

# **Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) Meeting Minutes**

City Council Chambers at City Hall 110 SE Watula Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Ocala, FL 34471

Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

1:00 p.m. EST

## **Attendees/Board Members:**

Cory Weaver-Chair

Tasha Osbourne-Vice Chair

Gwendolyn Dawson

Davida Randolph

Henry Samuels

## **Absent/Excused Members:**

Kristen Dreyer

Rob Peters

## **Staff:**

James Haynes, Jr., Community Development Services Director

Robin Ford, Community Development Services Deputy Director

Roberto Eliis, Growth Management Manager, Economic Development

Aubrey Hale, Planning Director

Barney Tanczos, IT

Rachel Herman, IT

Natalia Cox, Community Development Services Administrative Coordinator

Christopher Lewis, Community Development Services Rehabilitation Inspection Specialist

Bessie Morley, Community Development Services Intake Specialist

Ailin Abboud, Community Development Services Intake Specialist

## **Minutes:**

### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Ms. Cory Weaver opened the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

### **2. Proof of Public Notice**

Natalia Cox stated, "Public notice was posted for the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Meeting on the City of Ocala CDS website on Wednesday, March 12th, 2025."

### **3. Approval of January 29, 2025, Minutes**

Proposed for approval by Gwendolyn Dawson, seconded motion for approval by Davida Randolph, and approved by all attendees.

### **4. PRO Housing Grant Update**

James Haynes, Jr. advised that the City was not awarded any funds. There were 18 awards and only one (1) community in Florida received funding.

## **5. Affordable Housing Projects – Follins Project**

James Haynes, Jr. showed before and after pictures of the project and mentioned Ms. Follins was present in the audience. Ms. Follins addressed the Committee and shared her gratitude to the City of Ocala for the housing assistance program. She made a special mention of City staff namely Shaneka Greene, Bessie Morley, Christopher Lewis and James Haynes and contractor Bruce Wiley. Ms. Follins encouraged the Committee to continue to support the funding of the rehabilitation program.

## **6. LHAP Review**

James Haynes, Jr. stated that this year the City of Ocala has to send its local housing plan for the State. It's required every 3 years and he had submitted the first draft. This Plan's time line will cover from July 2025 to June 2028. He pointed the following:

Page 4: Home Purchase Price: There are two different methodologies that can be used to establish home purchase price limits to be considered "affordable"; one is the U. S. Treasury Department, the other is the local Housing Finance Authority. The City uses the Finance Authority numbers because it fits more with the community salaries and the Treasury number is higher. He mentioned that the last Plan price was \$252,000.

Page 5: 10% set aside for Admin dollars to offset salaries. However, last year the SHIP allotment was reduced 33% and this year a similar reduction in funding is expected to be similar, so that 10% will be used on current projects to assist applicants instead.

Page 6: Purchase assistance strategies. The City is starting to get a little more traction as it is working on its third purchase assistance for first time homebuyers this year after a 3-year hiatus. Assistance amounts are tiered and go up to 140% AMI. The maximum the City awards is \$40,000; the least amount is \$15,000.

Page 7: Maximum awards. Last year it was \$150,000, but that will be increased to \$175,000 based on the rehabs the City is currently working on. Mr. Haynes said that language was added in all the sections asking families to notify us within a certain amount of time after the death of the applicant. The goal is to keep the home in the family as long as the income standards are met. We try to include anything that qualifies in the Plan and that can be reasonably be approved, so that monies can be moved around without having to go back to the State for approval.

Page 13: Demolition and reconstruction. Financial analysis is conducted based on the expected cost per square foot to decide whether rehabs or rebuilds are feasible. The idea is to produce residential structures that are viable in a 20-30 year timeframe.

Page 14: Layers of repayment. Repayment loan/deferred loan/grant terms were reviewed.

Page 15: Rental assistance. Any additional funding from the State towards the end of the year will go towards rental assistance.

Disaster recovery strategy. Required by the State after the onset of COVID. Mr. Haynes mentioned that the Plan's first draft will be presented to the City Council for final approval before sending off to the State.

Mr. Haynes pointed out the flyer for the Fair Housing Celebration Month on Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>. He also mentioned the Fair Housing Proclamation before the City Council on April 1<sup>st</sup> and invited the AHAC to both events.

#### **7. Affordable Housing Projects Proposals**

James Haynes, Jr. advised there were two consultants at the meeting to present 2 affordable projects seeking a letter of support to those who apply for low income housing tax (9%) credits from the State (Florida Housing Coalition). A formal process is preferred and we have been working with the County to streamline the effort. It was decided to present the projects to the AHAC first to review and recommend the preferred project to the City Council for the final approval.

The two selected projects were Madison Oaks East and Magnolia Terrace. The first presentation was done by Stacy Banach and Scott Siemens for Madison Oaks. The second presentation was done by Tim Morgan and Danny Worfold on behalf of Magnolia Terrace.

The AHAC asked questions pertaining to the projects and were provided materials to conduct a final vote. The vote was as follows: Madison Oaks East (3 votes); Magnolia Terrace (2 votes). These results will be forwarded to the City Council.

It was announced that the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 28, 2025.

#### **8. Adjournment**

AHAC meeting adjourned at 2:41 pm EST.

/nc