

## Board Meeting Minutes

MAY 22, 2008

**Present:** Anne Bromley (via phone first part), Claudia Jahn, Barbara McHiley, Bill Buckland, Amy Moonshadow, Kasia Tota, Carol Tooton

**Regrets:** Ann Sinclair, Wayne Desmond, Patricia Richards (on leave)

**1. Approve agenda – APPROVED;**

**2. Approve minutes of April 22, 2008 - POSTPONED**

### **3. Membership Survey**

Background: Following the cancellation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium Social Marketing Committee recommended developing a short survey aimed at members/people on our mailing list. It was designed to gauge level of interest in various initiatives and help us develop a better focus.

There was a lengthy discussion related to the survey. Essentially, there were 2 streams of thought: a) send out the survey and use it to develop a new direction b) develop a new direction (already under discussion) and then design and send out a survey to confirm/validate this new direction.

In the end it was felt that the survey was too wide-open. It suggested things that AHANS at this point is not in a position to deliver. Consultations should be well-designed and mindful of our time and the time and effort of our members. We should be very clear what we want to get out of them. The survey could be used as a sounding board for the “**New Vision for AHANS**”

**DECISION:** Hold off on the survey.

**4. New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association Conference (see <http://www.nbnpha-alsblnb.ca/>)**

Background: In May Anne and Bill attended the NBNPHA in Fredericton. Anne reported via phone on the key learnings.

- The organization has a budget of \$100,000 with 75% coming from Membership (and some from government but we are not sure how much).
- Its primary function is not advocacy organization but rather it is to provide support to non-profit housing providers

- It has an excellent rapport with the Housing Minister who spoke glowingly of the organization at the conference
- It involves the private sector – construction and insurance companies support social development (is this influence of Quebec?)
- The NB government sees non-profits as being integral to doing business
- Minister Strach has been participating in housing meetings and may be interested in supporting the non-profit sector, possibly based on a NB or similar model

### Relevance to AHANS

- A few years ago a few people developed an exciting “Affordable Housing Help Office” proposal with the guidance and involvement of Harold Dillon prior to his retirement
- The main thrust behind it is that we simply need more affordable units but groups are struggling to develop winning proposals and cobble together funding from different sources (recently after several years of trying a local group received funding for 20 units after about 5 years of trying...some free guidance from CAH and Barb seemed to have helped)
- There is a real opportunity here as it is not clear how much money from the Affordable Rental Program has been allocated, and more importantly how much of it went to non-profits; according to correspondence from the NS Housing Office *“From the RFP there are seven (7) new developments under construction and there are about 6 projects that are in various stages of getting all of the items lined up. Also there is about 78 homeowner getting help with repairs”*, but we do not know whether any of these projects were going to non profits
- We need to be able to offer something tangible to our members... **units not events**
- At the same time members must know **“What is it that I support?”** ie you may not get services per se but are part of a network of people/groups that support more affordable housing in this province
- **Right now we spend a lot of time on administration (events, membership) while the larger picture is neglected – we need to advance the Housing Help Office proposal (or use it as a starting place) ACTION: Claudia to circulate the proposal**
- **We should strive to cooperate with the government and not be seen as “the enemy”**
- **We need to brainstorm membership (e.g. construction and insurance companies, architects, planners, technical experts)**
- **We need to pick a few key people interested in partnering (union, carpenters, churches, Grant, our Business Breakfast List)**
- **We should have a real consultation with the NB network to help us develop**
- **We need a business plan**
- **We need to define a contribution that AHANS can make toward the support of affordable housing in Nova Scotia, and put that to the minister to support a request for funding to help set up AHANS with a paid administrator – set up Set up a meeting with the Minister**
- **Do the survey but not just yet – once we know what we are doing it can be branded “New Vision for AHANS”**
- **Small group discuss NB meeting in more detail (Anne, Bill, Barb)**

### 5. Newspaper Letter

- Barb circulated the letter
- All agreed it was great but could be edited to reflect the above discussion, new focus on positive partnership
- What need does the government have?

## 6. AGM 2008

- Claudia suggested we hold it again during the Housing Week which this year will be **November 17-22**
- Carla is able to support us with 1,000 (thanks CMHC!) plus sponsor a speaker from the 2006 CMHC Housing Awards
- **ACTION:** Kasia look over the awarding winning projects and recommend speakers)

7. **Next Meeting** Thursday July 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm Location TBC

## 7. Adjourn

Prepared by: Kasia Tota, Secretary

### ATTCHMT – Excerpts from NBNPHA

<http://www.nbnpha-a/sblnp.ca/historymission.html>

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### History

The New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association (NBNPHA) was formed in April of 1993 as an umbrella organization for the Province's 235 non-profit housing corporations.

### Mission

To develop and strengthen the non-profit housing sector as a means of providing affordable and adequate housing for the people of New Brunswick with a particular emphasis on serving those with the greatest need.

### Goals

To establish communication between non-profit housing groups throughout the Province for the exchange of information and the pursuit of common interests.

- To promote the formation of non-profit housing corporations through the involvement of municipalities and community-based organizations.
- To advocate for housing and to respond to housing issues on behalf of those in need.
- To provide services to non-profit housing groups such as:

- research in housing issues
  - expertise in the delivery and management of non-profit housing
  - development and management support
- To establish relations with other provincial non-profit housing associations for the purpose of exchanging information and combining efforts to advocate at the national level.

**To achieve our goals we offer the following services to our members:**

- Workshops are held in different regions of the province. These workshops are designed to help the housing groups improve their management efficiency. The topics are requested by the members themselves.
- Each spring, NBNPHA organizes a conference in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This conference is held in collaboration with the Housing Branch of the Dept. of Family and Community Services. Members get a opportunity to attend workshops, meet other housing groups and participate in the decision-making of the Association.
- Upon request, the Association's director or the regional representative will attend a group's Board of Directors meeting.
- The Association publishes timely information bulletins to keep its members informed on local, provincial and national events in the feild of non-profit housing.
- We offer our members a collective insurance program. That covers their projects, and provides liability coverage for their board members. The rates are substantially lower than market rates.
- We offer our members a Cooperative Housing Investment Program (CHIP) that is offered through most Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires in the Province. This program offers free banking services, interest return on their operating (current) account over \$5,000, and the premium interest rate of 0.25% in addition to the posted rates on term deposits for their replacement reserves.
- We offer a bulk-purchasing program which enables our members to purchase supplies, appliances, etc. from participating merchants at lower cost.
- We offer a safety program for stovetop electric stove elements. You can equip your stove with Safe-T elements from Pioneering Technology at a special price negotiated by the Association.
- We offer one-day courses on bookkeeping, Preventive Maitenance, Financial Management, Tennant Relations, Board Roles & Responsibilities. These courses provide support for the efficient management of your non- profit housing project.
- We keep an up to date list of all the non-profit housing groups within the province. This list is available upon request.
- We have a compendium of grants and programs offered by the Federal and Provincial governments.

## **Our Plans for the Future**

We continue to look for other programs and services for our members.

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