

RENTAL HOUSING MEDIATION TASK FORCE
MINUTES

September 3, 2008
630 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, California, 93101
7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL:

ESTHER AGUILERA	<u> A </u>	BILL HURST	<u> E </u>
LESSA BECK	<u> E </u>	MARSHALL SHERRILL	<u> X </u>
MICHAEL BIFANO	<u> X </u>	BARBARA SMITH SHERRILL	<u> X </u>
BENJAMIN BUSH	<u> X </u>	SKIP SZYMANSKI	<u> X </u>
SILVIO DILORETO	<u> X </u>	SCOTT WEXLER	<u> X </u>
ANN FRYSLIE	<u> X </u>	BRUCE WOLLENBERG	<u> X </u>
DANIEL HERLINGER	<u> X </u>		

X = Present A = Absent E = Excused

Officers: Marshall Sherrill Chair, Ben Bush Vice Chair & Barbara Smith Sherrill Secretary
Staff Present: Andrea Bifano, Sr. Rental Housing Mediation Specialist, Sue Gray, Community Development Programs Supervisor.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Rental Housing Mediation Task Force (RHMTF) was conducted in compliance with the standards set by the Americans with Disability Act. No members from the public were present to address the RHMTF.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of March 5, 2008: Ann Fryslie made a motion to approve the Minutes of the March 5, 2008 meeting. Silvio Diloreto seconded the motion and it passed.

4. PRESENTATION ON MEASURE G – UTILITY USERS TAX:

Robert Peirson, Finance Director: A presentation, which included an informative hand out on Measure G, the Telecommunication and Video Users Tax Reduction Ordinance, was presented by Robert Peirson. He stated that City Council voted to put it on the November 4, 2008 ballot and that additional information could be obtained on the City's website.

5. CITY ADVISORY GROUP RECRUITMENT:

A. *Welcome Scott Wexler, Landlord appointed July 1, 2008:* The Santa Barbara City Council appointed Scott Wexler to the Landlord category. His term is scheduled to run until December 31, 2010.

B. *Scheduled Vacancies for 2008 to be filled December 2008:* Three mediators' terms are scheduled to expire December 31, 2008: Michael Daniel Bifano, Tenant (appointed in 2000), Ann Fryslie, Homeowner (appointed in 2005), and Bill Hurst, Homeowner (appointed in 2005). Staff stated that the City would soon begin recruitment for these positions, in addition to the two vacant preexisting positions.

6. CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION:

Michael L. Smith: A Certificate of Recognition was presented to Michael L. Smith for serving on the board from 1999 to 2008. Marshall Sherrill, Chair, presented the certificate to Michael and stated that he did an excellent job as Mediator while he served on the board.

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Andrea Bifano expressed her appreciation for Michael's commitment and dedication to the RHMTF. She stated that Michael was very active in mediations, outreach, and presentations. Additionally, she shared that he served in all officer positions, including Chair, for which he served two terms.

7. PROGRAM STAFFING:

Update: Sue Gray, Community Development Programs Supervisor gave a report on the RHMTF Program staffing. She stated that the Program had some funds that were carried over from the prior fiscal year, and that those funds would be used to pay for two temporary hourly Rental Mediation Aide positions through June 30, 2008.

8. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009-2010:

Discussion/Brain Storm Session: Sue Gray, lead a discussion and brain storm session regarding alternative funding for the RHMTF FY 2009-2010. She stated that without obtaining additional funding to the projected funds to be received by Community Development Block Grant, City of Goleta, City of Carpinteria and Santa Barbara County, the Program would not have enough money to pay for two part-time positions, in addition to the full time Sr. Rental Housing Mediation Specialist position. The group collectively brain stormed various ideas for additional funding.

9. CASELOAD REPORT AND MEDIATION TRAINING: (Approximately 1 hour)

A. *Statistical Reports:* Statistical reports for the months of April, May, June, July and August 2008 were distributed.

B. *Dispute Resolution Programs Act Training:* Two Mediator facilitated mediations were discussed along with the skills that lead to their successful resolution. The first mediation was conducted by: Michael Bifano and Lessa Beck. The second mediation was conducted by Ben Bush and Barbara Smith-Sherrill. The second mediation had two Attorneys present. The mediation training for the evening was: Dispute Resolution Programs Act Training Section 3622(c)(10). ***The Role and Participation of Attorneys and Witnesses in Dispute Resolution Proceedings.*** A five page handout was provided. The group actively participated in discussion.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Skip Szymanski announced that the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara would be holding a 3.5 hour Mediation Training during the month of October for their staff. He stated that Gina Rae Hendrickson would once again conduct the training. Skip extended an invitation to RHMTF mediators to attend the training at no cost. He stated that the training would be held at the Presidio Springs Conference Room located at 721 Laguna Street.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.