



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 15, 2013
Prepared By/Phone Number: Deece Eckstein, 854-9754
Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Deece Eckstein, 854-9754
Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON THE REAPPOINTMENT OF WILLIE S. ANDERSON, SARAH DALE ANDERSON AND PHILIP W. BARNES TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF TRAVIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR TERMS TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31, 2015.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: IGR recommends that the Travis County Commissioners Court reappoint Willie S. Anderson (Place 5), Sarah Dale Anderson (Place 2), and Philip W. Barnes (Place 3) to the Housing Authority of Travis County Board of Commissioners for terms to run from January 1, 2014, to December 31, 2015.

BACKGROUND: The Travis County Commissioners Court makes five appointments to the **Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC) Board of Commissioners**.¹ Appointments are for two years, and there is no limit on the amount of terms an appointee may serve.² At least one commissioner must be “a tenant of a public housing project over which the county housing authority has jurisdiction.”³ There are no other statutory prerequisites for service as a commissioner. Appointments to the HATC are governed by the Uniform Appointment Process adopted by the Court on March 6, 2012.

¹ TEX. LOCAL GOVT. CODE §392.032.

² TEX. LOCAL GOVT. CODE §392.034(a).

³ TEX. LOCAL GOVT. CODE §392.0331(c). The current tenant member is Willie S. Anderson, whose term will expire on December 31, 2013.

The terms of three members of the Housing Authority board – **Willie S. Anderson, Sarah Dale Anderson, and Philip W. Barnes** -- expire at the end of this year.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES: Because all three members have been serving for less than six years, they are eligible for reappointment under Section 1.017(b)(1)(B) of the County Code, which provides:

Reappointments. Before expiration of a term, or upon a vacancy arising for an organization subject to this UAP, the County Judge shall ... in the case of an existing organization member, that by the end of their term will not have served six years, instruct the Coordinator for Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) to determine if the member desires to continue for an additional term, and contact the organization to determine if the member has a good attendance of meetings and is a good contributor to the organization. Should the Coordinator for IGR submit an acceptable report to the County Judge, the County Judge shall schedule for Commissioners Court the consideration of the re-appointment.

All three appointees have expressed interest in being reappointed, and have sent letters to that effect to Judge Biscoe. Craig Alter, the Executive Director of the Housing Authority, has provided information regarding attendance and board participation for the three incumbents. The letters and Mr. Alter's memorandum are attached.

On a related issue not covered in this agenda item, the term of the Precinct 3 appointee to the **Strategic Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), Ofelia Elizondo**, also expires at the end of this year.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING: No fiscal impact.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS: None.

NAMES, PHONE NUMBERS AND EMAIL ADDRESSES OF PERSONS WHO MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY OR BE INVOLVED WITH THIS REQUEST:

Sherri Fleming
County Executive, Health and Human Services & Veterans Services
Phone: 854-4581
Email: Sherri.Fleming@co.travis.tx.us

Andrea Shields
Corporations Administrator
Phone: 854-9106
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Karen Thigpen
Assistant Corporations Administrator
Phone: 854-9106
Email: karen.thigpen@co.travis.tx.us

Craig Alter
Executive Director, Housing Authority of Travis County, Texas
Phone: 480-8245, x15
Email: craig@hatctx.com

Debbie Honeycutt
Housing Authority of Travis County, Texas
Phone: 480-8245, x34
Email: debbie@hatctx.com

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Current membership of the HATC and SHFC boards, as of October 8, 2013.
2. Memorandum from HATC Executive Director Craig Alter re HATC, SHFC board members' attendance and participation, September 30, 2013.
3. Letter from Ms. Willie S. Anderson re reappointment to HATC board, October 3, 2013.
4. Letter from Ms. Sarah Dale Anderson re reappointment to HATC board, October 2, 2013.
5. Letter from Mr. Philip Barnes re reappointment to HATC board, October 3, 2013.

Housing Authority of Travis County, Texas

Board of Commissioners

(This agency is covered under the Uniform Appointment Process)

Place	Name	Appointing Authority	Date(s) of Appointment	Adopted* Term Expiration Date
5	Willie S. Anderson	Court Appointment	5/31/2011	12/31/2013
1	Melvin G. Wrenn	Court Appointment	10/13/1998 reappointed 12/11/12	12/31/2014
2	Sarah Dale Anderson	Court Appointment	10/26/2010 reappointed 1/24/2012	12/31/2013
3	Philip W. Barnes	Court Appointment	9/8/2009 reappointed 10/25/2011	12/31/2013
4	Richard Moya	Court Appointment	7/1/2003 reappointed 12/11/12	12/31/2014

* - ADOPTED by the Commissioners Court, 10/23/12, Item #26

Last updated -- 10/8/2013

Strategic Housing Finance Corporation Board of Directors

(This agency is **not** covered under the Uniform Appointment Process*)

Place	Name	Appointing Authority	Date(s) of Appointment	Current Term Expiration Date	Adopted** Term Expiration Date
5	Willie S. Anderson	County Judge	5/31/2011	N/A	12/31/2017 ... 12/31/2023 ... 12/31/2029
1	Melvin Wrenn	Precinct 1	6/1/2004 reappointed 11/13/2012	N/A	12/31/2014 ... 12/31/2020 ... 12/31/2026
2	Sarah Dale Anderson	Precinct 2	11/16/2010 reappointed 1/24/2012	N/A	12/31/2017 ... 12/31/2023 ... 12/31/2029
3	Ofelia Elizondo	Precinct 3	7/5/2005 reappointed 10/25/2011	N/A	12/31/2013 ... 12/31/2019 ... 12/31/2025
4	Richard Moya	Precinct 4	6/1/2004 reappointed 11/13/2012	N/A	... 12/31/2018 ... 12/31/2024 ... 12/31/2030
6	Ed Wendler, Jr.	Court Appointment	2/26/2013	N/A	12/31/2015 ... 12/31/2021 ... 12/31/2027
7	Magdalena Blanco	Court Appointment	2/26/2013	N/A	12/31/2016 ... 12/31/2022 ... 12/31/2028

* - As of now. On October 30, the Court put off a discussion of whether to include the SHFC in the Uniform Appointment Process.

** - Adopted by the Commissioners Court, 10/30/12, Item #30

Last updated -- 09/03/2013



MEMORANDUM

TO: Sam Biscoe, Travis County Judge

FROM: Craig Alter, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Travis County

DATE: September 30, 2013

RE: Expiring Terms on Housing Authority of Travis County Board of Commissioners and Strategic Housing Finance Corporation Board of Directors

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

MELVIN WRENN

VICE CHAIR

PHILLIP BARNES

COMMISSIONER

SARAH ANDERSON

COMMISSIONER

WILLIE ANDERSON

COMMISSIONER

RICHARD MOYA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CRAIG ALTER

Phil Barnes and Sarah Anderson have had instrumental influence in formulating the Housing Authority HUD recovery response, overseeing the Authority regaining financial stability, participating in business proceedings, presenting alternative business strategies that became embraced by the Board, and comprising the Housing Authority Finance Committee. Phil Barnes began his second one year term as Vice Chairman of the Housing Authority on August 23, 2013. Sarah Anderson is also a member of the Strategic Housing Finance Corporation Board of Directors and began her second term as President on August 24, 2013.

Willie Anderson, the resident representative, regularly attends the Housing Authority Board meetings and has undergone extensive Commissioner training offered at state and national public housing authority conferences. She was recently invited to participate on the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) Commissioners Committee. She has delivered a strong resident perspective to the Board and maintains a high interest in resident education and service program development.

Ofelia Elizondo actively and consistently participates on the Strategic Housing Board and has provided leadership and insight in affordable housing development and operations. Her engagement focuses on equitable development partnership structure, risk assessment, financial management, property management effective practices, and resident services. Ms. Elizondo's current term is terminating almost four years before her six year appointment expiration as a result of the Travis County Commissioners Court adoption of the staggered Director term expiration schedule last year.

Each of the Board members referenced above merit consideration to continue in their current roles. Sarah Anderson's continued tenure on the Housing Authority Board is in its best interest given her role as President on Strategic Housing Financing Corporation.

The Housing Authority and Strategic Housing Boards have discussed and stated their desire for the Travis County Commissioners Court to consider appointing a single candidate for Phil Barnes' and Ofelia Elizondo's positions. To do so would re-establish the Strategic Board composition of five Housing Authority Board members, each appointed by one County Commissioner, and two members appointed by the Court at-large. The Strategic Housing Board presently has four members from the Housing Authority Board, two members appointed at-large, and the Precinct 3 Strategic Housing only appointment.

Please contact me if additional information is needed for your consideration.



October 3, 2013

The Honorable Sam Biscoe
Travis County Judge
700 Lavaca, Suite 2.700
Austin, Texas 78701

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

MELVIN WRENN

VICE CHAIR

PHILLIP BARNES

COMMISSIONER

SARAH ANDERSON

COMMISSIONER

WILLIE ANDERSON

COMMISSIONER

RICHARD MOYA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CRAIG ALTER

Re: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF TRAVIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REAPPOINTMENT

Dear Judge Biscoe,

I am immensely grateful to you and the Court for the opportunity to serve on the Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC) Board of Commissioners. I have been honored and hope to continue my service in the coming years. As you know, HATC is resilient and has made tremendous progress over the past few years. I am privileged to work with my fellow dedicated commissioners and our executive director as he leads the outstanding HATC team.

While serving as HATC Commissioner, I have had the awesome privilege of also participating in valuable training including the following:

- HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONER BASICS, TEXAS HOUSING ASSOCIATION (THA) ***COMMISSIONERS FUNDAMENTALS***
- ETHICS FOR THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS (NAHRO)
- LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR COMMISSIONERS (NAHRO)
- MARKETING IMAGE-BUILDING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (NAHRO)
- STRATEGIC PLANNING, AGENCY DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY (NAHRO)
- BONDS FOR BEGINNERS, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL HOUSING FINANCE AGENCIES (NALHFA)

Just recently, I accepted an invitation to serve on the National NAHRO Commissioners Committee. I am dedicated to a life of service and realize just how vital affordable housing is to our community. Having benefited from affordable housing programs, I am committed to “paying it forward.” As an educator, I am developing outreach programs focusing on literacy and empowerment. I am collaborating with other housing leaders and educators to empower and enrich the lives of our residents, especially our youth.

With your endorsement and the Court's approval, I welcome the opportunity to continue my service as commissioner for the Housing Authority of Travis County. I also commit to providing timely updates on HATC's continuous progress.

Thank you!

In Honorable Service,

Willie S. Anderson, Commissioner
Housing Authority of Travis County, Texas

October 2, 2013

Bruce Todd
County Commissioner Court – Precinct 2

RE: Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC), Board Commissioner

Commissioner Todd,

Please consider this letter a formal request to be considered for re-appointment to the Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC) Board of Commissioners.

My previous term of service to the Board has been productive for the organization and personally fulfilling. HATC faced many challenges prior to my appointment, but to date has cleared all findings with HUD and has addressed the final reconciliation of the accounting issues that had plagued the organization. Additionally, our independent audit this year, reiterated the enormous progress of the organization.

I look forward to now being able to not only help this organization face the challenges of federal budget cuts and other programmatic changes, but proactively address the needs of Travis County residents of modest means.

My goals with regard to service will continue to be as follows:

- Provide affordable housing policy, development, and administration expertise to the organization.
- Provide a working knowledge of similar agency administration procedures, including budgeting and performance measurement to the organization.
- Provide policy and technical direction to help the organization serve the community to the fullest extent possible.

I remain committed to serving a full term and attending 80% or more of the monthly meetings.

Thank you for your consideration of this re-appointment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Anderson".

Sarah Anderson

PHILIP W. BARNES

309 NIXON DRIVE
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746

October 3, 2013

The Honorable Gerald Daugherty
Travis County Commissioner Precinct Three
PO Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767

Commissioner Daugherty:

For the last four years, I have been privileged to serve as a member of the board of commissioners of the Housing Authority of Travis County (HATC). My term expires at the end of this calendar year, so I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you my assessment of the agency and its future.

Four years ago, HATC was in a period of reform and transition prompted by a special audit by the federal government that suggested millions of dollars of federal funds had been misspent. By the time I was appointed, the board under the long-time leadership of Melvin Wrenn and Richard Moya had moved already to replace the former executive director with Craig Alter, who continues to serve the agency in that capacity. Under Craig's leadership, the exact nature of the financial issues was determined and appropriate arrangements made to rectify the accounts and move forward. As it turns out, HATC had experienced the inappropriate use of federal funds – largely for the purchase of its office building -- occasioned in part by the intermingling of federal and non-federal dollars. The subsequent sale of the building to the county permitted HATC to move funds to the proper accounts, leading to a resolution of all issues raised by the special audit. Officials of the US Department of Housing and Urban Affairs (HUD) expressed genuine astonishment that HATC was able to address these issues in such a short time. During that time and with the board's support Craig also reorganized and streamlined the agency.

By the best estimates, the greater Austin area has a need for more than 40,000 additional affordable housing units, and that need is growing. In my view, traditional public housing will be a declining part of the solution. No additional federal funding will be available for the development and construction of traditional public housing units. Indeed, federal funding today is even inadequate to maintain let alone replace the 106 public housing units (in three locations) owned by HATC. Those units require an ever-growing subsidy from local funds to simply keep them open. The current arrangement is unsustainable, and this is the challenge facing HATC today: What is the highest and best use of these properties given the mission of the agency and the legal and financial constraints within which HATC must operate? The board is in the process of making these decisions now, and I am confident that optimal use will be found for each of them. To the extent that HATC will continue to own or manage HUD funded programs, HATC most likely will at best be in a "holding pattern."

As you know, some years ago HATC organized the Strategic Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) as an affiliated organization. Four of the five members of the HATC board of commissioners also serve as directors of the seven-member SHFC board; Craig Alter serves as its executive vice president; and SHFC contributes to the overhead costs incurred by HATC. In its most important role, SHFC serves as a vehicle for the use of public/private partnerships in the development and management of multifamily housing. Using tax credits available from the federal government, coupled with property tax exemptions from the county and other local taxing entities, multifamily properties can be built or acquired and rehabilitated at substantially less cost per unit, enabling units to be offered at substantially reduced rental rates. SHFC currently participates as a general partner on three tax credit properties representing 600 units of affordable housing; it has just broken ground on a fourth project, and others are in the pipeline. Done well, these projects require SHFC to have very sophisticated leadership and technical expertise. SHFC benefits from the leadership provided by those members of its board who bring experience in multifamily housing development and management to their assignment. The board itself is very fortunate that Craig Alter himself brings to SHFC experience in multifamily housing development and is well known and respected among the developers and financing entities that are involved in this specialized part of the housing industry.

The Honorable Gerald Daugherty
October 3, 2012
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I believe the SHFC board will set for itself reasonable goals for the development of additional affordable housing units for each of the next several years. With your continued support along with the rest of the Commissioners Court, SHFC can play an important role in helping meet the areas growing need for affordable housing. Travis County is a wonderful place to live. We have experienced remarkable economic growth, which will continue for the foreseeable future. Many of the new jobs are high wage; other jobs brought to the area and many of those created by the resulting demand for more services, are inherently lower wage jobs. Providing housing opportunities for this population is an essential part of the infrastructure supporting continued economic development.

In closing, I am grateful for the opportunity to have served on the HATC board, I am very supportive of the work done by HATC and SHFC. And please know that I welcome the opportunity to continue to serve the county in any appropriate capacity.

Sincerely yours,



PHIL BARNES

PWB/B

CC: Melvin Wrenn, Chair, Housing Authority of Travis County