TAHRA’s 74th Annual Meeting ~ “Dare to Soar”

TAHRA’s 74th annual meeting was held September 15 – 17, 2013 at The Chattanooga Hotel with 230 members, including 15 exhibiting companies in attendance. The John Acuff/TAHRA Scholarship Golf tournament was held on Sunday prior to the opening session. The opening session included presentations by Vincent Ivan Phillips, HUD personnel, Marcia Lewis and Charles Barnett and a SERC/NAHRO update from Thomas Rowe, SERC President.

Training session topics included: Health Care Reform, HCV Optimization Strategies, Workers Compensation, HR 101, Guns in Trunks Law, Workplace Violence, Successful Succession Planning for commissioners and management, a Washington update, Remediation of Methamphetamine Contaminated Properties, and Does RAD make Sense for You. A tour of the Chattanooga Housing Authority developments was also offered. Attendees enjoyed a reception with the exhibitors, lunch with their peers and an evening event at Pier 2 at the Southern Belle’s Riverboat.

A special thank you to our annual meeting sponsors: Barge Cauthen & Assoc., Inc., Michael Brady Inc., Chattanooga Housing Authority, Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, Inc., and Ledford Engineering & Planning, LLC.


Johnson City and McMinnville Housing Authorities win Tennessee’s Best Awards!

Congratulations to Johnson City and McMinnville Housing Authorities who won a THDA Tennessee’s Best Award at their recent Governor’s Housing Summit in Nashville.

Johnson City Housing won the Excellence in Partnership – Rising Star Award for their Homes for Youth (H4Y) program. Homes for Youth (H4Y) serves homeless 18-25 year olds by partnering with organizations in an effort to support, mentor and provide them with the tools to be successful. H4Y utilizes a three-pronged model for self-reliance: supportive transitional housing, team mentoring, and family advocacy. As needed, H4Y partners with community resources for job training, counseling, physical fitness, and other services. H4Y has an extensive network of dedicated partners in the Tri-Cities community that contributes generously through financial and spiritual support and guidance, technical assistance, in-kind donations and volunteering.

McMinnville Housing Authority won the Best in Innovation Award. They were one of four Tennessee housing authorities (See Best-continued Pg.5)
NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK

Donna Baumgartner, TAHRA Executive Director

As Thanksgiving quickly approaches, I would like to take this time to thank all of you who contribute in so many different ways to the success of our association – serving on committees and the board, attending our meetings and workshops, helping your fellow housing agency members, and all the many other ways you contribute. You are a blessing. Happy Thanksgiving!!

did an enormous amount of work preparing all the goodies we consumed.

Please begin to make your plans to attend our upcoming TAHRA events. First off is our annual “Day on the Hill”, February 25th and 26th. Now more than ever, it is imperative that we cultivate strong relationships with our legislature and those who vote on what we need to run our agencies. And don’t forget NAHRO Legislative, March 9th – 12th. They can’t hear from us too much!! Spring Workshop will be in Franklin, April 28th – 30th, 2014. Our Annual Conference will be in Orange Beach, AL, September 14th – 16th, 2014. We will make it worth your time and dollars to be there. A few changes are already being discussed to give you more bang for your dollar! So please send us your thoughts on needed session topics. It is YOUR workshop and conference!

Our website has this, as well as other information already posted. We have accomplished several upgraded features and will continue to add enhancements to make this an informative place to look for information. I encourage you to take a look at your agency listing and make sure it is correct. Other suggestions are welcome! And remember—if you have a facebook account, sign on and LIKE TAHRA! Again, thank you for this opportunity to serve and represent TAHRA!!

Joyce

Congratulations to our TAHRA Resident Newsletter Contest Winners!

Extra Large: Jackson Housing Authority
Large: Highland Residential Services
Medium: Gallatin Housing Authority

Each winning HA will receive a check for $75. Congratulations!
Why So Many Procurement Rules?
by Terry McKee

Do you ever wonder why there are so many state and federal rules concerning procurement? Why does it matter? Who cares? The rules are there for a lot of purposes but a primary purpose is to ensure fairness and openness in the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. Unlike a corporation, government is funded involuntarily through the levy and collection of taxes. Citizens expect that their taxes are spent in a wise and fair manner. Thus, procurement rules are intended to ensure that governmental procurement actions are open to all interested vendors and not just those that are favored by governmental employees nor those “that we have always dealt with.”

In addition to that undergirding reason though, and in my opinion, procurement rules are in place to keep you out of the newspaper and the courtroom! Far too many governmental entities get into the newspapers for the wrong reasons. Here are a few, of the many, headlines about scandals that have reached the headlines:

"FBI worker who helped land contract indicted"

WASHINGTON – An FBI employee was indicted Tuesday for allegedly accepting an all-expenses-paid Caribbean cruise for his family’s vacation after helping a shredding machine company win a $2 million contract.

"PHA Faces Building Supplies Scandal"

County sued over contract award

Company says $17.5M job to preserve records not out for bid

Dallas County didn’t seek bids because it used a cooperative that allows local governments to "piggyback" on existing contracts

"Heights, HUD: Why so many scandals in our public housing?"

$2.7M contract improper

The rules are there for a reason. Yes sometimes they seem laborious and tedious. Yes they slow the process down at times. But it is all for a good reason. It lets the taxpayers know we are doing the right thing, in the right way and being as fair, open and transparent as possible.

Thanks for letting me wax philosophical this time! always, if I can be of help to you, feel free to contact me: tmckee@kcdo.org

HRS Teens Need Training Room Makeover

Highlands Residential Services’ Teens Need Training after-school program recently completed a room makeover for the teens meeting room.

The makeover was made possible through a $10,000 award received by AmeriCorps volunteer with HRS, Shaquawana Wester, as a National winner for her Make a Difference project last year.

Several TNT supporters worked together to design and furnish the room, including the donation of a Smart Board from Cummins Filtration and the Cookeville Police Dept. and the Police Athletic League. An Open House was held for the public on Oct. 3.

"Tales of TAHRA" Back Issues Available Online!

Recent “Tales of TAHRA” issues are available at WWW.TAHRANET.ORG Earlier issues back to November 2004 are at the web address below. All these issues are available as .PDF files. Go to:

http://talesoftahra.googlepages.com

(Please note: there is no “www” in this address.)
MICHAEL BRADY INC is honored to serve the Murfreesboro Housing Authority

Congratulations on your pending retirement, Pat Noland!!!! Good luck in your future endeavors!

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that received funding under the Competitive Grant Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for the HUD Public Housing Capital Fund. The funds were used to complete the rehabilitation of one of the oldest public housing development in the community. An estimated $30,000 annually is saved in water, sewer and electricity costs. The renewal of the property includes the Tennessee Technological Agricultural Leadership and Development Serve Project planting over 60 cherry trees donated by a local nursery.

Commissioner Phelan Recognized with Center Dedication

Doug Lockard, Executive Director of Trenton Housing held a dedication and ribbon cutting for the newly built “Robert Sidney Phelan Education Center” at 404 Lexington Street. The Center is the first of its kind at the housing authority and will be the home of the LeMac After School and Summer Program which was formerly at the Community Resource Center. The after school program operates Monday – Friday on the Trenton Special School District Schedule. Summer Enrichment is open for six weeks and operates 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. During the past year the after school program enrolled over 106 students, grades K-8. This program has operated in this capacity for over 20 years now. Doug Lockard stated in his opening “Our building dedication is a fitting tribute to a humble and dedicated public servant who has ensured that low income families of Trenton have had opportunities to grow and prosper. For 43 ½ years Robert Sidney Phelan has served on the Trenton Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. We are honoring his legacy. Trenton Housing, our residents, family and friends now celebrate Robert Sidney Phelan’s lifetime commitment to the Trenton Community.”

Rhonda Casey, Director of Housing and Director of the Afterschool Program spoke about the journey of Trenton Housing’s after school program and its role in the community. She introduced the program assistants Myra Ganaway, Terri Bolden, Syreeta Herron and Evelyn Johnson. She then elaborated on the dedication and commitment that the Program Coordinator, Charlotte Doaks has shown over the past 20 years. Casey stated, “Charlotte Doaks began with a room of around five students at an apartment in Lynnhurst Development. She stayed with the program and helped it to grow from those five to over forty through the Drug Free Communities Grant program and now to over 100 students in the Leaps Grant Program.” Casey continued with thanking everyone who had helped build the capacity and importance of the program from students to parents to community leaders. Casey then talked about Charlotte’s teaching career of 33 years and how she had taught sixth grade students then tutored and mentored each afternoon at the After school program. Charlotte continued her focus on bettering the community by opening the community resource gym in the evenings for young people to play basketball. Without taking any of the attention off of a vital commissioner for Trenton Housing, Robert Sidney Phelan, Casey said “I have no doubt that without the help of our Commissioners, Doug Lockard, HUD, and Charlotte Doaks we would not have a program that impacts the students and community like it does today, and on behalf of all the staff, we thank you.

The Center consists of three classrooms, a dining area, kitchen, and a half court gym. The program is operating with over 109 students and has accomplished academic goals set forth in the grant programming throughout the past ten years. Offering life skills training, academic enrichment, homework assistance and physical activity the program has become a very prominent and successful program in Trenton. Each classroom and gym are named after the Trenton Housing Authority Commissioners: Commissioner Lynn Thompson, Commissioner Shirley Hayes, Commissioner Mike Wallsmith and Doaks Gymnasium.

We appreciate the support of our scholarship golf tournament sponsors: Barge Cauthen & Assoc., Inc., Christi Billings, Billings Brothers Farms, Clarksville Housing Authority, Crossville Housing Authority, Dayton Housing Authority, First Citizens National Bank, InSouth Bank, KCDC, LaFollette Housing Authority, Lawrenceburg Housing Authority, Ledford Engineering and Planning, LLC, Loudon Housing Authority, Lubin Enterprises, Inc., Mack Pest Control Inc., Martin Housing Authority, Momar, Morristown Housing Authority, Newbern Housing Authority, Bo Pierce, Rockwood Housing Authority, Sears Hometown Store, Tipton Farmers Cooperative, Union City Housing Authority, VeriRent, Robert Wilson, and Wimberly Lawson.

Mark your calendars for our 2014 annual meeting, September 14-16 in Orange Beach, Alabama.

**Dickson Housing Kids Benefit from Tennis Match Point Program**

The Dickson Housing Authority with the Dickson Parks Dept. and local businesses sponsored an after school tennis program during September, Match Point. Over 70 kids from DHA and surrounding community participated ranging in age from 5 to 17. Members of the Dickson Tennis Assoc. ran the program, designed to help kids benefit from physical, mental and character building aspects of the game. High school tennis players from Dickson High and Creekwood also served as instructors. All the kids received a trophy and t-shirt through DHA and local sponsors.
Lebanon Housing Authority Executive Director Henry Harding Retires, Patrick Johnson Hired

Henry has spent the last 29 years as Executive Director of the Lebanon Housing Authority. He is retiring to travel, spend more time at the lake and with family. Henry said "This job has been good to me. I had to learn on the move, no one around to help except Wynona & Homer. There were books of regulations and changes every day in the mail. Now you have to search the internet and ever changing web sites to keep current. Except for the oversight, nothing has changed. Too little money to do the extra things and too little sincere community effort to change things. After 29 years, it will be hard to change, I will make many a wrong turn in the car from habit. I met a lot of good people in public housing and encountered many funny and sad situations. This interaction is what I will miss the most.

When you reach the end of a career, you wonder about the future, but you also look back and wonder how things could have been different. If you did the best you could with what you had, you turn back to the future and wish the best for who comes next."

Our best wishes to Henry Harding on his retirement.

Patrick Johnson started as the new Lebanon Housing Authority Executive Director November 1. He is a former Chairman of the Board and he ran the self-sufficiency Hope 6 program for MDHA. We welcome Mr. Johnson and encourage him to become involved in TAHRA.

Gallatin Hires New Executive Director

Gallatin Housing Authority has a new Executive Director. Michael A. Bates started working September 3, 2013, as the new Executive Director of the Gallatin Housing Authority. He is a native Memphian born and raised. He graduated from the University of Memphis with a degree in Architectural Engineering Technology. Mr. Bates worked at several Housing Authorities including the Memphis Housing Authority, Shelby County Housing Authority, Gary Housing Authority of Gary, Indiana and, most recently the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (the 5th largest housing authority in America), where he was the Director of Engineering and Capital Improvements.

He is quoted as saying “Tennessee is my home and it feels wonderful to be back in my home state.” We understand that he is also a big Titans football fan. We welcome Mr. Bates and encourage him to become involved with TAHRA.

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- HQS and UPCS Inspections
- PHA Policies and Procedures
Strategic Planning Meeting

The Strategic Planning meeting brings TAHRA committees together each fall to plan and set goals for the coming year. Great facilities and beautiful scenery provided by Fall Creek Falls State Park.

TALES OF TAHRA Welcomes Your Comments and Article Submissions!

Comments can be sent to Donna Baumgartner, TAHRA Executive Director or any member of the TAHRA Board. Article submissions should be emailed to Tales Editor, Jim Young at talesofTAHRA@gmail.com - mailed to Jim at Crossville Housing Authority, P.O. Box 425, Crossville TN 38557 or faxed to Jim's attention at (931) 456-1513. We are looking for articles of interest to HA’s across Tennessee concerning interesting problem solutions and new programs that could be replicated at other HA’s. Previous issues can be found online at http://talesoftahra.googlepages.com