

# Meeting Notes - September 24, 2015

<b>Mission:</b>	Federal, state, local, and non-governmental leadership working together to improve housing and economic opportunities for the agriculture workforce.
<b>Facilitator:</b>	<b>Theresa Wingard, Planning and Policy Analyst, OHCS</b>
<b>Agenda:</b>	<p><b>Introductions:</b></p> <p>New members: Jenny Dresler/Oregon Farm Bureau/Director of State Public Policy Oregon Farm Bureau, Cierra Brown, Dalton Advocacy/Lobbyist for Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers, Ann Blaker/Executive Director/Bienestar</p> <p>Kathleen Kincade, Karen Shawcross, Danielle Quinones, Laurie Hoefler, Claudia Cantu, Tomas Schwabe, Don Herman</p> <p><b>Sub-Committee Reports:</b></p> <p><b>Needs and Research:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laurie Hoefler/LSO reported their goal is to identify needs. This can only really be done with thousands of interviews, but we don't have the resources. The team can gather information; where workers are, housing available, easy to access; organize a list that is updated each year with basic population data. Currently studies, Department of Ag information, OED information, and OSHA labor camp registry are not centralized. Natasha helped communicate with the Dept. of Ag, and had great computer skills (mapping etc.). Is there someone from OHCS that could replace Natasha?</li> <li>• OHCS has had many changes in the research department this year, and has limited resources. Is there anyone from this team who has the skills to help this committee? OHCS may assign someone in the future, but in the meantime, Theresa will make the request for any information this committee may need.</li> <li>• Suggestion to update OHCS website to capture information from needs and research committee; basic information for team members. <b>Theresa tasked the team with viewing the AWHFT webpage to decide where the information belongs. Karen S. offered to help gather resources to add to the site.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Alignment and Streamlining:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claudia Cantu/CASA reported the team is waiting for Doug C. to report back to this team. She suggested the team invite the new Rural Development/Multi Family Housing Director, Wes Cockran, who replaced Ramona Mitchell, to the next meeting. This would provide an opportunity for the team to hear his direction. The RD director will spark interest, and old and new members may come to this meeting.</li> </ul>

- Claudia C. and Doug C. will connect with the new Director. Suggestion to have the next meeting at a farmworker housing project. **Claudia will take the lead on inviting Wes Cockran and securing a facility.**
- Suggestion to have future meeting at other locations.

**Agriculture Workforce Tax Credit:** Don Herman

- 2015 tax credits are all reserved.
- 10 projects applied for, and approved; two labor camps, five onsite single family, one offsite single family, two offsite multifamily approved. Three are located in The Dalles, two in Hood River, one in Condon, one in Nyssa, one in Parkdale, one in Boardman, and one in Salem.
- Minnesota contacted OHCS for information on the tax credit program. They may model their program after our program.

**Discussion:**

- What does five singles mean? \*Rehabilitation of existing structures.
- Applications are first come, first serve basis.
- What is the application review process? \*If the application is complete, based on statute, it is reviewed for approval by management.
- Who historically gets the tax credits each year (for the last 5 years)? \*Don will research this issue.
- If the tax credits are gone, the applicant is advised to apply again in January.

**OHCS Spanish speaking outreach:** Theresa Wingard

OHCS performed outreach events around the state for the Consolidated Plan. The Spanish speaking communities did not seem well represented so OHCS contracted for additional outreach to Spanish speaking communities in the **non-entitlement** areas of the state. The intent of the outreach was to determine the housing needs in those communities. There were 12 meetings around the state; 279 participants, 270 of those were renters, a large percentage were immigrants from Mexico. The results mirrored the outreach performed in April, May, and June like: high rents, a shortage of affordable rental units, need for higher incomes to pay for rent and utilities. The results also showed additional issues and needs for this group such as, resources, landlord and tenant communication, intimidation, and immigration.

**Discussion:**

- Will OHCS consider farmworker specific outreach? \*This has not been determined, but will be considered for outreach in 2016
- It was suggested that this kind of outreach could be performed by the Needs and Research committee
- The team would like to hear about the benefits families are receiving from safe affordable housing
- It was suggested there should be a focus on what resources are most important

to communities, not just a list of issues

**Team Conversation/Daniel Quinones:**

Daniel noted the many issues detailed in the Spanish speaking outreach results, like: Discrimination, retaliation, not being able to pay rent because of basic necessities, housing not up to par, electrical issues, poverty issues, high rents for large families with children, the need for two or three incomes per household to make ends meet, more affordable housing close to work areas, renovations and repairs, help with legal paper work (children helping), using children’s SSNs which creates legal issues for them later, need help knowing where to go, how to talk to children’s teacher.

**How can this team help?**

- Get information about rights and resources out to the communities
- Provide some information flow
- Post information at projects (required to post information in a central location)
- Distribute legal aid pamphlet (**Laurie will bring samples for the team**)
- Post information at existing farmworker projects in community centers
- Post information at local church groups
- Refer to county health department and building departments
- Report BOLI and civil rights issues
- Empower people to help themselves

OSHA: Create a master referral list and distribute to migrant health clinics, churches Mexican restaurants and grocery stores, and the employment department.

**Tomas and Daniele will research this idea and report back to the team.**

Bienestar: Support quality affordable housing with resident services; concentrate advocacy efforts on outreach to farmworker landlord and tenant populations, which may get the team a step closer to policy work toward a farmworker housing set aside.

**What this team wants to hear about:**

- From current sponsors who own farmworker housing; statistical information about the good work, the results, good stories, how these projects helped people move into secure and affordable housing, and how this changed people’s lives.
- How housing ties into other benefits, how can we be more successful in building community based housing
- Details about income levels, how the financing is structured, level of rents are structured

**Meeting frequency and structure:**

- Continue to meet bi-monthly
- Set future meetings at other locations; Bienestar and CASA have internet and conference call capabilities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More structured conversations</li> <li>• Laurie suggested a conversation on housing and health, inviting Migrant Ed and Head Start, with Marc and Maria presenting/facilitating. Theresa noted this is a high priority for OHCS and suggested inviting Housing Integrator Kenny LaPoint to be a part of the conversation. <b>Laurie will be point person for this project.</b></li> <li>• Tomas would like to see a brochure that includes a summary of local and state level housing resources, key contact names, and services as it relates to housing would be a valuable tool</li> </ul> <p><b>Information Sharing</b>          Bienestar: Happy Hour event on October 2<sup>nd</sup> in Hillsboro</p> <p><b>Action Items:</b>  <b>Future topics/presentations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claudia C. and Doug C. will meet with/invite new Rural Development Director Wes Cochran to the next meeting</li> <li>• Laurie H. will be point person for Housing and Health focus two meetings out</li> <li>• Karen S. will help gather resources to add to the site</li> <li>• Team will review the AWHFT webpage to decide where new resources belong</li> <li>• Don H. will research the five year history of tax credit awards</li> <li>• Thomas S. and Daniele Q. will research a resource directory</li> <li>• Laurie H. will bring samples of the legal aid booklet to the next meeting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Next Meeting:</b></p>	<p>Oregon Housing and Community Services          725 Summer St., NE STE. B, Salem, OR          Thursday, January 28, 2015          10:00a-12:00p, Room 124B          Phone: 1-877-273-4202 / ROOM: #531-141-227</p>
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