



Commissioner Franklin Donahoe  
Representing Snohomish County

Commissioner Sara Franklin-Phillips  
Representing South King County

Commissioner Al Herron  
Representing King County

Commissioner De'Sean Quinn  
Representing South King County

Commissioner Sheila Reed Trahan  
Representing Tri-Cities

Commissioner Dr. James Smith  
Representing King County

Commissioner Dorian Waller  
Representing Pierce County

Commissioner Sandra Williams  
Representing Eastern Washington

Commissioner Dolly England  
Representing Southwest Washington

Executive Director Edward O. Prince

## Commission on African American Affairs Meeting Minutes

### Vancouver Housing Authority

2500 Main Street, Vancouver, WA 99202

July 15, 2016 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Members Present: Interim Chair Franklin-Phillips, Herron, England, Smith, Williams and Reed-Trahan, Executive Director Edward Prince and Executive Assistant Charlotte Kerney.  
Absent: Chair Donahoe, Commissioners Quinn and Waller

1:00 PM Interim Chair Franklin-Phillips calls the meeting to order

1:05 PM Motion to pass May 20th meeting minutes. Motion carries.

1:10 PM Executive Director Edward Prince gives Director's Report

1:15 PM Healthy Living Collaborative of Vancouver, Kachina Inman, Executive Director Committed to strengthening individuals, families, systems, communities across SW Washington. Works with over 50 diverse partners across four counties that span different social services, a tribal nation, housing services, transportation, homelessness. Led by a steering committee and policy committee and that policy committee drives their work. Focus in community-based prevention and engagement – acting and connecting with the community. The Collaborative relies on their community health workers to understand what's happening in their community - they are the gear that connects the Collaborative to the community. Front-line workers are either from the community or have a close connection with the community they serve. The Collaborative engages in community-based prevention and engagement, and works on policy at both the local and state level that helps create healthy communities. They are also working to bring business into partnership.

1:45 PM Vancouver Housing Authority, Bridgett Fahnbulleh.

Bridgeville Project-. Working on a building to help provide more resident services – a one-stop shop/ employment center, for individuals can avoid chasing services all day. Lobbying for more state support along with their capital campaign. VHA states 10% of their clients are people of color due to poverty being very high in the Vancouver, WA area. The land has been secured. Additional information is available at [www.vha.usa.com](http://www.vha.usa.com)

2:50 pm - Andy Silver, Executive Director, Clark County Council for the Homeless

The impact of the Vancouver housing market has a disparate effect on the community. Historically, home ownership investments from the 1930's, 98% of federal funding went to white families. Housing policy in the 1950's saw intentional zoning decisions that created housing stock that does not match the needs of the community. From 2005 – 2015 the greatest increase in the number of people who were renters in our nation's history driven by the mortgage crisis and people losing their homes to foreclosure, as well as baby boomers who are downsizing and the wave of millennials who don't have access to home ownership.

Like many vicinities, Vancouver has a very tight rental market that combined with these factors drive the increase in homelessness. People are paying more of their monthly income in rent these days and subject to screening criteria. Mr. Silver states affordable housing means something different to everyone. The income vs. the price of housing doesn't match up: If over 30% of income is spent on housing, people are described as cost-burdened; over 50%, people are described as severely cost-burdened. The organization sees intentional housing discrimination on a regular basis as well, in light of the housing crisis. Unfortunately, the Council does not have the capacity to investigate.

The Council has some rent by-down efforts underway. They work closely with the Vancouver Housing Authority, however there aren't enough resources to meet the demand. But because of the tight market, they can't use all the resources they have. Individuals are unable to find a place to live in the private market when they do get a voucher.

The federal government wants to take a look at the criminal history a landlord looks at has to have a direct Connection to the type of tenant that person would be. This could be an interesting tool once it is further vetted by the feds.

Vancouver, year over year, had the highest rent increases in the country, but rents are still lower than Portland. In response, the City of Vancouver created an Affordable Housing Task Force that sought to find an approach to the housing issue. Mr. Silver feels the ballot initiative would be the most effective as the Affordable Housing Fund would mean dedicated money to preserve housing for working families, seniors, people with disabilities who make less than 50% of the median income. If passed, it would cost home owners about \$90 per year.