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CCAH Takes Giant Step into Cyberspace!

Yes, you guessed it! Thanks to the hard work of our Executive Director, we have a terrific new communication tool. I know it took us a while to get on the Information Highway, but a couple of months ago we took the leap and are sailing along with our brand new Web site.

Please check us out when you get the chance. The Web address is www.carolinas-councilforaffordablehousing.com.

You'll find interesting information relating to our membership, news and tidbits from CARH, announcements of upcoming events, order forms for leases, and lots of industry-related links. We're excited to be able to bridge the digital gap and become more accessible to all of our supporters in the affordable housing industry.

Since our site is so new, we'd love to get some feedback and suggestions for

enhancements or ways we can make it an even more effective way to stay in touch. Please feel free to forward any comments to our Executive Director, Ms. Nancy Cross, at ccahboard@aol.com.

CCAH Welcomes Newest Board Member

After the retirement of Willard Dean from DTH Management Co. this past June, the Council had a vacant seat on its Board of Directors. In July, the Board nominated and unanimously voted in our newest board member. Lisa McGee, Affordable Housing Asset Manager for Greystone & Company, now fills the vacant seat and will serve as a member of the Properties Training & Education Committee.

Lisa has been in the affordable housing industry for over

19 years. At Greystone, Lisa is responsible for processing RD prepayments, rehabs and development applications. Prior to her employment with Greystone in 2005, she served as Compliance and Asset Manager with WAJ Management, Inc., overseeing 36 affordable housing properties, and later served as the Regional Property Manager for those properties for an additional four years.

Lisa previously worked with USDA Rural Development for 13 years on state, district, and county levels. She is a certified

HUD Assisted Housing Manager and has earned her C6P Tax Credit Certification, S.T.A.R. Certification, Fair Housing and Accessibility Certifications, and Landlord Training Certification.

Lisa has a true passion for affordable housing and has committed her career to this mission. The Council is thrilled to have Lisa as a new member on the Board of Directors and wish to officially welcome her aboard. Lisa can be reached at lmcgee@greyco.com.

Message from the President

tion of our new e-newsletter, and we hope you enjoy reading about what's happening in our neck of the woods. Believe me, a LOT is happening too!

The **2006 Annual Meeting this past May** was another great opportunity for our members to get together and network with one another. Over 150 attendees enjoyed the golf tournament, the awards luncheon, and other highlights of the meeting including updates from USDA-RD on preservation strategies and their 538 Loan Program. We heard about the new North Carolina Identity Theft Protection Act and were given an up-close and personal perspective regarding illegal drugs and the growing epidemic of methamphetamine trafficking and use in America. All of the sessions were informative, timely, and thought-provoking, and I'd like to once again thank all of our expert speakers, panelists, and everyone who participated in the meeting at the beach.

I'm happy to report that the **Annual Meeting for 2007 is already set for April 17-19** and will once again be at the Marriott Grande Dunes in Myrtle Beach. Please help us continue to bring top-notch trainers and quality information to you at the meeting by considering sponsorship or by being an exhibitor.

As many of you know, **Willard Dean of DTH Management, Inc., retired** in June. Not only did DTH lose a wonderful President, but the CCAH Board found itself one Director short as well. I want to officially acknowledge Willard on behalf of the Board for his many years of service to the membership of the

It seems like yesterday when I wrote to tell you of all the exciting things that were coming up for 2006. Now look, the year is almost over and the holidays are fast approaching! This is the second publica-

Council. Willard served as member of the Council's Board of Directors for several terms and most recently chaired the Annual Meeting Committee in 2005-2006. Willard is greatly missed by us all, and we wish him the very best in retirement.



Willard Dean, pictured here at the Annual Meeting, has retired from DTH Management.

On a lighter note, one of our newest initiatives has finally become a reality. We now have a **new Web site!** This Web site (www.carolinascouncilforaffordablehousing.com) should help when ordering leases, obtaining membership and sponsorship information, and will include updates about upcoming events as well as links to lots of other housing-related Web sites. Please check us out when you get the chance.

Just a reminder, the **2007 membership renewals/applications** will be out in the mail this month. We sincerely hope that you value your membership in the CCAH and hope that you will renew your membership for the coming year promptly. We've still got lots to accomplish, and we want to represent as many voices as possible to protect our interests and to promote the continued growth of safe, affordable housing in North and South Carolina.

Finally, I sincerely hope that everyone has had a healthy, safe and prosperous year so far. Happy Holidays everyone, and the same for the coming New Year!

*Jill Odom
November 3, 2006*

Free Marketing Service: List your property at NCHousingSearch.org

NCHousingSearch is a free Web bilingual page where landlords can list vacancies and prospective tenants can search for affordable apartments. The Web site is sponsored by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, the N.C. Inter-agency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs, the N.C. Department of Correction, CAHEC, CCAH, and CICNC.

This listing service is currently recruiting landlords and property owners to list properties throughout the state. The N.C. Housing Finance Agency will be coordinating a marketing program to managers of housing credit apartments, prospective renters, and the service agencies who assist them early in 2007. The Web page is powered by the Charlotte-based company Socialserve.com, which operates similar sites in

Charlotte, Greensboro, and Asheville as well as for numerous other cities and states.

Interested landlords should click on "Register to List Properties" under the "Property Providers" section of the Web page. After a short registration process, you will be contacted by Socialserve's bilingual call center within a few days to walk you through setting up your vacancy listings. Reach thousands of potential renters—list your property at NCHousingSearch.org!

A Washington Report

October 2006

On November 7 voters will elect a new Congress and determine which political party will control the House and Senate. Six days after that, Congress will return in a lame duck session to try to finish appropriating funds for FY 2007 and other pending legislation.

In this particularly bitter political season, it is possible, however, to find strong indicators from both political parties that are encouraging for the affordable housing world.

Before recessing for the final election sprint, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives approved three housing bills and had a fourth that was ready for consideration. The legislation the House passed would extend HOPE VI (which was already included in pending appropriations legislation), continue the mark-to-market initiative, and increase multifamily loans limits in high-cost areas.

The fourth bill, which did not reach the House floor, allows the prepayment of some Section 515 loans, establishes vouchers for displaced tenants, and offers incentives to encourage preservation. (More on this later in this memo.)

On the other side of the aisle, Speaker-in-waiting Nancy Pelosi and could-be chairmen Charlie Rangel (Ways and Means) and Barney Frank (Financial Services, which has authorizing jurisdiction over all but military housing programs) have all identified affordable housing programs and refinement of the Housing Credit (and Bond) as priorities if the Democrats take control of the House.

The "p" word (production) is even heard in discussions about new housing policy initiatives.

Albeit stalled for the year, the House also has pending strongly bipartisan legislation that would make positive changes in the Credit and Bond programs. Similar legislation will be introduced next year in the 110th Congress.

A continuing resolution (CR), which expires November 17, is funding HUD and rural housing programs. In fact, 10 of the 12 major appropriations measures are contained in the CR. It will be renewed until the individual money bills are adopted through regular order or in some type of omnibus legislation. That could come between November and Christmas, or actually not be resolved until 2007.

Before departing for the campaign, Congress moved \$5.3 billion from discretionary domestic spending to the defense department account—\$20 million of that total did go to Homeland security.

Congressional "rules" require that the \$5.3 billion be offset somehow. A typical way of accomplishing this is through an across-the-board cut in domestic accounts, amounting to about 1.1 percent in this instance.

Even if that cut does take place, HUD and USDA programs have been treated pretty well, all things considered.

All of this demonstrates that vestiges of Congressional tendencies toward bipartisan public policy still exist, at least when it comes to housing. At least I hope it does.

The saga of prepayment of older Section 515 loans continues unabated. Some form of the legislation referenced above will be introduced next year, and in the meantime pilot and demonstration programs provided in appropriations legislation or administratively established by the Rural Development Service will be announced next in the form of regulations.

Section 515 owners still seem to have the advantage in several lawsuits over prepayment, but the court decisions are far from consistent.

The initiative for using Section 538 guaranteed rural multifamily loans for preservation will be extended this year, and there will be a ready availability of funds (guarantees). This RDS program, I still believe, offers a solid opportunity for certain Section 515 projects, particularly those in better markets or with rental assistance.

The new development in this arena is that I have identified a possible precedent for a method of refinancing Section 515 loans. The "it makes no sense" Congressional budget process complicates anything not clearly within its parameters, but I hope to find enough creative Democrats and Republicans next year to pursue this.

My research indicates the refinancing has already been used to a limited extent in other federal direct loan programs.

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Annual Meeting in Action

May 7-9, 2006

Myrtle Beach, SC



Breakfast buffet at the Marriott Grande Dunes Resort



NC and SC Rural Development Awards Luncheon



Larry Floyd (*right*) presents an SC RD Award to Harris Brown Management, Inc.



Bill Hobbs (*right*) presents an NC RD Award to GEM Management, Inc.



Danny Ellis, GEM Management, serves as moderator for the Agency (HUD, SCHFPA, NCHFA) Panel.

Our Loss Is Their Gain

Our own Bill Hobbs, North Carolina Rural Development's Director of Multi-Family Programs, is leaving us. He has accepted a new assignment in Hilo, Hawaii, as their Director of Housing Programs. No, I'm not joking. Bill will be responsible for both the single-family and multi-family housing programs in the state of Hawaii as well as the Western Pacific territories of Guam, Saipan, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau. His new territory comprises some 4.5 million square miles. Do you think that's large enough to handle the likes of Bill? Maybe....maybe not.

Developing partnerships is a remarkable strength of Mr. Hobbs, and we in the rural housing industry have benefited greatly from his leadership, fellowship, support, and humor for the past three years. We simply aren't going to be the same here without him, and we know the folks in Hawaii have truly gotten themselves a winner!

Bill and his lovely wife, Pat, visited the "Big Island" in August for their initial "look-see" and have found a nice condo within walking distance of the state RD office, which will suit them well until they can buy a house. In Bill's words, Hilo is a "quaint old town, that's much more laid-back than the Honolulu area." Bill says he'll miss his friends and barbeque the most, but looks forward to coming back in April for his niece's wedding and a quick visit.

Bill's last day in office here will probably be December 21st. He'll be available in his new office on January 12th and has already invited all of us to paradise for a visit. I'm sure I speak for all the members of the CCAH when wishing Bill and Pat all the best in the upcoming years. Relocating to paradise is a dream that many of us share, but few of us will ever achieve. As always, Bill not only dreams it, he gets it done! Many, many successes in the future for you, Mr. Hobbs.

Jill Odom, President



In December Bill Hobbs will say good bye to the Carolinas to assume the position of Director of Housing Programs in Hilo, Hawaii. Here Bill (seated, second to left) is pictured at the Annual Meeting with representatives from RD North and South Carolina, CARH, CAHEC, and CCAH President, Jill Odom.

Mark Your Calendars

Annual Meetings Set for 2007 and 2008

Training Sessions for 2006 and 2007



Mike Holoman (left), Past President of CCAH, greets new CCAH Director Brandon Liles.

The 2007 and 2008 Annual Meetings are scheduled for April 17, 18, and 19 of 2007 and April 20, 21, and 22 of 2008. Mark your calendars and make your reservations early. The next two Annual Meetings will again be held at The Grande Dunes Resort in Myrtle Beach. This location has been extremely popular with our members, and the resort has agreed to hold prices to a modest increase for the next two years.

The 2007 Annual Meeting promises to be another informative and invaluable

networking opportunity for all CCAH members. Legislative updates, Agency panel discussions, relevant educational opportunities, a trade show, and plenty of time to connect with other members are just some agenda highlights.

We're in the process of finalizing the 2007 agenda, and it already has something for everyone. More detailed information will be forthcoming in January. As usual, we can't wait to see everyone next spring AT THE BEACH!

The PTE (Properties Training & Education Committee) has been working overtime to plan some great opportunities for you. Be sure to mark your calendars now!

For those of you in North Carolina we've got a special treat! Bill Hobbs, RD Director of Multi-Family Programs, will personally host three one-

day training sessions. The registration fee will be nominal, and PTE credits may be used. Registration information will be in the mail within the next few days. Please pick the location nearest you and register directly with Nancy Cross at CCAHboard@aol.com.

November 29, 2006:

The Global Transpark Training Center, Kinston, NC

November 30, 2006:

Embassy Suites, Greensboro, NC

December 4, 2006:

The Park Inn Gateway Conference Center, Hickory, NC

If you're looking for something in South Carolina, we're finalizing the plans for a fantastic seminar in Columbia coming in January 2007. Details will be out soon. You won't want to miss it!

News From NCHFA's Housing Forum

On October 11, 2006, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency held its Annual Housing Forum in Greensboro.

Many of us in attendance had the opportunity to meet Sara C. Newsom, Manager of Rental Assets, for the first time. Most of you know that Paul Kimball has taken over the role of Manager of Strategic Planning and Policy at the Agency, and so Sara, recently relocated from Texas, is now in Raleigh to take over the helm in Rental Assets. If you haven't had the chance to meet Sara yet, I think you'll find her very friendly, personable and a well-versed seasoned veteran of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

Probably the most noteworthy news from the Forum came during the Tax Credit Compliance Sessions. Taken straight from the NCHFA Web site, the announcement goes like this:

Effective January 1, 2007, NCHFA will require the use of a limited number of forms for all developments monitored by NCHFA, including those with an allocation of tax credits. The number of required forms will be kept to a minimum. While not required, several other forms were created to address documentation issues. Many forms in the market place do not collect enough information to accurately determine whether households qualify under the housing program's income restrictions. These "Best Practice Forms" were designed to collect information necessary to facilitate the determination of eligibility. A third category of forms has been created and provided for general use.

On all of the NCHFA forms the social security number of individuals has been removed. NCHFA understands that in order to comply with federal laws governing the LIHTC program you may be required to provide a third party with personal information such as a social security number (i.e., to obtain a credit report). However, all material transmitted to NCHFA must have an individual's social security number or other personal information redacted.

The new required forms now include:

- Tenant Income Certification
- Employment Verification
- Under \$5,000 Asset Certification

It should be noted that the new NCHFA required forms will not supercede those forms currently required by Rural Development. For questions or additional information you may contact Sara Newsom at snewsom@nchfa.com.