

Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name: Affordable Housing ARPA Advisory Committee

Meeting Date: February 16, 2023

Meeting Called to Order: 10:03AM

Location: Dougherty Auditorium- 120 W. Dougherty Street.

Recording: <https://youtube.com/live/70Ax5nupkxc?feature=share>

Virtual? ☐ Yes / ☒ No

Public Input Requested or Received? ☒ Yes / ☐ No

Committee Attendees:

☒ Kelly Girtz	☐ Evan Mills	☒ Jesse Houle
☒ Marqueta Swain	☒ Brad Griffin	☒ Sharon Liggett (non-voting)
☒ Niki Jones	☐ Alice Kinman	☐ Spencer Frye (non-voting)
☒ Rick Parker	☒ Shea Post	☐ Charles Smith (non-voting)
☐ John Spagna	☒ Matthew Hall	☒ Fred Smith (non-voting)
☒ Heather Benham	☒ Solomon Smothers	☐ Charlie Gluodenis (non-voting)
☐ Laura Alexander	☒ Andrew Saunders	☐ Terris Thomas (non-voting)
☐ Cecilia Mercer	☒ Ovita Thornton	

Staff Attendees:

☒ Alejandra Calva	☒ Cameron McGlothen	☒ Hannah Savard
☒ Coral Rogers	☒ Paige Seago	☒ Sherrie Hines

HR&A Attendees:

☒ Philip Kash	☒ Sophie Danish (virtual)
☒ Vidhee Garg	☒ Austin Amandolia (virtual)

Items Discussed:

1. Committee approved minutes from meeting on 12/12/22. First motion by Mayor Girtz, seconded by Rick Parker.
2. Rick Parker introduced Connie Staudinger as the new Executive Director of Athens Housing Authority, and Mayor Girtz announced that Commissioners Houle and Thornton have joined the committee.
3. Solomon Smothers provided updates about proposed 2023 GICH Point Process, and the 5/19/23 application deadline.

4. HR&A provided a recap of the discussion during 12/12/22 meeting, and introduced the day's discussion focused on ACC's 3 key primary housing challenges: lack of quality affordable rental homes, lack of support for homeownership, and a modest affordable housing delivery system.
5. HR&A presented findings to date and led discussion around the local rental housing market, including housing cost burden among renters, rental housing gap, typology and vacancy rates in subsidized and naturally occurring affordable rental units, and rent increases. Discussion points included a need to look at regional data to understand local trends, and potential solution areas like developing more subsidized rental homes, limiting rate of rent increases, increasing income of lower income households.
6. HR&A presented findings to date and led discussion on homeownership trends and challenges in ACC, including home prices, mortgage denials, housing stock and homeowner cost burden. Discussion points included a need to focus on increasing and sustaining home ownership in ACC (vs. only focusing on renters), as well as potential solution areas like making mortgage financing more equitable, increasing supply of move-in ready homes, and support to lower-income homeowners.
7. HR&A presented findings on local housing system, including strengths and areas of improvement like expanding/sustaining funding, building mission-driven affordable housing capacity, and sustaining the focus on affordable housing.
8. Commissioner Thornton announced that the Fair Housing Conference will take place in April.
9. Commissioner Houle made a motion to adjourn meeting, seconded by Rick Parker.

Meeting Adjourned at: 11:42 a.m.