

**Housing Finance Authority of
St. Johns County, Florida
Regular Meeting**

**December 20, 2018
Minutes**

The Housing Finance Authority of St. Johns County met at 3:00 pm in the Kingfisher Conference Room at the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building – Housing Department, 200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida 32084.

The meeting was called to order at 3:03pm by Jay Kalter, Chair.

Members Present:

Linda DeGrande
Craig Higgins
Jay Kalter
Robert Marshall
Michael O'Donnell
Malinda Peebles

Members Absent: Victor Raymos

BCC Liaison: Commissioner Jeb Smith

Guests Present:

Mike Peebles
Jean Mangu - Edwards Cohen, Counsel to the HFA
Rebecca Lavie – Assistant County Attorney
Shawna Novak – Director, HHS
Julie Voorhees – HHS, Housing Support Staff
Michelle Lawlor – HHS, Housing Support Staff

Notices regarding the meeting were sent to all members. No press was in attendance.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda and Approval of Agenda:

Motion made by Craig Higgins to accept agenda as presented; motion seconded by Linda DeGrande. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Public Comments: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion made by Linda DeGrande to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2018 meeting; motion seconded by Craig Higgins. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Report:

- **Financials – November, 2018:** Mr. O'Connell was ill and unable to attend the meeting. Financials were distributed.

New Business:

- **HFA Lots – Disposition Process:** Ms. Novak distributed information on the Bid to Sale Process, provided by the County Purchasing Department, and advised the HFA there will be some decisions for them to make with regard to the surplus lots. Ms. Novak said the HFA has been provided with two options for the sale of these properties. Ms. Novak explained that under the first option, the lots would be packaged together and each lot could then be purchased by a different buyer. Ms. Novak said this process would allow each lot to go to the highest and best bidder. Mr. O'Donnell asked whether there could be a minimum bid on each lot and Ms. Novak was unsure and said this would be a question for the Purchasing Department. Jay Kalter asked if the HFA would have the right to reject any offer below market value and again, Ms. Novak suggested this question be posed to the Purchasing Department. Ms. Novak stated the other option available to the HFA would be selling the land to adjacent property owners, provided the value of the parcel is \$15,000 or less, as determined by a fee appraiser designated by the HFA or as determined by the County Property Appraiser. Further, Ms. Novak said, the Purchasing Department can also contact all of the adjacent property owners by official letter, including the bid documents when they put the bid out for the land, notifying them of the opportunity to purchase the property. Jean Mangu suggested a hybrid of these two options and Rebecca Lavie suggested it would be reasonable to notify the adjacent property owners by letter and advise them unless they respond by a certain date, the properties will be advertised and sold by bid to the general public. Mr. Kalter asked about separating the properties between those that are wetlands restricted, or have other issues, and those that are more desirable. Ms. Novak said Purchasing was very clear about there being only one bid document for all properties. Ms. Novak stated separate bid documents will not be an option. Ms. Novak asked that the HFA also consider whether the lots are to be sold at "assessed" value or at "just market" value. Ms. Novak referred to page two of the handout, which lists all lots and a comparison of the two values, as of November 15, 2018. A discussion ensued regarding which lots need a wetlands permit and which lots do not. There was also discussion with regard to minimum pricing and Robert Marshall expressed concern that if only very low bids are received, will the HFA be forced to sell to the highest and best bidder of those very low bids. Mr. Marshall asked if the HFA could refuse all bids if none come in at a fair price. Mr. Kalter then asked what would be done if a builder interested in using the property for affordable housing puts in a bid that is less than a builder that does not plan to build affordable housing. Ms. Novak referred to section 3 of the handout, which is entitled "Responsibilities of the HFA" and said it will be up to the HFA to determine if the properties should remain affordable. Mr. Marshall gave the opinion the properties should not be deed-restricted for affordable housing, as the lots would not sell for as high a price. Mr. Marshall said the money the HFA makes on these lots will be put back toward affordable housing in other ways. Ms. Novak said the decision is up to the HFA but County staff recommends the properties be deed-restricted as affordable. Linda DeGrande stated the reason the HFA could not use some of the surplus lots is because so much fill dirt would be required to make them buildable. Ms. DeGrande said building affordably on those lots won't be feasible because of the cost of the fill dirt. No decision regarding the surplus lots was made and the matter was tabled until a representative from the County's Purchasing Department can be present to address some of the HFA member's questions and concerns.

Old Business:

- **Own a Home Opportunity Program Update:** Jean Mangu advised there was no income from this program during the month of November. Linda DeGrande asked if anyone would be willing to attend the semi-annual Raymond James meeting in Ft. Meyers, Florida, on January 19. Ms. DeGrande said she has concerns with regard to DR Horton and DHI, as she believes they have not been using the “Own a Home Program” and she would like to ask about this and about the drop in monthly income across the board. Ms. Degrande explained the cost to attend the meeting would be approximately \$200, and this would include a one-night stay at Hilton Garden Inn and the mileage to Ft. Meyers. Ms. DeGrande stated she would be willing to attend the meeting. **Motion** made by Robert Marshall to send Linda DeGrande to the Raymond James meeting and for the HFA to pay her expenses for travel and lodging; motion seconded by Malinda Peebles. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the HFA will be held on January 24, 2019 in the Kingfisher Conference Room, at the Health and Human Services Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary