

HOUSING COMMISSION OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2024, 11:15 AM
100 W HOUSTON & VIDEO CONFERENCE

Members Present: Katie Wilson, Chair
Robert Abraham, Member
Pedro Alanis, Member
Jeffrey Arndt, Member
Taneka “Nikki” Johnson, Member
Crystal Requejo, Member
Michael Reyes, Member

Members Absent: Kristin Davila, Member
Cecilia Garcia Redmond, Member

Staff Present: Veronica Garcia, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Mark Carmona, *City Manager’s Office*; Juan Valdez, *Mayor’s Office*; Teresa Myers, *Mayor’s Office*; Veronica Gonzalez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Jameene Williams, *City Attorney’s Office*; Thomas Heydon, *Department of Human Services*; Sara Wamsley Estrada, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Jacob Floyd, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Siboney Diaz-Sánchez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Marivel Arauza, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Jessica Lozano, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; James McKenzie, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Valentina Fernandez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Joyce Palmer, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Sharon Chan, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*

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- **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Chair, Katie Wilson, at 11:27 AM.
 - **Roll Call** – Sara Wamsley Estrada, Housing Policy Administrator, called the roll. At the time when roll call was conducted, seven (7) members were present representing a quorum.
1. **Public Comments** – Wilson announced there were thirteen (13) residents signed up for public comment. (*Video timestamp: 41:00*)
 1. **Item #6e:** Sunny Davila, District 4 resident and President-elect for the San Antonio Apartment Association (SAAA), read a statement noting that SAAA supports veterans and believes that veterans should have access to safe and stable housing. Davila stated the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program is meant to be voluntary. Where large housing providers are able to navigate through the program requirements, many private owner-operators opt to not participate due to costly regulatory barriers and coordination. SAAA asked the Commission to consider policy changes for removing barriers through collaborative stakeholder engagement to ensure housing for veterans.
 2. **Item #6e:** Jose Arzola, Commander of the American GI Forum (AGIF) Miguel Hernandez, Jr. Chapter, stated his support of ending source of income discrimination (SOID) against veterans. Arzola noted from his experience working with the VASH

Program through his non-profit, that the process needed to be streamlined and that we should not be satisfied with the status quo. He emphasized the need to ensure veterans do not stay homeless.

3. **Item #6e:** Pete Bernal stated his support of a policy to end housing voucher discrimination against veterans. Bernal stated many veterans are better served residing close to support facilities and need the VASH Program to help them live near those facilities. He requested Commissioners consider the policy as a hand up, not a handout, for veterans to reclaim a meaningful purpose in the community.
4. **Item #6e and #2:** Roman Pena, Commander of the AGIF of Bexar County and Chairman of Our Casas, stated his support of ending SOID for veterans. Pena noted that landlords in the northside oppose housing vouchers where many of the veteran hospitals and facilities are located. Pena also noted his support for the Community Land Trust model and was pleased to see the Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC) and Esperanza Peace and Justice Center's involvement.
5. **Item #6e:** Rich Acosta, President of My City is My Home; Treasurer of AGIF of Bexar County; Housing Chair of VSW 9186, stated his support of ending SOID for veterans. Acosta also noted support from YWCA and the Abundant Life Christian Fellowship Church. He stated Fort Worth passed a policy for veterans and joined with an organization to do third party inspections and assist in reducing the wait time for veterans.
6. **Item #6e:** Marlana Stricker, representative of My City is My Home and Stricker Relocation Services, stated her support of ending SOID for veterans. She noted there are several programs and resources in place to assist property owners and operators if damage does occur to rented property.
7. **Item #6e:** Steven Price, representative of the Voices of Our Veterans, stated his support of ending SOID for veterans. Price read a press release regarding U.S. Representatives Scott Peters and Adam Shift reintroduction of the Fair Housing Improvement Act of 2023 to protect veterans and low-income families from housing discrimination and requested that the legislation be introduced and passed in San Antonio.
8. **Item #6e:** Laurence Romo, retired Lieutenant Colonel from the US Air Force, stated his support of ending SOID for veterans. Romo noted that Fort Worth increased their support of veterans by creating new programs with direct services to veterans experiencing homelessness and an ordinance amending discrimination against veteran's lawful source of income.
9. **Item #2:** Graciela Sanchez noted Rene Gonzales, Ray Morales and Leticia Sanchez were present and representatives of the Esperanza Community Land Trust (CLT). She shared the CLT has the same boundaries as the Historic Westside Residents Association. Sanchez noted the journey for the Esperanza CLT and is awaiting amendments to the City's CLT policies to ensure their CLT is able to function correctly at all levels of government.
10. **Item #2, 3, and 5:** Leticia Sanchez, Co-chair of the Historic Westside Residents Association, stated the City was not making large enough strides for affordability and requested the Housing Bond funding be used to increase units at or below 30% AMI (area median income). Sanchez noted the Esperanza CLT had already assisted one resident that was in danger of foreclosure. She also requested an audience with the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Preservation and Development subcommittee (RBSC) as one of the planned Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) lines runs through their community and they are worried they would be priced out from their houses.
11. **Item #3 and 6e:** Kayla Miranda, housing advocate and resident of Alazan-Apache Courts, noted the precedent that the Esperanza CLT has created for San Antonio.

Miranda also noted her support for ending SOID for low-income families.

- Item #3:** Ana Polanco, a coalition member from the Westside, stated she is more aware of the resources available to the community through these meetings. She is also aware of the growing needs in the community and supports increased funding to address housing that provides dignity to people. Polanco requested more help in distributing the information for resources to the community. Polanco stated families receiving resources or assistance would have a great impact in their wellbeing.

Staff note: The Housing Commission deadline for submitted written comment is 24 hours before the meeting. The reason for this is because it takes 24 hours for comments received in a language other than English to be translated. Speakers can leave a voicemail to be played during the meeting up to three hours before the meeting. Speakers can sign up to speak live during the meeting virtually up to 3 hours before the meeting or to speak during the meeting in person up until the meeting starts. Speakers who call past the deadline are given the opportunity to submit a written comment to be included in the minutes but not read during the meeting, and to sign up in advance for the following meeting.

- Item #1: Approval of the minutes from the San Antonio Housing Commission meeting on April 24, 2024.** (Video timestamp: 1:24:25)

Commissioner Robert Abraham motioned to approve the minutes from the San Antonio Housing Commission meeting on April 24, 2024. Commissioner Pedro Alanis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- Item #2: Briefing and discussion related to a Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) strategy to establish a Community Land Trust (CLT).** (Video timestamp: 2:46)

Wamsley Estrada introduced Jason Webb, Community & Technical Assistance Principal for Grounded Solutions Network, and requested he present. Webb overviewed core elements of CLTs, classic models, and their ability to build perpetual affordable housing. Wamsley Estrada outlined CLT's alignment with the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP), current process to receive a CLT designation in Texas, and requirements and considerations for CLT designation.

The item was for briefing and discussion only. No action was taken.

- Item #3: Briefing and discussion on the 2022- 2027 Affordable Housing Bond FY 2024 Request for Proposals (RFP).** (Video timestamp: 1:24:50)

Wilson requested Ian Benavidez, Deputy Director, present. Benavidez noted that Victoria Gonzalez-Gerlach, Housing Bond Administrator, would present. Gonzalez-Gerlach overviewed the Housing Bond's available funding, solicitation details, evaluation criteria, evaluation committee, award recommendation, and timeline.

The item was for briefing and discussion only. No action was taken.

- Item #4: Briefing and possible action related to the approval of recommended non-commissioner appointees to the Renters' Solutions Subcommittee (RSS) of the Housing Commission.** (Video timestamp: 1:39:20)

Wilson requested Jacob Floyd, Housing Policy Manager, present. Floyd overviewed the RSS application timeline and noted the recommended candidates as follows:

Recommended Appointees	Category
Keisha Brown	Renter

Andrè Greene	Renter
Valerie Rodriguez	Renter
Shawn Irwin	Rental Property Management
Daniel Rossiter	Rental Property Owner

Commissioner Nikki Johnson motioned to approve the recommended appointees as the new non-Commission members of the Renters’ Solution Subcommittee. Commissioner Michael Reyes seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Item #5: Briefing and discussion on the Housing Commission Subcommittees’ ongoing work. *(Video timestamp: 1:45:40)*

Wilson requested the subcommittee representatives (Abraham, Alanis, and Johnson) present.

The item was for briefing and discussion only. No action was taken.

7. Item #6: Director’s Report. *(Video timestamp: 1:55:30)*

Wilson requested Veronica Gonzalez, Assistant Director, present. Gonzalez overviewed the Property Tax Help Campaign recap, FY 2025 Annual Action Plan update, San Antonio Community Resource Directory (SACRD) Housing Portal launch update, Public Information Campaign RFP update, Housing Voucher update, and upcoming meetings.

Item was for briefing and discussion only. No action was taken.

8. Item #6: Commissioner reports on items of community interests. *(Video timestamp: 02:08:55)*

Wilson inquired if the Commissioners had any items to note for the Commission and/or public interest.

Commissioner Reyes stated that Opportunity Home would be hosting a Lease Up Fair on June 6th from 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM to assist housing choice voucher families looking for rental units.

Reyes noted that on June 13th from 9:30 AM - Noon, Opportunity Home would host a Landlord Seminar in hopes to increase the pool of units and expand the range past Loop 410.

Commissioner Requejo stated MAUC (Mexican American Unity Council) was awarded \$850,000 to complete their one-stop shop and progress on their CLT.

Item was for briefing and discussion only. No action was taken.

Closing-

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned without contest at 1:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Sharon Chan
Housing Policy Coordinator

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