Present were:
    Stephen Rinehart, Chairman
    Divina Westerfield-Maruca, First Vice-Chairman
    Erick Pons
    Kenneth Ellis
    Glen Gibellina
    Vallerie Guillory
    Brandon Johnson
    William Connerly
    Mark Dunlop
    Michael Fenton
    George Kruse, Board of County Commissioners

Absent was:
    Michelle Scott

Also present were:
    Deborah Ash, Redevelopment and Economic Opportunity
    William O'Shea, Building and Development Services
    Lee Washington, Community and Veterans Services Director
    Sarah Warren, Assistant County Attorney
    Jonathan Martinez, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Circuit Court

AGENDA AND SIGN-IN SHEET

1. CALL TO ORDER
   Deborah Ash, Redevelopment and Economic Opportunity, called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ROLL CALL
   The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call were performed.

3. DECLARATION OF A QUORUM
   A quorum was declared.

4. WELCOME
   Lee Washington, Director, Community and Veterans Services, welcomed the AHAC members.

5. INTRODUCTION OF ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS
   All the members introduced themselves.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS
   Jonathan Martinez, Deputy Clerk of the Circuit Court, opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.
Nominations - Chairman
Divina Maruca by Member Gibellina
Steve Rinehart by Member Dunlop
Vallerie Guillory by herself

Member Rinehart was elected Chairman by majority vote.

Chairman Rinehart opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chairman.

Divina Maruca was nominated as Vice Chairman, as there were no other nominations, she was appointed as Vice Chairman.

7. BASICS OF THE SUNSHINE LAW, PUBLIC RECORDS AND ETHICS

Sarah Warren, Assistant County Attorney, provided a brief overview of the Sunshine laws, which require that meetings are open for the public and must be reasonably noticed. Members are prohibited to communicate outside of meetings regarding board business. Members are not allowed to whisper during the meeting. If the members have a report, it should be presented to Ms. Ash, and she will add it to the agenda. There are criminal and civil penalties for knowing violations of the Sunshine Law: it is a second-degree misdemeanor punishable by up to 60 days in jail and a civil violation of up to $500.

Discussion ensued regarding Member Guillory providing personal updates during the meeting, there is a possibility updates would be considered Board business, and if the topic will be brought to the Board in the future then conversations must be held in the Sunshine.

Mr. Washington explained Member Guillory’s project is not something that has the potential to be discussed during AHAC meetings.

Member Kruse explained AHAC votes on policy not projects.

Member Gibellina shared that he emails Commissioners about affordable housing.

Ms. Warren explained that emailing Commissioners is not against the Sunshine Law.

Member Connerly asked Ms. Warren to send members information regarding Sunshine Laws.

Ms. Warren explained Chapter 119 of the Florida Statue Public Records Act. Public records are defined to include any type of records that communicate, perpetuate and formalize knowledge of any County business. Under the Public Records Act, if Board members send a text to someone not on the Board and the individual says something, it might become public record. Any texts and emails should be forwarded to Ms. Ash that contain County business. Violating the Public Records Act could result in a first-degree misdemeanor with up to a year in jail and a $1,000 fine. It is important not to communicate with Board members about topics that might come before the board unless at an AHAC meeting. If emails are sent regarding County business, the email must be on a County account. Members cannot solicit or collect gifts to sway votes, members cannot use their position to secure any special benefits, and members cannot enter into a conflicting employment or contractual relationship that will conflict with voting. Members should not vote on a matter that will adhere to private gain or loss. Meeting minutes are summary or notes reflecting the events of the meeting.
There will be a public records and sunshine seminar on November 30th.

Member Gibellina inquired about the County paying for an attorney regarding a records request.

Ms. Warren explained if the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) deemed it necessary, they would pay for an attorney.

8. **OVERVIEW AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

Deborah Ash, Redevelopment and Economic Opportunity shared a slide presentation reviewing Statutory requirements. The purpose of AHAC is to produce an annual report with recommendations on local affordable housing incentives. The current funding strategies include rehabilitation, reconstruction, down payment assistance, housing counseling, and disaster assistance. AHACs responsibility is to review the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code (LDC), policies, and recommend improvements. At a minimum, AHAC must review incentives A - K by statutory requirements. Some AHAC accomplishments include the Utilities department charge of a 5 month direct connection fee of $375 then charge a monthly fee of $100 thereafter, and allow development services to defer fees instead of collect fees and reimburse for affordable housing developments. There have been revisions to LDC Section 545.2. The maximum allowance for accessory dwelling units is 750 square feet with no restrictions on the number of bedrooms.

Member Gibellina questioned the strategies being allowed in the SHIP funding.

Ms. Ash explained there could be other strategies to use SHIP funding.

Member Gibellina would like to include other strategies to use SHIP funding for the County.

A motion was made by Member Gibellina to incorporate three strategies, new construction funding, GAP financing, and acquisition of properties for affordable housing, to be a part of the SHIP strategies.

Member Conerly inquired about the strategies being on the County website.

Ms. Ash explained the strategies are listed in the SHIP Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP), and the funding can be used on one strategy or multiple strategies.

Member Rinehart explained that the AHAC could look into the LHAP for the next meeting. SHIP funds go to the homeowner not the developer, and they are strictly for down payment assistance.

Ms. Ash explained there is no specific way to use the funding but it is for the homeowner.

Chairman Rinehart explained the process of the AHAC and tabled member Gibellina’s topic for the next meeting. The motion died to lack of a second.

9. **UPDATE ON TRINITY WITHOUT BORDERS AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT**

Member Guillory and Member Gibellina provided an update and noted there was a ribbon
cutting ceremony with local elected officials at the event. Trinity Without Borders developed a modular home that was built by Affinity in Lakeland, Georgia, that meets and exceeds all Florida building codes and came in at about $108 per foot. They had to go through three contractors in order for the house to be developed.

10. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2022, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The location will be in the Administration Building, Manatee Room Fifth Floor, 1112 Manatee Avenue West, Bradenton 34205.

11. **MEMBER COMMENT**

Member Maruca expressed her concerns with the amount of time, builders are taking to complete builds. There should not be affordable housing lots just sitting there with nothing happening.

Member Gibellina explained meetings are very important. There should be a policy to allow the Vice Chairman to run the meeting in the event the Chairman would like to cancel the meeting, or at the decision of the board. It should not be at the decision of the Chairman.

Chairman Rinehart explained if members chose to address the Board about certain topics, they should have the information and specifics instead of throwing in general statements.

Member Maruca asked for accountability and funding for land that is just sitting in the County.

Mr. Washington explained he is meeting with the County Administrator regarding the property that member Maruca mentioned.

Discussion ensued regarding statistics of other counties in regards to the time of purchasing the land and the development of properties, put questions on the agenda, some things are outside the County’s control, and Member Gibellina requested to be the AHAC spokesperson.

Member Kruse emphasized the spokesman needs to be clear if they are speaking individually or for the AHAC.

Discussion ensued on how the primary purpose of AHAC is to review the incentives A through K. Members should not talk about personal projects and pet peeves. Members are encouraged to move forward and not move personal projects forward, AHAC is an advisory board, and it would benefit members to be familiar with the Land Development Code.

Member Guillory stated she received funding for her project from donors.

12. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There being no public comment, Chairman Rinehart closed public comment.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Chairman Rinehart adjourned the meeting at 4:22 pm.

Minutes Approved: ____________________

HC MB 21-22/4