

HOUSING COMMISSION OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024, 11:30 AM
100 W HOUSTON & VIDEO CONFERENCE

Members Present: Katie Wilson, Chair
Robert Abraham, Member
Pedro Alanis, Member
Kristin Davila, Member
Taneka “Nikki” Johnson, Member
Cecilia Garcia Redmond, Member
Crystal Requejo, Member
Michael Reyes, Member

Members Absent: Jeffrey Arndt, Member

Staff Present: Veronica Gonzalez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services*; Juan Valdez, *Mayor’s Office*; Teresa Myers, *Mayor’s Office*; 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*

- **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Chair, Katie Wilson, at 11:51 AM.
- **Roll Call** – Jacob Floyd, Housing Policy Manager, called the roll. At the time when roll call was conducted, eight (8) members were present representing a quorum.
- 1. **Public Comments** - Wilson announced there were four (4) residents signed up for public comment. (*Audio timestamp: 02:28*)
 - 1. **Item #6b:** Leticia Sanchez, Co-chair of the Historic Westside Residents Association, stated that housing funding should be focused on keeping generational residents housed. Sanchez expressed that many developers build units that are not affordable and the City should assist developers that are able to construct units that would charge a maximum of \$500 a month. She noted the waitlist for public housing was currently 110,000 households with 1,000 more families being added each month. She questioned what portion of the bond funding had been allocated to construct 30-50% AMI units. Sanchez noted that many developments are led by profit margins and mix market rate units with public housing units. Instead, funding should be redirected to the City’s rental assistance program. She stated that more individuals need help as wages have not kept up with the cost of living. Sanchez expressed that funding should be given to Community Land Trusts (CLT) as

though the concept is old, it has been newly brought to San Antonio to aid people with lower incomes. She stated that lining developers' pockets with tax funds is wrong and the City should stop assisting this injustice.

2. **Item #6b:** Blanca Rivera requested the Commissioners to keep people like her in mind that earn minimum wage. She noted, as an example, if a person worked \$10 an hour at 40 hours, they would only earn \$1,600 a month. Living on the Westside where most of the apartments cost \$1000 a month, a person would have \$600 left, leaving little room for utilities or a car payment with insurance. Rivera stressed that on a \$1,600 a month income, a person couldn't afford to be sick. She noted many of the houses in her community that belong to older people need repairs. But as they can't afford repairs, the older people keep living in dilapidated structures. Rivera stated she lived the same way as she can't dream of affording a decent home. She hoped that the Commissioners would consider the working and poor class when creating programs.
3. **Item #6b:** Luissa Santibane, coordinator for a coalition of dignified access to housing, thanked everyone who help support the permanent supportive housing at Acequia Trails by SAMMinistries. She requested additional funding for working class housing options. Her coalition participated in successfully dismissing a development's bid near the west side as the coalition felt the units were not affordable. She stated the coalition is waiting for a developer with actual affordable units to develop on the proposed site, such as Opportunity Home. She noted the Advance Rapid Transit is around the planned area and would be opportune for a Transit Oriented Development (TOD).
4. **Item #6b:** Ana Polanco, a coalition member from the Westside, noted her coalition began surveys on housing conditions three months ago and gained rapport with the community. The coalition was able to determine the conditions of many people's houses. She appreciated the different types of programs the City currently has. Polanco noted sometimes it takes more than one year to be accepted to those programs, but trust has been gained significantly by the families from the programs have been able to reach. She expressed her commitment to helping build a bridge of connection. She would like to connect in furthering the outreach of current and future programs.

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.

2. **Item #1: Approval of the minutes from the San Antonio Housing Commission meeting on February 21, 2024.** (Audio timestamp: 20:12)
Commissioner Pedro Alanis motioned to approve the minutes from the San Antonio Housing Commission meeting on February 21, 2024. Commissioner Cecilia Garcia Redmond seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Item #2: Briefing and discussion on RentWise SA: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities initiatives updates.** (Audio timestamp: 20:38)

Wilson requested Sara Wamsley Estrada, Housing Policy Administrator, present. Wamsley Estrada overviewed the RentWise SA campaign goals, deliverables, information sessions, and renter video series.

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

4. Item #3: Briefing and discussion related to reframing housing and aging in place lead by San Antonio Area Foundation (SAAF) and disABILITYsa. *(Audio timestamp: 36:18)*

Wilson requested Jane Paccione, Managing Director of Collective Impact of San Antonio Area Foundation (SAAF), and Melanie Cawthon, Co-Founder and CEO of disABILITYsa, present. Paccione and Cawthon spoke regarding the current and future demographic of older adults and people with disabilities, reframing aging and disabilities to embrace supportive solutions, and reframing affordable housing to ensure accessibility and visitability in homes.

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

5. Item #4: Briefing and discussion on the San Antonio Housing Trust and Opportunity Home San Antonio's current work. *(Audio timestamp: 1:11:25)*

Wilson requested Commissioner Michael Reyes to present. Reyes overviewed an update regarding Opportunity Home's Lease Up Fair, Housing Bond project updates, voucher distribution and mobility trends, and waitlist overview.

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

6. Item #5: Briefing on the Housing Commission Subcommittees' Ongoing Work. *(Audio timestamp: 01:25:43)*

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

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

7. Item #6: Director's Report. *(Audio timestamp: 01:31:27)*

Wilson requested Veronica Gonzalez, Assistant Director, present. Gonzalez overviewed the Property Tax Help Campaign, Community Land Trust update, Strategic Housing Implementation Plan national recognition, and upcoming meetings.

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

8. Item #7: Commissioner reports on items of community interests. *(Audio timestamp: 01:39:35)*

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

Wilson noted with the City's budget season arriving, she would like to discuss on how to request increase of funding for programs especially as homelessness is increasing.

Commissioner Crystal Requejo announced that the Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC) alongside other organizations were able to speak at the Housing Counseling

Federal Advisory Committee Meeting and discuss housing strategies particularly on educating the community in ways to preserve their housing. Commissioner Abraham noted the Committee members were complimentary of San Antonio's progress.

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

Closing-

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned without contest at 1:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

**Sharon Chan
Housing Policy Coordinator**

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