

City of Valdosta Fair Housing Committee

Monthly Meeting – Minutes

Thursday, January 14, 2016 5:30-6:30

City of Valdosta – City Hall Annex, Multi-Purpose Room

Members Present:

Pastor David Adams, Seth Brown, Dr. Penelope Schmidt, Kelly Strozier, Herbert Williams

City Staff Present: Vanassa Flucas and Sarah Lowe

The Meeting was called to order by Ms. Vanassa Flucas at 5:29 p.m., followed by the invocation given by Pastor Adams.

Ms. Kelly Strozier asked the committee to make a motion regarding the October Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Seth Brown motioned to approve the minutes as written.

Seconded by Mr. Herbert Williams

Minutes for October Meeting were approved.

Fair Housing Committee Activities 2016

Results were shared by Ms. Flucas regarding the Focus Groups

Summary of discussion was the results were found to be very helpful. Looking ahead, Fair Housing Committee may want to perform additional surveys and expand the survey to include other locations and consider gathering feedback from the renter's perspective. We may want to consider including the renter issues as well as the homeowners when dealing with Fair Housing.

Pastor Adams agreed and would like to look towards renter concerns and issues.

Other topics discussed included: Landlord issues, involving the Councilmembers by implementing a stronger blight tax, code enforcement and programs to help remove trash. (Ex: The Bulk Trash Amnesty Event)

Reminder was given to the Committee regarding the next Bulk Trash Amnesty Day scheduled to take place on April 23, in conjunction with The Great American Clean Up event through KLVB.

Housing Summit: Ideas for Housing Summit were discussed. We would like to gather ideas and partner with other groups to provide a one-stop-shop to get housing resources to the citizens. We can discuss further in the next couple of meetings.

Fellwood Trip: As a reminder, we decided to post pone the tour to Sustainable Fellwood for this coming spring to encourage more participation. Neighborhood Development Staff will make all the arrangements and coordinate with the committee. Tentative date will be Saturday April 30th.

Choice Neighborhood Grant update provided. This grant is very competitive. We still have more foundational items to complete before we will be competitive with our application submission. We are still in the planning process and getting partnerships developed.

Homeless Count. We will be doing another Homeless County this year, but this time we will plan to capture the homeless veterans. Official count next year is going to be done with electronic tools. The main goal and focus will be to do a better job with capturing all the homeless in Lowndes County, and not just those currently utilizing local services.

Ms. Flucas encouraged the Committee to send in any ideas and/or feedback to the Neighborhood Development Division office.

Ms. Flucas gave an update on the City of Valdosta's new website. The website is scheduled to go live within the next couple of weeks. The Neighborhood Development page will hold a "Fair Housing Complaint" button. Citizens that click button, will be directed to the official Fair Housing website.

National Community Development Week

This year the National Community Development Week will fall on March 28 through April 1. This week is set aside to celebrate what we do with CDBG programs.

Ms. Flucas stated she does not have the draft budget for Annual Action Plan yet, but as soon as she does, she will send a copy to the Committee so each can see what we are proposing with the CDBG funding for the next year beginning July 1, 2016.

Ms. Strozier opened the floor for Open Discussion:

Pastor Adams would like the Committee to keep an eye on the precinct planned to open in Ora Lee West.

Ms. Flucas addressed other concerns regarding Ora Lee West.

Ms. Flucas reminded the members that we are now meet on a quarterly system. Our next meeting will be in April. Ms. Flucas also mentioned she would be sending out the Windshield Survey results once finalized.

There were no additional agenda to discuss, so Ms. Strozier asked for a motioned to adjourn. Ms. Schmidt made the motion to adjourn. Pastor Adams seconded this motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.