

Petersburg
Anti-Poverty Commission (APC) Minutes
February 11, 2021

Attendees: Dr. Rosezelia Roy, Ms. Keitoya Taylor, Mrs. Barbara Hoosier, Mrs. Treska Wilson-smith, Mrs. Florence Rhue, Mrs. Monica Elrod-Huddleston, Mrs. Deborah Buford, Mrs. Beverly McLaughlin, Pastor Michael Shannon

Guest: Ms. Yvette Bemby, Petersburg Redevelopment and Housing, Attorney Chris Bernhardt, Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Citizens: Ms. Brittany Crockett, Loria's Iphone, Mrs. Mary S. Howard, Mr. Leonard Muse, Mr. Nathaniel Pride

Video Conference: Zoom meeting

Agenda:

I. Opening of Meeting.

Dr. Rosezelia Roy

Opening Prayer: Mrs. Florence Rhue

Meeting Commenced: 6:02 p.m.

Motion to Accept the Agenda: Mrs. Florence Rhue 1st, Mrs. Barbara Hoosier 2nd

II. Introduction of Guest: Ms. Yvette Bemby, Petersburg Redevelopment and Housing, Attorney Chris Bernhardt, Central Virginia Legal Aid Society

Dr. Rosezelia Roy

III. Overview of Anti-Poverty Commission's Goals.

Dr. Rosezelia Roy

IV. Conversation with Ms. Bemby and Attorney Chris Bernhart,

Topic/Questions	Commissioners/ Guest response:	Summary of Commissioners/Guest remarks:
Dr. Roy: What are the requirements at this time due to COVID-19?	Mrs. Bemby	To ensure that students have hotspots so they can have internet. Preventative measures are preparing PPE for the staff daily, staffing remotely and staggering staff coming into the office. Tenants have access to them by phone calls, issuing vouchers, providing zoom calls

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		for support with housing and extended the time to finding housing
Dr. Roy: Who helped to relocate tenants?	Mrs. Bembry	Pecan Acres were demolished and tenants were relocated. The housing authority paid for relocation and the individual rent has not changed. Staff met with tenants 60 days and 30 days prior to relocation. There was constant communication. The tenants were placed based on their family size and school demographics.
Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith: When the units are rebuilt will it be Wifi accessible?	Mrs. Bembry	The units will be rebuilt into luxury apartment and there will be Wifi included.
Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith What is the projected time frame people can return?	Mr. Nathaniel Pride:	Correction people can return to their location 2022.
Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith Anyway, the homeless population at the local church can be serviced by the housing and redevelopment?	Mr. Nathaniel Pride:	At this time, they do not have a specific plan to address, but there will need to be an application process.
Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith Can adult protective services get involved and help with completing the application for the program.	Mr. Nathaniel Pride	Ms. Howard: 804-722-1181. St. Joseph Villa Executive Director Erica Holmes
Dr. Roy: Is it something that might be considered through your agency?	Mr. Nathaniel Pride:	There is an immediate need and at this time they cannot meet that need. Communication will need to occur with the church if they are allowing it.
Mrs. Treska: How do we connect the dots to help the homeless?	Mrs. Hoosier	Suggested the City will need to develop a program to communicate with the homeless people. A collaboration between the City and St. Joseph Villa
Dr. Roy: Are there cooling and heating stations?	Mrs. Florence Rhue:	That stopped some time ago
Dr. Roy: Will Petersburg work with the homeless? Are there any statistics from CARES and Red Cross?		
	Mrs. Beverly McLaughlin:	Pointed out the increased number of children living in the hotels on Washington St. and other counties will place

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		families in the local area.
Dr. Roy: Are there any programs of resiliency?	Mrs. Bembry	Family Self-Sufficiency Program to encouraging people to go to work. To begin the program the participant must set goals (save money, obtain GED, own a home). Rent is based on income. They will match and place funds in escrow account to build in order to reach income goal and returned to them. For example: One woman was able to purchase a home in 3 years and graduate from the program.
Mrs. Florence Rhue: How many people are on the list?	Mrs. Bembry	Provide participants housing choices: 1000 people can apply. There are 300 people on the waiting list for 1 & 2 bedrooms and another list for 3 bedroom
Dr. Roy: Will the program be announced?	Mrs. Bembry	We will send emails to the different agencies: Freedom Center, newspapers, partner with D19 to give the community applications and mail the application to the individuals. The date for application will remain open.

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Topic/Questions	Commissioners/ Guest response:	Summary of Commissioners/Guest remarks:
Dr. Roy: Introduction of Attorney Burnhart	Attorney Burnhart	Represents people legal rights in court when accused of a crime and address needs.
<p>Dr. Roy: How do you address eviction and legal issues? Petersburg is the highest on the list of eviction in the U.S on middle size homes. What programs are available to help and address the individuals needs?</p>	Attorney Burnhart	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Eviction Diversion Program was pilot on July 2020. The purpose will be to refabricate the program in Richmond here in Petersburg. 2. To help community member to negotiate with landlord about rent and help meet goals. People have not been able to take advantage of the pilot program and contribute the 25% down. Due to COVID, people didn't have income to make payments. Since COVID the laws have changed and people need to be educated on the changes. 3. The General Assembly ruled if you made a payment plan to a landlord that owns 4 or more units, they have to offer a payment plan and Rent Relief Program Agreement This has been addressed to move state wide. 4. The eviction crisis in Hopewell is behind Petersburg in 2020. The drop in number of evictions is due to the changes in laws and court closures that made it difficult to file an eviction. 5. People have to talk with the landlord to let them know they can't pay due to COVID. The people are protected by the Eviction Program. They are restricted due to COVID especially if people didn't do anything to be fired.

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		People are waiting months for unemployment and still haven't gotten a decision from the court.
	Mr. Nathaniel Pride	Law has been extended to March 31, 2021. There are delinquencies and we want to give relief on the impact on families and landlord.
	Attorney Burnhart	There is a huge pool of money for Electricity bill, debt and catch up on back paid rent. Smaller landlord are not applying for Rent Relief.
Mrs. Wilson Smith-Treska: How do we educate or prepare the people when the Moratorium is lifted?	Mrs. Bembry	The Housing authority requested the people to notify a decrease of income and turning in the information.
	Mrs. Florence Rhue:	Suggested to reestablish neighborhood association to pass along information and to be helpful to the community.
Mrs. Hoosier reported assisting others with the Mortgage and Rent Relief Program. Community members stated the application is complicated to fill out and can not get in touch with anyone for clarification. After printing out the application. What do you do with it? Do the landlord have to do a statement? How do you make people aware and use the program?	Attorney Burnhart:	Legal Aid Justice System are still assisting with the rent and Mortgage program. The program was launched in September 2020 online to be used locally and state wide. A helpful method would be to request the landlord to apply for the tenant to receive the assistance faster. Go online to apply for Rent Relief. 2 portals. Public Education is a challenge and work with other organization. Website. https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/rmrp

V. Acknowledgement of Appreciation of Guests

Dr. Roy expressed appreciation for the presence and sharing their information.

VI. Approval of Minutes (December 2020 and January 2021)

Motion to review the meeting minutes for (December 2020, January 2021, February 2021)

VII. Follow-up on Minutes Being placed on Petersburg's Official Website and meeting date announcement.

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<p>Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will send another request and CC commissioners. Mrs. Kimmy Osaba is responsible for placing the information on the website. Suggested the Chair should send a letter of request to place the notes on the website. 2. Request a copy of the grants for the City and what have been used. 3. Will send an email CC APC President and Second Chair to have a copy and the authority to talk with her? 	<p>Dr. Roy: Requested to know the process to place the information on the website. What is needed to correct and execute?</p> <p>Pastor Michel Shannon: Suggested to CC Mr. Miller and the City Manager. Request a time frame for completion of posting of information.</p>
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VIII. Discussion of Guest Response.

Dr. Roy	Disappointed with the number of individuals are participating in the Family Self-Sufficiency Program.
Mrs. Florence Rhue	Certain people in the community will need a lot of coaching and assistance with completion of the program.
Mrs. Treska Wilson-Smith.	Appreciate the structure and providing the public meeting for Pecan Acres. Housing Development explained the process, plan for the new apartments, preparation and various programs in the community.
Pastor Michael Shannon	Previously the HUD Program required the completion of 8 hours of community services per month if they are not going to school and receive TANIF. The program was cancelled.

IX. Follow-up reports from the Healthy Community and Education/Workforce development

Mrs. Deborah Buford	Reported on Netflix docuseries on Flint Towne. After the water crisis in 2016. A smaller town thriving until the car factory shut down. It was a 300 member police force and currently 98. The town resulted in a high crime, homelessness and abandon houses. New police chief helped with changing the perspective of the town. He received assistance from the community and implemented the (Police Reserve). Volunteers were provided yellow lights to help with surveillance the community. With the community support crime decreased by 40% and community relationships improved.
Dr. Roy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Richmond Resilience Program provided \$500 a month for 24 months. The funds were donated by the Robins Foundation. 2. Financial Navigators provide a public service an answer questions. The public can call in an receive answers to financial problems. 3. Human Kind are partnering and providing financial empowerment starting in January 5, 2021 by Mayor Stone

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<p>Pastor Michael Shannon</p>	<p>Education Workforce:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Petersburg public school-Family engagement, mentorship program, student training, mentor at least 23 seniors. Two months the City has school board meeting for parent to address any questions from the parents. 2. WAVE launched in March. Continue to accept books for the bus. The bus will go into the community. There will be a computer on buses to help with resumes and activities. If there is an activity in the community, invite the bus to be involved. 3. Diploma plus to Community College or Skilled learning. Teach people how to use their hands. Challenge has been limited response back.
<p>Mrs. Florence Rhue</p>	<p>Need parent engagement, process and plan an outcome the system is looking for.</p>

- X. **Dr. Roy as guest on Dr. Hart’s Program, WVST 91.3 FM, February 9, 2021 to share the Anti-Poverty Commission platform and how the impact of COVID 19 effects poverty in Petersburg.**

Dr. Roy provided an update report.

XI. Announcements.

Will need to form a subcommittee to bring forth information
Parent engagement workshop last one was Feb 9, to educate parents.
Wave books asking for donations
http://www.neverstopbelieving.org/services/housing-homeless-services/
CACH Crater Area Coalition on Homelessness will have the most recent data on this: https://cachcoc.org/
Great source for information about current housing law: https://housing.vplc.org/

XII. Closing

Time: 8:22p
Prayer:
Next Scheduled Meeting: 3-11-2021

Recorder: Ms. Keitoya Taylor