

**Minutes of the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
Board of Commissioners Meeting**

Date: Monday, 26 March 2007

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Amoco Building
1340 Poydras Street, 10th Floor Board Room
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

The following agenda items were considered at the meeting:

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM

2. Roll Call

Quorum was present with Commissioners Abbott, Couhig, Cowen, Gray, Singleton, West, and Woods. Commissioners Brown, Connor, Lagarde, and Major were noted absent.

3. Introduction of Guests

- Jim Pate, New Orleans Habitat for Humanity
- Michelle Krupa, Times Picayune
- Davin Boldissar, BGR
- Michelle Kimball, PRC
- Patricia Gay, PRC
- Royce Duplessis, City Council District C
- Ed Shanklin, Melvin Securities
- Jack Bowers, New Orleans Habitat for Humanity
- Lauren Lentz, New Orleans Resident
- Becca O'Brien, Mayor's Office
- Anthony Jones, Mayor's Office – Technology
- Jeff Thomas, ORM
- Gloria Serafin, New Orleans Resident
- Thomas O'Neil, Developer
- Ricardo Gutierrez, Citizens Road Home Action Chat

4. Review and Approval of Agenda

Approval Motion: Couhig

Second: Gray

Vote: Unanimous

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting held March 12, 2007

Approval Motion: Couhig

Second: Gray

Vote: Unanimous

6. Committee Reports

a) Land Assembly and Disposition

Land Assembly and Disposition met on 19 March 2007. The Committee agreed to:

- approach the City Council to educate them on NORA's upcoming request for them to introduce CIP plans
- create an Advisory Council for the Committee which the Executive Director is currently working on assembling
- move forward with NORA's tools for land acquisition including Quick Take

Chairman West also informed the Board of his meeting with Donna Addkison about funding sources.

b) Finance and Administration

Finance and Administration had no new information to report.

7. Executive Director's Report

▪ **Office Space**

Mr. Williams reminded the Board that NORA has outgrown its current office space and is presently reviewing three alternatives, two in our current building and one outside the building. Mr. Williams postponed making a decision in anticipation of a potentially cost free lease agreement and deferred to the Chair as to which committee should review the information. The Chair chose Finance as the reviewing committee and it was decided that they would have a report for the Body by the next meeting. Commissioner Cowen informed Mr. Williams about available space in the 1555 Poydras building and supplied him with contact information.

▪ **Staffing**

This report was rendered during Executive Session

▪ **NORA Prospectus**

NORA is currently in contact with various foundations for funding of every aspect of its operations (staffing, technical, etc). Those ad hoc presentations were being done in-house by staff. The Executive Director and Staff are in the process of working with consultants on a NORA Prospectus: a detailed, professional description of NORA's goals, responsibilities, objectives, organizational structure, and role in the recovery process. This prospectus would enable NORA to fundraise with a consistent and detailed presentation. A draft of the prospectus will be available to the Commissioners by the next meeting.

Mr. Williams emphasized the significance of this prospectus as an important tool; one that he would like to have available for two upcoming meetings with potential funders.

▪ **Parish Wide Recovery Council**

Mr. Williams informed the Board that the first meeting of the Orleans Parish Recovery Council was held on Friday, 23 March 2007 at UNO. The Committee was comprised of all City Departments as well as agencies and other entities involved in the recovery process. Mr. Williams described the meeting as a good first step whose purpose was to make sure that all the

entities involved in recovery have good working communication and relationships with each other. In line with the key role NORA is playing in the recovery, Mr. Williams volunteered to serve on the Core Committee of the Council. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis with conversations occurring much more frequently. Mr. Williams agree to update the Board as the information is available.

Mr. Williams was asked for additional updates by the Board:

1. Legislative Agenda: The legislative package has been prepared with items that had previously been discussed by the Board, including bulk petitions and quiet title. Mr. Williams asked the Chair to refer the legislative package to the Executive Committee for review and additional input on other items that may need to be added. The City Legal Department has the legislative package now and will be meeting to discuss the content. Meetings are also being set up with Legislators for the same purpose.
2. Quick Take: The draft ordinance for quick take is completed. The City Legal Department is currently reviewing it now. The Commissioners were emailed a copy as well. The next step is a meeting with Legal and Recovery before the final ordinance is brought to the Board. Mr. Williams assured the Board it would be ready for presentation to City Council on 05 April 07.
3. Federal Funding Request: A \$15 Million request for Federal funds is moving through Congress as part of a supplemental military bill that passed the House but has stalled in the Senate. The request is also slated to move through Congress via other avenues. Mr. Williams asked the Board for their help with developing and sustaining a relationship with Congressman Baker, Chairman Frank, Chairman Baccus, and others. Commissioner Cowen offered to make his Government Relations people available to the Agency and gave Mr. Williams contact information. Commissioner Woods offered his services as well in light of his already established relationship with our Congressional leaders.

8. Chairman's Report: Legislative Agenda

No report was given due to discussion during the Executive Director's report.

9. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Issues

Motion: Singleton, to create the positions of Special Council to General Council and Intergovernmental Affairs, adopting the job description of the Special Council, requesting a job description for Intergovernmental Affairs from the Executive Director.

Second: Woods

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Gray, to allow the Executive Director to engage a consultant to do a job search for any of the necessary Manager positions to the extent that the consultant's fees are paid by another source.

Second: Singleton

Vote: Unanimous

10. Public Comment

- Jim Pate, Executive Director of the New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity addressed the Board about what they have been doing and plan to do in the near future. Mr. Pate expressed that their only impediment is land and that he looks forward to continuing his work with Chris Gobert who in the past has been very helpful in Habitat's acquisition of land. Mr. Pate informed the Board that most of the 80 houses that Habitat has completed or has under construction currently, were acquired with Chris' help from NORA. Board President Rob Worley introduced himself to the Board.
- Thomas O'Neil, a developer in New Orleans for the last five years addressed the Board in reference to when a list would be available so that he and the developers he represents can continue acquiring property. Mr. Williams informed Mr. O'Neil that NORA is in the final stages of finalizing its policies and procedures, and until the point of completion, a list will not be available. Chairman Abbott informed Mr. O'Neil that NORA has an action plan deadline of 90 days which was made in January, and that the Agency is moving as expeditiously as prudence will allow.
- Ricardo Gutierrez, representing the Citizens Road Home Action Team, addressed the Board in reference to concerns about the proceeds from property sales being funneled back to the neighborhood where the property was sold. Mr. Gutierrez also expressed an interest in acquiring NORA property through auction and having a meeting schedule with minutes posted on the website.
- Patty Gay addressed the Board giving an overview of what Preservation Resource Center is doing, including an update on the Rebuilding Together and Operation Comeback Programs. Ms. Gay also commented on the auction process reflecting on the fact that many times at auction, a property may not be sold at fair market value.

11. Old Business

None

12. New Business

None

13. Adjourn

Motion: Cowen

Second: Singleton

Vote: Unanimous