

HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD
Special Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2010

The Tucumcari Housing Authority Board met Monday, February 8, 2010 for a special meeting at 10:00 a.m. in Tucumcari City Hall. Members present constituting a quorum included Antonio Apodaca, Jim Lafferty, Robert Lumpkin, and Jim Witcher. Mr. Jimmy Sandoval was absent. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

City and Housing Authority staff present were; Bobbye Rose, City Manager; Viki Riddle, Housing Authority Interim Executive Director; and Christine Dougherty, City Clerk.

Consideration of Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

There were no suggested changes or deletions to the agenda.

Consideration of Professional Services Agreement With Clovis Housing and Redevelopment Agency

A phone conference was held so that the Housing Authority Advisory Board could consult with Mr. Floyd Duran and Ms. Mandy Griego of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Ms. Rose explained to the Advisory Board that Mr. Duran had reviewed the proposed contract between the City of Tucumcari and the Clovis Housing and Redevelopment Agency. Mr. Duran stated that he had reviewed the contract and he had no concerns with the document. Ms. Rose asked Mr. Duran if the contract services could be paid for with HUD funds. Mr. Duran responded in the positive.

Mr. Witcher asked Mr. Duran if he had reviewed the fees listed on page three of the contract. Mr. Witcher inquired if Mr. Duran felt those fees were reasonable. Mr. Duran responded in the positive adding that in other communities the fees would be much higher.

Ms. Griego added that she recalled having someone come to Tucumcari in May to help at the Housing Authority office for one week and the fee was \$20,000.

Mr. Lafferty asked if the fees would be paid by the City of Tucumcari. Ms. Griego responded in the negative adding that the fees would be paid by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Ms. Griego went on to say that the assistance is necessary to assist the staff in taking corrective action as the Tucumcari Housing Authority has been labeled as troubled for three and soon four years.

Mr. Witcher asked how long Mr. Duran and Ms. Griego anticipated it will take to bring the office back into compliance. Ms. Griego responded that the level of cooperation from the staff will determine how quickly this can be achieved. However, Ms. Griego speculated a minimum of two years to become a model office.

Mr. Duran explained that he has particular interest in this issue because the American Recovery and Reinvestment funds have a short window of obligation. The Tucumcari office has \$180,000

of these funds that are in jeopardy. Mr. Duran stated that with help from the Clovis staff, the funds can be obligated quickly.

Ms. Rose stated that she thought the obligation of the funds was already taken care of. Mr. Duran inquired if Ms. Rose was speaking of capital funds or stimulus funds. Ms. Rose clarified that she was speaking of capital funds. Mr. Duran explained that unless the funds are obligated, they are not yet secured. Mr. Duran went on to say that half the funds will be lost if not obligated.

Mr. Lafferty asked if the staff was aware of this need to obligate the funds. Mr. Duran responded in the positive stating that he felt the previous administration had too many things on her plate.

Mr. Witcher stated that he felt the recommendations should be followed and the contract should be signed.

Mr. Apodaca asked if the disclosure statement that will be added to the application can be retroactive. Ms. Griego responded in the negative stating that it will only be applicable to new applicants.

Mr. Apodaca went on to say that the City Attorney believes that the City Commission should not serve as the Housing Authority board. Ms. Griego explained that the Municipal Housing Act 345 provides local government the ability to provide housing. Ms. Griego went on to explain that paragraph number five of the act gives local governments the authority to create a component to act as a board. Ms. Griego suggested that research should be done to find if the City Commission had ever passed a resolution that makes the Housing Authority a component unit of the City.

Mr. Witcher asked if the City Commission could serve as the Housing Authority board. Ms. Griego responded in the negative. She went on to say that agency status must be created by the City Commission. If this has not been done, then the Housing Authority Advisory duties are part of the City Commission duties.

Mr. Lumpkin thanked Mr. Duran and Ms. Griego for their help and stated that their optimism is appreciated. Mr. Lumpkin stated that he looks forward to working with both of them. Mr. Duran stated that he would like for everyone to meet and discuss the situation further.

Mr. Lafferty stated that the board has been trying to take responsibility of this, but there has been no oversight because of Directors and Managers. Mr. Lafferty asked what have they done this time to make sure the problems are fixed. Mr. Duran responded that nothing other than personnel changes have been made. Mr. Duran went on to say that many Housing Authority offices of this size have struggled. Mr. Duran added that signing the agreement with Clovis can help deal with the issues and that the big issue is to avoid losing funds.

Mr. Apodaca stated that sometimes staff gives a financial report but the board does not vote to approve the report. Mr. Apodaca asked if this is appropriate. Mr. Duran responded in the negative stating that the board should approve the financial report at each meeting. Mr. Duran also stated that the application process should be approved by the Housing Authority Board.

Ms. Griego explained that the Housing Authority should be treated like any other City department including the expenditures, budget, personnel and similar items. Ms. Griego went on to state that these discussions occur when Housing Authorities are in crisis. This happens when the board has been misled and misinformed.

Mr. Apodaca stated that there will be at least one new commissioner after the March election. Mr. Apodaca wondered if a new person is elected and then it is discovered that they have relatives in public housing. Mr. Duran responded that information should be provided to those running for office and they need to disclose any relatives living in public housing while they are running. Mr. Duran stated that it is most likely difficult in Tucumcari to find people to serve that don't have relatives in public housing. Mr. Duran offered that one solution is to regionalize, however local oversight would be lost if that is done.

Mr. Apodaca stated that the ramifications to the employees are a concern if regionalization is considered.

Mr. Lumpkin made a motion to approve the Professional Services Agreement with the Clovis Housing and Redevelopment Agency, Inc. Mr. Witcher seconded the motion. Roll Call:

Lafferty	Apodaca	Lumpkin	Witcher
Yes	Abstain	Yes	Yes

Items From Board Members

Mr. Witcher had no comments.

Mr. Lumpkin said that he appreciated the hard work it took to re-write the agreement and feels this decision will be good for Tucumcari. Mr. Lumpkin said things are looking up and hopes we are finding answers to our problems.

Mr. Lafferty had no comments.

Mr. Apodaca stated that if anyone has questions, he would like them to be asked and aired out. Mr. Apodaca added that he has a sister living in public housing. Mr. Lumpkin stated that the board did not know about the disclosure rules and understands that there was no malfeasance.

Mr. Apodaca stated that he had spoken to Mr. Duran and was told that a Housing Authority Ethics Manual had been mailed with a letter to Mr. Jimmy Sandoval. Mr. Apodaca said he felt like he was lying to HUD staff about receiving the Ethics Manual, which he had not seen or received. Mr. Apodaca stated that City staff had not shown the manual to him.

Mr. Apodaca went on to say that there have been problems with the Senior Center in the past and the Commission received nothing. Mr. Apodaca stated they are at the mercy of the staff. Mr. Apodaca explained that each of the Commissioners has outside obligations and can't always get away for training.

Mr. Apodaca asked if all the housing applicants are being asked to disclose if they are related to someone on the board. Mr. Apodaca went on to say that the board does not know what letters they receive at City Hall. He stated that they see the audit letter but they do not see the results.

Mr. Lafferty stated that Mr. Apodaca should not beat himself up over the non-disclosure issue as staff only put in front of them what needed signatures or to be put in the minutes. Mr. Lafferty stated that Mr. Apodaca did not do anything to benefit his sister. Mr. Lafferty went on to say that until staff makes the board accountable as they are, the problems will not be fixed.

Mr. Lumpkin stated that he feels the contract with Clovis is a step towards fixing the problems.

Mr. Lafferty stated that the board has said that before, explaining that Ms. Martin was hired due to her experience in Housing. Mr. Lafferty said that the board needs to be responsible for oversight and accountability.

Mr. Lumpkin asked if the housing finances are going through the City finance office. Mr. Apodaca added that the meeting time for housing needs to be changed as they are too rushed having the meeting right before the Commission meeting. Mr. Witcher recommended that the housing meeting should be held on the third Thursday of each month. Mr. Apodaca stated that on the next agenda the housing application should be reviewed.

Mr. Lafferty stated that the problem is how to solve the issue. He explained that Mr. Sandoval got vocal about a problem he was having with the Housing Authority. Mr. Lafferty stated that when Mr. Sandoval got vocal, the Housing Authority got upset about his involvement.

Mr. Apodaca stated that two Commissioners in the past, Mr. Maestas and Ms. Mayfield had family living in public housing. Mr. Witcher suggested that Ms. Riddle should make a list of all those in housing for the Commission to review so that all relationships can be disclosed.

Mr. Apodaca stated that no housing directors have mentioned disclosure in the past and he felt lucky that he received a letter. Mr. Apodaca questioned why disclosure was never brought up to the board. Mr. Apodaca stated that he felt the intent was to hurt not help anyone and it was wrong.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Witcher to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Lumpkin. Time noted 10:42 a.m. Roll Call:

Apodaca	Lumpkin	Witcher	Lafferty
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Antonio Apodaca, Mayor

ATTEST:

Christine Dougherty, City Clerk