

Spring 2010

April



NEBRASKA CHAPTER OF NAHRO

# NE NAHRO Newsletter

## President's Report

I would like to express on behalf of Nebraska NAHRO and our member agencies, our Best Wishes to Cindy Sahlfeld in her new career. It has been my distinct pleasure to know and work with Cindy. We wish her well and hope she'll share those Public Relations tips with us from her new position in radio!

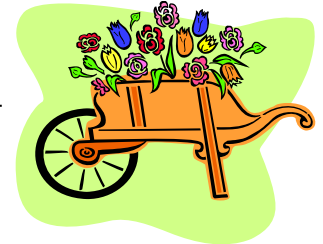
Briefly I would like to update everyone on National NAHRO Legislative Conference:

It was an exciting time to be in Washington D.C. ! Nebraska was well represented by the following delegates:

1<sup>st</sup> District: Cindy Sahlfeld, So. Sioux City; Chris Lamberty, Lincoln; Sheila Miller, Norfolk and Peggy Christoffersen, Blair

2<sup>nd</sup> District: Deanna Wagner, Douglas County and George Achola, Omaha

3<sup>rd</sup> District: Diane Adams, Lexington; Nancy Bentley, Scotts Bluff County; Rita Griggs, Blue Hill; Jeanne Janssen, Hall County; and Cindy Naber, York.



The Legislative Conference was made even more exciting with keynote speakers Frank Sesno, Commentator CNN; Stuart Rothenburg, CNN Political Analyst and Barry Bluestone, Professor of Political Economy; Donald Lavoy, Carrisa Riddle and Michael Dennis, HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program; as well as Deborah Hernandez, Gregory Byrne and Jeff Riddel, HUD Public Housing.

That afternoon, we had a special session with HUD again – giving Housing Authorities the opportunity to pose questions on the proposed Transformation of Rental Housing Assistance – Project-basing Public Housing and Project-based voucher assistance for public housing in lieu of operating and Capitol funds. Hundreds of questions were presented which often left

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- Directories and membership certificates are in the Mail look for yours this week.
- If you would like to order extra directories for \$10.00 each contact me at [ne\\_nahro\\_sso@hotmail.com](mailto:ne_nahro_sso@hotmail.com)

## President's Report Cont.

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HUD with more questions to answer. You will want to stay tuned on this topic – it is the direction that HUD wants to go! NAHRO will be reviewing the full revision the first few weeks in April, you'll want to be informed.

Together, we marched to the Hill to visit in strength both Senator Nelson and Senator Johannes representatives. Then, we split up to visit our respective Districts and again, we felt a warm reception with attentive legislative aides. After lunch at Union Station, we attended a special session on the hill featuring Chad Chirico, Analyst for the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). Did you know they only determine projected numbers, but offer no opinions on the merits, successes or failures of proposed Congressional measures.

My best memories are arriving on Sunday afternoon and having a 3 hour walk and tour of the Smithsonian Institutes, walking by the USDA Washington Offices, taking in the breath-taking view at the Washington Monument and the beauty of the Cherry Blossoms this time of year. It was Spring Break, so families and college students were everywhere! I also attended the Housing America Calendar Poster Contest Auction which featured the high school student from the Duke Ellington School of Dance and Drama . I went home with our Nebraska poster winners after making a nice donation to next year's contest and totally enjoying meeting Housing Authority folks from all over the nation as we enjoyed a spectacular display of talented youth!

Don't forget to talk to your legislators whenever they are home on break – your personal touch will go a long way to them remembering what housing is all about – the people we serve, our mission and our accomplishments!

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Spring Workshop in Kearney, April 20<sup>th</sup>!

*Nancy*

Nancy Bentley



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### **2010 NEBRASKA NAHRO CONFERENCE**

### **“BRIDGING THE GAP ON THE WAVES OF CHANGE”**

### **SOUTH SIOUX CITY, NEBRASKA**

The Planning Committee for the 2010 Nebraska NAHRO Conference is busily preparing for another exciting, fun packed and educational conference.

The conference will be held at the newly renovated Marina Inn in South Sioux City. While good food and great comfort usually trumps training, we do plan to have some great sessions available as well as 2 trainings that will be offered—New Executive Director Training and Commissioner Training.

Be looking for more information and registration materials to be coming soon, and mark it on your calendar to attend. Remember to get your registrations in early to take advantage of the Early Bird rate.

The Planning Committee

## Member Services

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CONGRATULATIONS to the two 2010 recipients of the NE NAHRO Scholarship Award!!! There were two winners this year due to a \$1,000 scholarship being awarded to a past recipient re-applying, and a \$1,000 scholarship being awarded to a new applicant. Terri Brown of Falls City Housing Authority, (winner of the 2008 NE NAHRO Scholarship) re-applied and was chosen for an additional \$1,000 scholarship in 2010. The new applicant receiving a \$1,000 scholarship was Ammie Minich of Alliance Housing Authority. The 2010 winners will be publicly recognized during the noon luncheon at the Spring Work-

shop in Kearney on April 20, 2010.

Best of luck to both girls in furthering their education!!!

Heather Looper and I have been working on updating and reprinting the NE NAHRO Directory for 2010. The new Directories are completed and will be handed out at the Spring Workshop.

Included with the newsletter are the Award Nomination forms for the Fall Conference Awards. Take the time to nominate your resident, commissioner, staff person and maintenance person. Nominations are Due July 31.

Current Member Services Committee Members are:  
Starla Anderson  
Rita Grigg  
Joan Bertolini  
Peggy Christoffersen



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To: NE NAHRO Membership

April 6, 2010

From: Cindy Sahlfeld, NE NAHRO (outgoing President)

It is with a sense of sadness that I must inform you of my resignation as your Nebraska State Chapter President. I have given notice of resignation as the Executive Director of the South Sioux City Housing Agency to my board of Commissioners effective April 15, 2010.

Although, this was a short term as your President, I still felt it was a very good learning experience and was honored to have been nominated and to have served in that capacity over the past 6 months. I believe everyone involved in the Housing industry in Nebraska does an outstanding job and have a commitment to help serve the needs of low-income individuals and families which is unbelievable.

I am pursuing another career opportunity and look forward to the change that it will bring.

Lastly, I wish the best for NE NAHRO Chapter and will miss seeing all of you at the trainings and Conferences.

Thank You,

*Cindy Sahlfeld*

Cindy E. Sahlfeld, Executive Director     South Sioux City Housing Agency

## Professional Development

Commissioners Fundamentals training will be held in Blair, Nebraska, on Monday and Tuesday, May 17 & 18, 2010. Registration forms were emailed to all agencies in Nebraska, and we would especially like to focus on nearby agencies that can take advantage of very little travel and expense to their agency. Please share the registration forms with your Commissioners and encourage them to attend. Evelyn Labode and Sue Kleider will be workshop leaders. Thanks so much to Peggy Christofferson of the Blair Housing Agency for hosting.

Commissioner Fundamentals is also on the schedule for the 2010 Fall Conference in So. Sioux City. This workshop will be held September 15 & 16<sup>th</sup> during the conference. Jim Englis from Lavinia, Michigan, former President of National NAHRO, will be conducting this session. Jim is actively conducting Commissioner Fundamental trainings and has been very successful in getting a great number of the Commissioners trained in Michigan.

We encourage any agency to host a commissioners training to bring the training to their community and make it hard for them to turn down the convenience of attending training at home, the low cost to the agency, and significant savings in time. Certified trainers are Pat Hosick, Evelyn Labode, Deanna Wagner and Sue Kleider for Nebraska.

**M.I.C.E** (Marketing, Imaging and Community Engagement) training was conducted February 10 & 11 in Kearney Nebraska at the Ramada Inn. Stan Quy, former Programs Director of HUD Omaha and now a

National NAHRO faculty member, was able to offer this training to Nebraska membership as a "pilot" course. Rates were substantially reduced for membership but attendance was low. This is an extremely helpful workshop if your agency is thinking of establishing a Strategic Plan or if you have a vision for the future of your agency.

**SPRING WORKSHOP was held Tuesday, April 20, 2010, at the Holiday Inn, Kearney. What a great turnout for the day!! We were ready to shed winter blahs and return to bright spring colors and cordial visits with friends from NE NAHRO. 114 attendees registered with 6 additional presenting sessions or addressing the group. Judy Logge and Julie Drahota won the door prizes of beautiful BIG lavender and yellow purses !!**

**We thank the Omaha HUD Staff of Deb Lingwall, Don Dibble, Patty Poltack, Mike Jones, and Joni Hendricks for participating in the day long sessions. Agenda Items Included:**

Procurement Reviews and Findings – Patty Poltack (HUD)

ARRA – Mike Jones (HUD)

Section 8 Roundtable & PH Terminations & Debts Owed Module – Joni Hendricks

Section 8 & PH Rent Calculation –

EVerify (NE State LB403) & Nebraska New Hire - handouts only

How to Conduct a Board Meeting – Stan Quy

PD Committee met February 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the spring workshop agenda, the remaining 2010 training schedule, the 2010 Fall Conference in South Sioux City and the 2011 Conference in North Platte. Ed Greenwood, ED from North Platte was in attendance and he and his staff will be working with us on the 2011 conference. **We are currently working on bringing an ACOP & ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN Workshop to Nebraska if it is financially feasible. The agenda looks great. We will send it out by email to all Nebraska NAHRO members -- please let me or a committee member know if this is something you WILL attend.**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual NE NAHRO Maintenance Conference will be held in York, June 1, 2 & 3, 2010. Joe Belfiore is chair of the committee.

Please Note: If you need a copy of the Registration Form for any training, visit the NE NAHRO website at [www.nenahro.org](http://www.nenahro.org).

*Sue Kleider, NE NAHRO Vice President of Portfolio, Professional Development*

*Committee Members: Linda Ebel, Cindy Haussler, Tricia Wood, Ute Wojtalewicz, Barb Petska*



## Orville Stanton

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Dear NE NAHRO Members:

I am honored to chair the committee for the annual Orville Stanton Award For Distinguished Service.

This award will be presented at the Nebraska NAHRO Fall Conference to be held in South Sioux City. As you may know, the Orville Stanton Award for Distinguished Service is the most prestigious award given by the NE Chapter of NAHRO because it honors an individual who has worked tirelessly for the Chapter and for the promotion of decent, safe and sanitary housing in our state. It is the time of year to begin accepting nominations for that award. If you would like to nominate an individual, please submit a letter naming the person and stating why you think this person should be considered for the award. It would also help if you could tell us a little bit about the person you are nominating.

Don't wait - take the time right now and nominate who you would like to see receive this award. There are lots of leaders around our state – from very small to large housing agencies. The only requirement is that the recipient be a member of our NE NAHRO Chapter Family. Send your nomination in writing as soon as possible to:

Chris Lamberty  
Lincoln Housing Authority  
5700 R St.  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68505  
[chris@L-housing.com](mailto:chris@L-housing.com)

*Nomination deadline is July 31, 2010.* This year's committee is made up of recent recipients of the award, Joy Hill, Rick Ruzicka, and myself. Please make the committee's job tough by having to select from lots of qualified people!!!

Hope to be hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Chris Lamberty

## Housing and Legislative – Chris Lamberty

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### **On the Nebraska Front:**

*The Legislature and Governor approved LB 226 which allowed 18 years olds to enter into contracts and leases. Nebraska Revised Statute §43-2101 was amended as follows (the underlined portion is new language):*

*All persons under nineteen years of age are declared to be minors, but in the case any person marries under the age of nineteen years, his or her minority ends. Upon becoming the age of majority, a person is considered an adult and acquires all rights and responsibilities granted or imposed by statute or common law, except that a person eighteen years of age or older and who is not a ward of the state may enter into a binding contract or lease of whatever kind or nature and shall be legally responsible there-fore.*

For Public Housing Agencies, these means we can serve persons age 18 and up as adult Heads of Households. If your Public Housing Occupancy or Section 8 Administrative policies limit assistance to persons age 19 years and older, you should amend your policies and practices to reflect the current state law.

### **On the National Front:**

The NAHRO Housing Committee met during the Legislative Conference at the end of March. Most of the meeting and the conference was dominated by discussion of the Transforming Rental Assistance (TRA) proposal, HUD's new initiative to combine Public Housing and several other rental assistance programs. Despite the dominance of TRA, there are several other items looming, including: the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act (SEVRA) still exists and may again see action in this Congress; the Small Agency Reform proposal developed with NAHRO and PHADA is being shopped around as a bill to be introduced; and NAHRO continues to advocate for HOPE VI and work to ensure the Choice Neighborhood Program will primarily affect distressed public housing.

The Nebraska NAHRO delegation advocated strongly for our Congressional representatives to support and help introduce the Small Agency Reform proposal. NAHRO staff will be following up with our representatives. Hopefully we'll have more information on this soon.

**TRA.** HUD has revised the initial proposal in response to comments from NAHRO and other industry groups. The proposal still has to take the form of legislation and go through Congress. If approved as proposed, however, it would significantly alter the funding and regulatory features of Public Housing, and effectively end Public Housing as a distinct HUD program. Highlights of the revised proposal include the following:

## Housing and Legislative — Chris Lamberty

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- Projects could be converted either to a new form of Section 8 project-based contract assistance under new statutory authority or, under limited circumstances, to Project-Based Vouchers (PBV). The original proposal contemplated conversion only to a single form of subsidy based on PBV assistance.
- Conversions under the new statute would be subject to a Resident Choice Voucher option that would allow residents to access a Housing Choice Voucher after 24 months of residency. Conversions to PBV would continue to give residents access to a tenant-based voucher after 12 months of residency. PHAs would be required to commit no more than every third turnover voucher to this purpose.
- Contracts would have an initial 20-year term, with options to extend.
- Converting projects would require the completion of a physical needs assessment and rent comparability study, which would factor into the conversion applications.

On the positive side, TRA is similar to NAHRO's proposal of a demonstration program to convert Public Housing developments into Project-Based Rental Assistance contracts in the existing HUD Multifamily program. TRA represents an opportunity for many properties to get an increased and predictable funding stream in the form of a contract rent, which could be used to carry debt or build replacement reserves. This is the main reason why we should be interested and not reactionary.

HUD has added a resident mobility component that raises a number of practical questions and concerns. The proposal could significantly reduce the number of families served from Housing Choice Voucher waiting lists, many of whom have already waited years to receive much-needed housing assistance. In addition, the mobility feature could lead to "churning" within some converted projects, disrupting communities, destabilizing rental income, and increasing turnover costs. Also, the question of how this might work in communities with no voucher program remains unanswered.

With some of those issues in mind the Housing Committee passed the following resolutions.

**1. Introducing Mobility to Public Housing through Conversion.** NAHRO staff is requested to work with the Department to ensure that any choice component incorporated in the Transforming Rental Assistance initiative (TRA) is adequately funded, ensures the prioritization of the preservation needs of the property and its ability to secure private financing, and ensures local flexibility in its implementation based on local market conditions.

**2. Multiple Options for Conversion.** NAHRO believes PHAs should have access to multiple options for the preservation and recapitalization of their public housing projects. PHAs that would benefit from converting public housing to a different form of assistance should be able to choose between conversion tools based on the Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance and Project-Based Voucher models, respectively. PHAs should retain the option to remain in the public housing program with full funding and regulatory reform. NAHRO staff is requested to continue to advocate flexibility in conversion options, and that all conversion should remain on a voluntary basis at the discretion of the PHA.

**3. Use of Disposition Proceeds.** NAHRO staff are authorized and requested to contact appropriate HUD offi-

## Housing and Legislative — Chris Lamberty

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cial to request that the Department reconsider its present position concerning the use of proceeds of disposition of federally assisted public housing, so that the use of such proceeds for the development of affordable housing that is not assisted under the U.S. Housing Act shall be permitted.

**4. HCV Waiting Lists and Public Housing TRA Mobility.** NAHRO emphasizes the fact that, since the enactment of QHWRA, low-income households who apply for and receive Public Housing assistance have been able to maintain their place on the HCV waiting list as well as to receive voucher assistance when their names come to the top of the waiting list (§ 982.205 Waiting list: Different programs).

**5. Ongoing Reforms: Consortia Reporting, SEMAP, and Deconcentration.** In its FY 2011 budget proposal, the Department states that a "...balkanized administrative geography limits the use of Federal rental assistance to decrease concentrations of poor and minority families or to expand opportunities to live in mixed-income sustainable neighborhoods." NAHRO notes that the Department has not put forth evidence-based research to support its assertions about PHAs' administration of the program. Providing such evidence-based information would seem to be extremely relevant to the choice component of the Transforming Rental Assistance proposal. Over the years, Congress has directed the Department to implement regulatory and administrative measures to increase flexibility, reduce administrative burden, and streamline program implementation within the HCV program.

NAHRO continues to support further reform in a number of areas, including portability, reporting for PHAs engaged in consortia (as required under the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act), SEMAP, and deconcentration.

**6. Oversight and Administration of Voucher Programs.** Currently, responsibility to manage and administer local voucher activity is clearly defined within existing jurisdictions. Adding an alternative structure (as contemplated under the Transforming Rental Assistance initiative as described in the administration's FY 2011 budget proposal) using another administrative body that would operate outside of, and overlap with, existing jurisdictions in a way that is inconsistent with state enabling legislation and without the legal permission of the locality in question would create confusion in communities participating in or attempting to access programs. Further, this move would reduce individual responsibility by residents and participants which could weaken a community's ability to address barriers to self-sufficiency and upward mobility.

NAHRO acknowledges a need for oversight within the new rental program to ensure statutory and regulatory compliance. We are opposed to the language in HUD's budget proposal which would take responsibility for administration of vouchers away from PHAs.

SAVE THE DATE

**NCRC/ Nebraska Chapter  
2011 NAHRO Spring Conference**

**Hitting a Home Run for Affordable Housing**



April 26 – 29, 2011  
Hilton Omaha  
1001 Cass Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68102

**NAHRO**  
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials  
**N E B R A S K A**



**2011 NCRC/ Nebraska Chapter  
NAHRO Spring Conference**

**Golf Outing Vendors  
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Networking Engaging Sessions  
Housing Tour**

**And much, much, more!**

**For more information contact  
402-444-7100 ext. 215**



**NE NAHRO NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY**

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and paid for as part of membership dues.

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**1820 SW 25th St.**

**Lincoln, NE 68522**

**ne\_nahro\_sso@hotmail.com**

**Phone, Answering Machine and Fax**

**402-435-0941**

If you didn't pick up your Directory at the Spring Workshop watch the mail for it to arrive this week.

**We're on the web!**

**Nenahro.org**

## Calendar Of Events

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June 1-3 — NE NAHRO  
Maintenance Conference —  
York, NE Holiday Inn

October 31-Nov 2 — Na-  
tional NAHRO Conference  
— Reno, NV

July 22-24 — National  
NAHRO Summer Confer-  
ence — Boston, MA

September 14-16 — NE  
NAHRO FALL CONFER-  
ENCE — South Sioux City,  
NE Marina Inn