

Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2017
6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Nice called the regular meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Chair Nice asked Secretary Tully to call the roll.

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ray Nice
John Kurtovich
Joe Loduca
Chris Koczwar
John Tully

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

ALSO PRESENT:

Victoria M. Gaspar, Executive Director
Elsa Bekele, CPA
Betsey Allen, Miller Cooper & Co., Ltd.
One Member of the General Pub

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After allowing commissioners to look over minutes of the October 16, 2017 meeting, Chair Nice called for approval of minutes. Motion was made by Commissioner Kurtovich to approve and seconded by Commissioner Loduca. Commissioner Koczwarra mentioned the need for the approval of the minutes of the August 14, 2017 board meeting as well. Chair Nice introduced the approval of the minutes of the August 14, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Koczwarra motioned for approval and was seconded by Commissioner Tully to accept the minutes of the August 14, 2017 meeting.

GUEST SPEAKER

Commissioner Loduca referred Ms. Bekele to introduce our auditor, Betsy Allen from Miller Cooper & Co., Ltd. to present the audit for fiscal year 2016/2017. Ms. Allen gave her Independent auditors' report and went over basic financial statements. Ms. Allen communicated to the Board the importance of segregation of duties and continuance of a review process. She recommended the best practice for reimbursement checks and the use of enhancing technology and firewall. Ms. Allen concluded her report by emphasizing the need to be proactive with the use of risk assessing technology. When finished with her report, Ms. Allen then excused herself from the meeting. Following thereafter, one member of the general public decided to excuse himself as well. He has been a part of the program for a year and half and did not intend to stay for the rest of the meeting. His information was taken down and will be followed up with the Executive Director.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Commissioner Joe Loduca referred to Ms. Bekele to give the Financial Report. During the Financial Report Ms. Bekele discussed budgetary concerns and proposing a budget amendment to referenced items such as the FOIA request. Commissioner Koczwarra motioned to accept the Budget Report and was seconded by Commissioner Tully.

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Nice introduced the Neighborhood Housing Services Annual Dinner on March 13, 2018 that in prior years, Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program has been a part of. The Commissioners did have a discussion on the benefit the networking may have on the Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program. Once the Executive Director can get an actual account of who may be able attend, tickets may be purchased.

Furthermore, Chair Nice also introduced the new House Bill 017 that includes changes to the program. Modifications include decreasing 9 commissioners to 7, 5 of which must reside in district and 4 to make a quorum. As part of the new legislation, there was the ability for a tax reimbursement program and hiring youth as part of an apprenticeship. Chair Nice spoke briefly about offering a summer paid apprenticeship to adolescent youths in the neighborhood. These youths would be for public relations purposes. Executive Director Gaspar added that the youth may also assist with community outreach, local nonprofit organizations that Southwest Home

Equity Assurance Program has a partnership with and potential clean up. Commissioner Koczvara questioned the program's applicability to workers compensation liability, insurance and business liability. Commissioner Kurtovich also expressed the same concern as well as questioning why we would pursue the employment business. The Commissioners agreed that this was something Southwest Home Assurance Program would have to investigate and create further as we would have the opportunity to do so. Commissioner Tully mentioned that Special Service Areas (SSAs) have the ability to do that and perhaps the Commission would investigate how that program is administered. Commissioner Tully also mentioned the potential of partnering up with Streets and Sanitation as well as assisting local block parties. The hiring of kids would reinvest into the new generation of the district. This would be followed up in the February meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Gaspar began the Executive Director's report with the number update on registrations and home improvement loans. Executive Director Gaspar distributed various maps that pin pointed where claims have been paid and home improvement loans taken out in all. The maps provided an idea of the communities that know about the program and those that do not. Inevitably this helps to streamline the strategy for the future and offers a more accurate perspective on who and where the program is actually reaching and where efforts must be revisited. Chair Nice commended Executive Director Gaspar's travel to areas of district that have not been traveled before.

As part of the Executive Director's Report, Executive Director Gaspar gave the Halloween parade update and detailed the comparison in spending from last years to this year. She also noted the differences in donations, most notably with the reusable bag added. A suggestion was made to make the bag bigger and that was something everyone agreed upon.

The bi-annual magazine was also discussed with the new additions of the testimonial, the district map, and ward and zip code information. However, it was noted that the time frame of this year may have hindered the registration numbers as there were not as many generated as in prior years. There was consideration in changing the time frame of the magazine due to that hindrance.

Executive Director Gaspar informed the Commissioners of the new report by Metropolitan Family Services that gave an analysis of 5 communities within the district. The report detailed information such as homeownership statistics, foreclosure data and general insight on the communities within our district. All of which could be heavily utilized as we head into the new direction of assisting homeowners within our district. A majority of the communities mentioned are locations that Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program is not fully represented in. Consecutively, the new website launched November 8, 2017 and its contents and logistics were also briefly discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Executive Director Gaspar concluded the Executive Director Report with new business and the potential for future programs. With the current press of other similar programs, it is essential that

Southwest Home Equity Assurance Program begin to look towards new partnerships with local nonprofit organizations that reinvest into the district. Executive Director Gaspar informed the Commissioners of nonprofits she has begun to work with like Poderworks and the continuance of meeting with other nonprofits to begin negotiations. The importance of proactivity was the main topic of conversation.

Victoria informed the Commissioners on upcoming items such as communicating with real estate agencies in the district and organizing the Home Improvement Loan program.

There was also a brief discussion on partnering up the next magazine with City of Chicago's recycling program with the help of Commissioner Tully. Additionally, everyone congratulated Commissioner Tully on his recent promotion.

OLD BUSINESS

Following thereafter, Chair Nice opened the floor for Old Business, one of which was already spoken about, the website. Commissioner Kurtovich brought up the recent tree trimming that was done over our property line. The request was completed by a local business, Midway Tree Service and completed after neighbor complaints were given to a local ward office. While, the tree was not on our property, we had the jurisdiction to trim anything over our line that would pose a threat to customers and/or staff.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nice concluded the meeting. Commissioner Kurtovich motioned to adjourn and Commissioner Koczwarra seconded the motion. The meeting concluded at 7:42p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Tully
Secretary