

MINUTES

Grand Junction Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners'/Grand Junction
City Council Joint Meeting

January 24, 2005
Linden Pointe Clubhouse
1975 Barcelona Way

1. Call to Order

At 11:50 a.m., the joint Grand Junction Housing Authority (GJHA)/Grand Junction City Council (City Council) Luncheon Meeting was called to order by Grand Junction Mayor Bruce Hill. Those in attendance included City Council Members Harry Butler, Dennis Kirtland, Cindy Enos-Martinez, and Jim Spehar; GJHA Board Members Kathleen Belgard, Gabe DeGabriele, Erin Ginter, Steve Heinemann, Gi Moon, and Tisha Petelo; City staff members Kelly Arnold, David Varley, John Shaver, and Sheryl Trent; GJHA staff members Jody Kole and Kristine Franz; and Mike Wiggins representing the Daily Sentinel.

2. City Council Discussion of City's Strategic Plan Update, Affordable Housing Elements, Implementation Strategy

Councilman Jim Spehar lead the discussion on this Agenda item beginning with identifying two City Council objectives (outside the goals listed in the *Shelter and Housing that are Adequate* portion of the City's Strategic Plan for 2002-2012) that might be of interest to the GJHA, and stressing the importance of finding the correct methodology to do the studies:

- One of the goals regarding economic development is a wage survey for 2005, which the Workforce Center will be assisting with. The objective is to provide a good basis for community discussion, not direction, regarding wage rates in Grand Junction.
- Through the Economic Development Partnership, Council will be working to survey 100 local businesses to identify needs and workforce issues.

He also informed the group that Council has formed a Working Committee that will concentrate on the *Shelter and Housing Goals*, and discussed how this Committee might approach this endeavor. He expounded on those Goals as follows:

- **Objective 22A** – *Identify and convene policy level working partners, developing and promoting public/private partnerships to address funding opportunities and relationships with existing and potential public agencies, not-for-profits and the private sector and*
- **Objective 22B** – *With professional assistance discuss and adopt a common methodology to address housing issues.*

Minutes (contd.)

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- As a follow-up of the Housing Forum, working groups will be established to follow through on the information heard at the Forum. It is anticipated that through a facilitated discussion with Housing Forum participant representatives, ideas identified at the Forum will be addressed.
- **Objective 22C** – *Identify and allocate City resources (financial and other) available for project implementation.*
 - The Council has allocated one-half million dollars in this year's budget for the housing goals.
- **Objective 22D** – *Initiate and participate in the development of at least one project benefiting each of the target populations as identified at the Affordable Housing Forum.*
 - This goal is intended to be long term and is to initiate or participate in projects that will meet the needs of each of the identified population from the Housing Forum.
- **Objective 22E** – *Continue to participate in the staff level working group to coordinate information.*
 - The Council intends to continue to participate in the work of the Housing Coalition and other umbrella groups that are working to meet the housing needs in the Grand Valley.

Kelly Arnold, City Manager, briefly highlighted other City efforts that might be of interest to the GJHA:

- The City has inventoried all public property that it owns and plans to inventory all publicly held land in the 201 boundary and on the fringe of the community, so an understanding is acquired of who owns what and what opportunities might exist.
- Within the last 6 months, Council has adopted the Infill and Redevelopment Policy. If a project comes in for application to the City that is within the designated boundaries, one of the bonus criteria that make it a project that the City may participate in is the housing element. Applications are being accepted now.

3. GJHA Will Suffer Sizeable Cuts to Housing Choice Voucher Program in 2005

Jody Kole, GJHA Executive Director, explained that the Authority is waiting for the final decision from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on the Agency's appeal of the proposed level of funding cut that would result in a loss equivalent to 50 vouchers and at least 3 staff positions. As these funding cuts are critical, she indicated that staff is working hard at developing other internal alternatives to generate additional revenue. Lengthy discussion ensued exploring various opportunities as Jody clarified additional questions.

4. New Initiatives of Grand Junction Housing Authority – Will be Seeking Support from City and Other Partners

Because of current/future federal funding cuts, GJHA continues to proactively look for ways to be entrepreneurial to meet the funding shortfall and generate additional capital. Several of those ideas were shared with City Council:

- Steve Heinemann, GJHA Board Chairperson, advised that the Agency will be working directly with Freddie Mac in regards to new Workforce Homeownership Programs. A possibility exists that the City of Grand Junction could be the first “small city” to be selected for a workforce housing project, and GJHA staff will meet with Freddie Mac's Regional Representative, Rick Padilla, on February 18th to initiate the investigation into this process.
- Ideas the GJHA will proceed with include expanding the acquisition and rehab of units to rent, acquiring lease-to-purchase properties for the Homeownership Program, and “buying and selling” properties to increase cash flow.
- Jody explained the theory and guidelines of a state/local funded Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program, designed for families who are homeless or near homeless and responded to various questions. GJHA has begun to develop a proposal to the Colorado Division of Housing (CDOH), and will seek community support, including funding as local match from both the City and Mesa County.

5. Adjourn

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

