my board updates and we came to this board. I asked the Clerk, I really asked the Clerk to. Give everybody a copy of the 11 things and have them look at it, and if they saw something that it really was interested in to report back. So we don't know, but for us to be, for us to be.

Picking 1, and that's not what the commission wants is wasting our time and I asked this, I'm asking you to follow up, they say, I just go away anyway. So, but if we come back and say, well, no, you know, Mr. Gaines was kind of right on now, give us some direction to where you want us to go. We'll get busy and do it. That's all I am asking.

Mr. Thompson: I'm not speaking for everybody, but I think we have all discussed it. We're really not sure about the programs. We're not really up to speed on the programs. Which is state money, which is federal money. Where does it all come from? How does that what charges? I mean, we know. Some of the SHIP money for the renovations and the houses they're fixing up.

I get that. Where's the money for new developments? Where's the money for new houses? Where is that coming from?

Mr. Gaines: But that's a question that when we do this report, and we sit in front of y'all sitting in front of me, the rest of it, those are questions that that can't get because if you ask it there, it's a public meeting. If you ask it there, you have to get an answer and if they don't answer it, I was sitting on that end and say something like, and we need this to help this board, help this board move. And that's where we are. So, I even tried to ask everybody that they want to sit on the board. I wasn't trying to leave just to get some fresh ideas, but maybe I was, you know, out of ideas. So, they ran from that real quick.

Mr. Thompson: So, I mean, let's face it, economics drive everything without the economics, we can do all day long. If it's not going to get built, it's not going to get built. And without the money, it's not going to get built.

Mr. Gaines: Well, I'm going to say this, and I know everybody in town, I'm going to say this, we need to do it. Whatever you're going to ask for, we need to do it now because Tallahassee is about to go on legislation in what, two weeks? In about two weeks, January 2nd, 3rd week of January, they're about to be up there. So everybody who is asking for something is asking right now.

They're already talking to their people asking right now. And the word from Tallahassee, back to all the city officials, stop with all this asking, we're going to tighten the budget this year. That's what word came back.

However, affordable housing is still high on the governor's list. Me and the Governor don't see eye to eye on everything, but right now, affordable housing is still high on his list. So if we got his ear, we need to jump in his ear right away.

And if anybody didn't know Dana or Senator Graham or all the rest of them, we need to get in their ear and say, send the money back. Even if you know Brian, Brian Mays, when he go back to D.C., send the money back and let us build some of this affordable housing because it looks good on their political card. When they stand up there and say, I built such and such in Fort Pierce, I built such and such in St. Lucie County, it looks good on their card.

I'm just telling you how I'm learning how this thing works. You know, I'm trying to build inside of this game called politics, but I'm learning how it works and I'm really biting my tongue now. So I'm just doing that.

That's what I say. Now is the time to you know, if you know, if you have a relationship with Brian Mays, if you have a relationship with Senator Rayl and Aaron and all the rest of Tony and all the rest of Tony..

Mr. Thompson: Toby

Mr. Gaines: Whatever, Tony, oh, now it's time to call, now it's time to call them and ask those questions. What money can we get to help these programs? And I'm on this committee to help this program. Now it's time to get it.

Ms. O'Brien: Well, that question that I had is, well, we're not the only AHAC in the state, there's other people doing this. So, can we find another jurisdiction that's similar to Fort Pierce and figure out how there are a few and how, what are they doing? How are they doing it?

Ms. Clarke: I reached out to the closest city that looks like city of Fort Pierce, Rivera Beach, I'm waiting for a response from their SHIP /CBDG administrator, the person that runs it, so we'll find out exactly what they're doing and kind of mirror that.

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Mr. Gaines: And to add a caveat to what you said. Not find one or two, find as many as you can to form a coalition, so in three or four cities, I'd ask AHAC.

Ms. Davis: I also think you necessarily don't have to ask a city that looks like us.

The county has this committee and so does Port St. Lucie. I've read through their meetings. It can be, there are simple fixes. And I think we started that in there very, when we first got on this board. With different those videos went through cities all over that had different type of examples. And so we don't have to necessarily mirror what those examples are, but they do give you ideas.

Um, the city of Port St. Lucie has different other outside agencies come to their meetings and housing councils come to their meetings and give presentations on what's actually going on with affordable housing. So, you can kind of gather ideas of creativity, not just, you know, what another city is doing, but we can create it here because thinking outside the box and asking for it, because I'm pretty sure the money is there, when you ask for it, you need to ask for it. Ms. O'Brien: What about matching not just locations, but matching, like, size of land or income levels or some other things that was mesh our city in with that state? Ms. Clark: Well, that's why I reached out to her here because they have a similar kind of each.

Ms. O'Brien: I'm sorry, thought you said

Ms. Clarke: they have a similar demographic to the city. So, that's why I reached out to them and, you know, we, we attended a SHIP conference in September and got some feedback from our administrators on how to proceed with our strategies and make sure that we're doing things the right way. But like, the 3 days that it comes down to funding everything is about funding, so if we can't show that we are implementing these strategies, according to those 11, those 11 strategies, and we pick the one that we are, if we can't show that we are providing those, that strategy, then Um, it doesn't go well for, you know, our funding, our increase in funding, they will give you according to what you are carrying out.

Mr. Thompson: So, so they want to see the zoning change and all the rules. Ms. Davis: That's what, this committee is about is to review the local government. Ordinances and what can we put into place to get the money here? So, we laid the foundation of, hey, we have now this ordinance, so you don't have excuses of you gotta jump through all these hoops, bring your money, spend it here because we created a plan for you to spend it here.

To developers in what have you.

Mr. Banks: does the county have a SHIP allocation?

Ms. Clarke: Yes

Mr. Banks: and then CDBG allocation.

Ms. Clarke: Yes Mr. Banks: Do they designate a portion of that to Fort Pierce?

Ms. Clarke: No

Mr. Banks: but they do for Port Saint Lucie?

Ms. Clarke: It's all for Port Saint Lucie It's all I think that's a conversation because our SHIP allocations is not large enough. It's going to be so we can't do it. We can't even do 1 project. Um, and our CDBG is also low, but I think that's a conversation we need to recommend with the county because we're part of the county, right? So, those conversations take trouble.

Mr. Gaines: No, I'm saying, I go with you, but I've been quiet. Mr. Banks: Who would that conversation be with?

Ms. O'Brien: Champions

Ms. Clarke: Jennifer

Mr. Banks: who controls the delegation? So, I know she administers the delegation, but is that the board?

Ms. Henton: You mean the funding?

Mr. Banks: Yeah

Ms. Henton: that's the Florida housing coalition.

Mr. Banks: but who in the county? Because they have to designate where they distribute those dollars to. Right?

Ms. Henton: Yeah.

Mr. Banks: So, is there a board that is over the house? Mr. Gaines: start of the top, set an appointment with your commissioners. I wouldn't know that you want this in different 1. Let me know what's going on.

Mr. Banks: That's the low hanging fruit is to know what he's saying.

Mr. Gaines: He wants to be a different commissioner for district 1. Here's the time. Go talk to him.

Mr. Banks: Absolutely.

Ms. O'Brien: You brought up a good point earlier when you mentioned, okay, we've set these things in place. Now people come and utilize them. Well, that's the marketing aspect.

When we reach out to groups, developers let them know who does that. Can we assist with that?

Ms. Davis: I mean, that sounds like a recommendation to the city to implement it. You know, marketing wise, that's I don't know where it will fall that, but maybe it's a recommendation that we can suggest to the commission to direct staff to put a, a bucket of funds for marketing, making it attractive for people to come and spend.

Ms. O'Brien: or just making some connections and figure out who knows who as far as I don't know.

Ms. Davis: Yeah.

Mr. Banks: I think for affordable housing development. When you look at Fort Pierce, because of how low the SHIP and CDBG allocation is kind of a red flag for developers, because that's I mean, you have to use subsidy to make the numbers work.

So, if we could figure that out with the county, I'm not saying it solves the whole problem, but it provides some level of subsidy. Where developers, if they find out you have an allocation designated for a particular area, that itself would market getting the word out. Of course, but that would draw developers.

Because the subsidy is available.

Ms. O'Brien: there's the cost of additional funding and then there's the barriers that we hope we reduce that.

Mr. Banks: Yeah, I think the ordinances are great. It's just like Bill said, I mean, it comes down to can you make money work.

Ms. Davis: you know, the counties with how much money they get? We can have a meeting, I mean, we can set up and..

Mr. Banks: yeah, I think that would be great. Mr. Thompson: No, was this presented to the commission is on the 16th? at the 716 meeting now.

Ms. Clarke: Yes

Mr. Thompson: When are we going to be present? Multiple: January.

Mr. Banks: Is that the one that we got the email for the 21st?

Ms. Clarke: I sent an email just in case you all were not able to come to a quorum and to a decision tonight. If you vote, I sent that meeting, so inadvertently, I'll cancel that. I'll take that off the calendar today.

Mr. Gaines: Thank you.

Ms. Clarke: You're welcome.

Ms. Davis: All right. So, our next meeting, since this goes to commission in January, we look for a recommendation from the commission. We probably shouldn't be until February. Is that okay?

Ms. Clarke: That's what I was thinking.

Mr. Thompson: Do we know that this is going to the commission?

Ms. Clarke: Yeah, I think the 21st of January, yeah, the 505 meeting.

Ms. Davis: Yeah, that's what this immediately means. What is...

Ms. O'Brien: Can we get the county representative to our meeting? That way we can all talk.

Ms. Davis: Yeah, that's a good idea. Sorry, Jenny. Go ahead.

Mr. Thompson: We talked about January already.

Mr. Banks: And I would say that the commissioner passed over, would that be district 1?

Mr. Gaines: Clasby

Mr. Banks: because they can put a set aside there. I'm sure.

Mr. Gains: Here I come. If you ask him, here I come. Okay.

Ms. Davis: So. Mr. Gaines: I'm just letting you know.

Ms. Davis: No, no.

Mr. Gaines: Here I come.

Ms. Davis: February 6th? Yes. At 5.30?

Ms. Clarke: Mm-hmm.

Ms. Davis: Okay. What time?

Ms. Henton: Is 5:30pm still Ok with, everybody?

Ms. Davis: Yeah, that might be... Okay. I might be remote after that meeting.

Mr. Gaines: Why?

Ms. Davis: I have a blessing. When? Next week.

Mr. Gaines: Or... Yeah, you will be remote. I'll come to see you then. Yeah.

Mr. Thompson: Is that February 5th or 6th? Thursday? 6th.

Ms. Davis: And we look forward to have a county representative at that meeting.

Ms. Clarke: I Will make contact.

Mr. Banks: Is the county the issuer of bonds as well?

Mr. Bank: Is the county the issuer of bonds as well? Like taxes and bonds? Ms. Clark: I'm not sure that I actually have that information.

Mr. Banks: Okay, so the city doesn't have their own. All: So how's it coming into the region? It's kind of like. I got to tell you.

Mr. Gaines: The more we talk, the more we talk to the county, the more we talk to the people to get the word out, then people are starting to get right over there. If we sit here in this room and talk amongst ourselves, and then go sit at the meeting downstairs, I can call that a county holiday bond. Right, we're coming in and sitting here and hearing, hey, this is what we're trying to do, and it benefits you too.

All right, so I say this all the time in council meetings. People think Fort Pierce is not in St. Lucie County. We're still a part of St. Lucie County.

We're not outside of St. Lucie County. We're still part of St. Lucie County. So St. Lucie County, if we're doing good in Fort Pierce, you're doing good in St. Lucie County.

Let's join in and make it work. Ms. Clark: Before we adjourn or finish up, I'd like a chance to introduce our new staff. Gentleman to my right, Mr. Covasky Brutus for us.

He's actually our community resource specialist. He's going to be engaging with everyone.

Ms. Davis: Good luck to you.

Mr. Clarke: And our temporary staff, Marit Woods, will be here with us.

Ms. Davis: Nice to have you. Welcome to the city of Fort Pierce. I hope you stay for quite some time.

Ms. Clarke: And our new reporting specialist. In charge of aiding with specialized reports to our HUD and our SHIP.

Mr. Gaines: To our new staff, I understand. Every time you say. And so do I. So you see me on the commission town or whatever. I don't change the hallway. You see me in the hallway. Stop me, grab me, talk to me. I don't care about it. You should talk to me. And other commissioners kind of don't like me. You see me. If I'm in my office. That's how I feel.

So. I'm trying to behave in 2025.

Ms. Davis: Good trouble.

Mr. Banks: Before we bring the county in, should we have. Should we contribute to the agenda to have something prepared? To lead the discussion.

Ms. Clarke: I took some of your. Your agenda items. And what some of the challenges are. It would be nice to. So that when I do reach out, we can the Topics that interest our committee has.

For you to come and bring answers. So that they're not just coming here and hearing the. For lack of a better word.

Ms. Davis: Well, that's why I asked you for it. To see what the commission's vision is. You know, like what's the recommendation. I don't know. Give us. Some type of baseline. Is Leslie still on it?

Yes, Leslie is out of town. So, she is not here Today. She would be available for the next meeting.

Ms. Davis: Chad's is not here?

Ms. Clarke: We are losing one member. Yeah. So, we will miss him. I appreciate his contribution. He was one of the ones that.

Ms. Davis: I just looked over. I haven't heard or seen. So, I was just actually concerned. Okay, I'm cool. I like this. I ask questions all the time. And I give him a hard time. All the time. You have to keep. We voted them in.

Mr. Gaines: I need to turn it up for it. I think she comes to the commission. That's great. All the time.

Mr. Thompson: all adjourned.

Merry Christmas.