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FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS

November / December 2010

President's Message

A FAHRO First



William Russell

This past month included two more significant reasons to be proud of FAHRO as well as two more examples of how **Participation Pays**.

First, we had three FAHRO members volunteer their time—what little they have these days—to provide personal, on-site technical assistance to an agency in need of peer assistance. Larry Shuman (Avon Park), Maria Burger (Stuart) and Beth Kinsey (Broward County) travelled to New Smyrna Beach HA to provide direct assistance to the agency as it endeavors to climb out of a host of compliance and management issues that HUD has identified. Bravo to our three FAHRO members for their dedication to peer assistance.

Second, thanks to Scott Keller, our federal consultant, we were very fortunate to host HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan for



HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan joins FAHRO for a special luncheon in Orlando on Oct. 12, 2010.

a private luncheon sponsored by FAHRO at the Orlando Airport Hyatt. Those in attendance—about 40 in all—got to see first-hand how engaged and knowledgeable the secretary is about our issues. He spoke at length about the Transforming Rental Assistance program and some of the issues that are being addressed in a revised draft of the legislation (which is now out). He spoke about the Section Eight Voucher Reform

See **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** on page 7

State Legislative Affairs

Governor Rick Scott?

by Richard Pinsky, FAHRO State Affairs Consultant



Richard Pinsky

Governor Rick Scott? Probably no governor in Florida's history has had a bigger question mark next to his name than Governor-elect Rick Scott as he prepares his transition to take over Florida's executive branch this January.

Other than his signature "Let's get to work" slogan, very little has been revealed

about his approach to actually running our state government.

From his television commercials during the campaign, we did learn that he spent some portion of his childhood living in public housing. We are hopeful his experience will serve as at least a basis of understanding of the need for rehabilitation of Florida's public housing units. On the other hand, the "elimination of the Department

See **GOVERNOR** on page 10

Calendar

January 26-28, 2011

FAHRO Region II North/Central Florida Training
Hands-On HVAC Electrical Systems Troubleshooting for Housing Maintenance Staff
Orlando Housing Authority
Hampton Park Facility, Orlando, Fla.

May 10-12, 2011

FAHRO Executive Directors Forum
Location TBA

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Member Feedback

Do you need help with a project or issue and want to see if any of our readers have the answer? Has a colleague done something wonderful that deserves an attaboy or attagirl? Or are you just frustrated and want to vent? Here is your chance to (anonymously if you wish) say thanks, ask for assistance, vent your frustrations, express your opinion or let us know how you feel.

- The Tallahassee Housing Authority in partnership with the City of Tallahassee and Leon County jointly applied for federal CDBG Disaster Mitigation funding in the amount of \$712,546. These funds will be used for weatherization and energy improvements of the HA's public housing developments. The HA also received notice of funding (\$240,000 over three years) for a ROSS service coordinator position from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This position will further establish community partnerships and provide residents support in acquiring education, job skill development and enhancement for upward self-sufficiency.
- Happy Centennial Birthday to Rachel Haynes, a resident at Pinellas County Housing Authority's Magnolia Gardens Assisted Living Facility. She celebrated being 100 years young on Sept. 18.
- Using federal stimulus money, the Winter Haven Housing Authority has completed \$457,196 in capital improvement projects for its Lake Deer Apartments. Improvements have been made to central heat and air as well as security lighting, and a former after-care community center has been remade into the HA's new administrative offices. The old office will be leased to social service groups to generate funds for the agency.
- Rosemary Walker,



commission chair of the New Smyrna Beach HA, recently wrote FAHRO to thank three FAHRO members for their peer-to-peer assistance. Larry Shoe-man (Avon Park), Maria Burger (Stuart) and Beth Kinney (Broward) assisted New Smyrna Beach with understanding federal and state requirements, templates for policies and procedures, job descriptions, file organization and other things needed to make improvements after a HUD review.

If you would like to contribute to Sounding Off, please send your comments to Susan Trainor, FAHROgram editor, by email, editor@cfj.nu, or by fax, 850/878-7760. ✉

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End of the Beginning or Beginning of the End?

by Scott Keller, FAHRO Federal Policy Consultant



Republican candidates made historic gains in the mid-term elections by capturing the House and increasing their share of the Senate. President Obama now faces a dramatically different legislative environment as he seeks to advance the remainder of his policy agenda and prepares to run for reelection in 2012.

The 2011 Congress will be more complex than a debate between Republican and Democratic ideals. House Republicans and Senate Republicans and moderate and conservative Republicans disagree on many things as well. In the Senate there is a battle between Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and Republican Senator Jim DeMint. McConnell is battling behind the scenes to save earmarks (the process of inserting special projects into the budget) from DeMint and his NO EARMARKS campaign mantra. McConnell is encouraging his colleagues to keep an open mind and not to automatically side with DeMint, whose plan calls on

Senate Republicans to unilaterally give up earmarks in the 112th Congress. McConnell believes that eliminating earmarks would effectively cede Congress's spending authority to the White House and will not make a real dent in the \$1 trillion-plus budget deficit.

This difference of opinion between moderates and conservatives is clouding the picture on whether or not we'll see a budget before year's end. Recall that we're under a continuing resolution to fund the federal government. This creates great difficulty for us when HUD cannot tell us what our final operating, capital and Section 8 resources will be for the year. There's a strong chance for a budget agreement this year. This earmark issue, however, will need to be resolved before that occurs.

Much is up in the air for the "lame duck" session. Potential issues for consideration are 1) extending President Bush's tax cuts, 2) unemployment insurance, 3) an omnibus appropriations bill, 4) giving seniors a bump in Social Security payments, 5) settlements in

the *Pigford* and *Cobell* cases involving suits by African-American farmers and Native Americans against the federal government, 6) the Michelle Obama-backed child nutrition bill, 7) food safety legislation, 8) a vehicle safety measure pushed by Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman, 9) immigration legislation, and 9) the Employee Non-Discrimination Act. The dominant issues among these are the tax cuts and the omnibus. The other issues will move (or not) depending on the resolution of the budget and tax issues.

A productive session will depend on cooperation between the two parties. How this will work out is far from clear. What is clear, however, is that the next two years will depend greatly on how two men, President Obama and Speaker Boehner, can forge a partnership and move the country forward. These two men, with seemingly little in common, hold each other's fates in their hands.

For President Obama and his term of office, November was either the end of the beginning or the beginning of the end.

Hands-On HVAC Electrical Systems Troubleshooting for Housing Maintenance Staff

FAHRO is pleased to announce a three-day, hands-on HVAC Electrical Systems Troubleshooting Training for Housing Maintenance Staff, Jan. 26-28, 2011. This high-quality training will be held at the Orlando Housing Authority's Hampton Park Facility, 325 North Hillside Avenue, Orlando, Fla. It is being provided by the nationally acclaimed Training Services Association and is specially discounted for FAHRO members to save you money.

The majority of service problems with air-conditioning systems, heat pumps and gas and electric furnaces are related to electrical situations. The workshop is structured so participants will learn electrical troubleshooting from the ground up with actual "hands-on" experience with real-life testing situations. They will also learn how to use a digital multi-meter. The training is geared to be a clear and concise lesson regarding what to do and how to do it—so your maintenance people have the skills to save your agency money. Participants are encouraged to bring their own diagrams so they can receive individualized assistance from the trainer.

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Let's Get to Work!



Corey Mathews

O.K., so I ripped off newly minted Governor-elect Rick Scott's campaign slogan to title this article, but regardless of your political preferences, it is a mantra welcome to all ears in our current

economy. With so many of our fellow citizens searching for employment, the economy remaining sluggish and other significant issues reaching the tipping point, there is clearly much to be done.


We, as members of the association, also have our work to do. I am not just talking about your daily responsibilities at the office. We have scores of new policymakers at the local, state and national levels—many of whom have no previous public sector experience. Some may argue that is a good thing, others that it's not, but regardless, it changes everything. More important, almost all of them know absolutely nothing about your business

or your industry. As your association, it is our job to get in there, get to know them and get our message across. We have been hard at work doing that for some time, but we need your help!

Every politician in the country who won their elections went to bed that Tuesday night with a smile on their faces and awoke with one fear grinding in the pit of their stomachs—what are they going to have to do to get re-elected? Your job is to go meet with them, get them to come by your office and teach them what it is you do and what policies you need them to enact this spring to help you serve their constituents and create new jobs. Whoever can do that will be their new best friend.

Once they arrive in Tallahassee, they will go into the sausage-grinder that is the political process. They will get pushed here and pulled there. Ideas will evolve and develop, often getting corrupted in the din of all the voices seeking to put their spin on the outcome. That is why, when they have

no time to spare, they will need to think back to the next couple of months—when you became their best friend. That is when they will take your call, remember the good you are doing and do what's right for you and your community.

The time is now. The responsibility is yours. Are you ready? Great! Let's get to work! 

Send Your News to FAHRO!

Tell us about your accomplishments, milestones and other interesting member news. Your fellow members want to know!

Submit your news to FAHRO via:

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Photographs are welcome!



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Local Attorneys Provide Pro Bono Services as Hearing Officers

Here is an idea from Pinellas County Housing Authority. Other housing agencies may wish to implement a similar program, which provides local attorneys volunteer opportunities to perform pro bono legal services while assisting the agency in providing impartial hearings in termination of assistance proceedings.

PCHA sends an announcement regarding its need for attorneys to act as hearing officers on behalf of the housing

Volunteer Opportunity Pinellas County Housing Authority Hearing Officers

The Pinellas County Housing Authority (PCHA) operates a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, a rental assistance program for very-low income individuals and families funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

PCHA is in need of volunteer attorneys to act as Hearing Officers on behalf of the Housing Authority regarding the termination of assistance of Section 8 Voucher program participants.

Hearing Officers review case records, conduct informal hearings to review information and testimony provided by Section 8 Voucher program participants, and following consideration of the information provided by the program participants, make determinations

authority regarding the termination of assistance of Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program participants. Attorneys who are interested come to the agency for a single training and then hold hearings. It is a win-win for all concerned because there is virtually no cost to the PHA, and the hearing officers are impartial officers of the court. In addition, the attorneys earn volunteer hours for their pro bono service.

whether the termination of assistance by the Housing Authority was made in accordance with HUD regulation and PCHA policy, and if the evidence presented during the informal hearing warrants overturning the Housing Authority's termination decision.

Volunteers are needed to assist the Housing Authority for an average of 4 to 8 hours per month.

For more information, please contact:

Debbie Johnson, Executive Director

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Act (SEVRA), how it may be close to passage and how it will normalize the annual funding process for vouchers. I believe a private, FAHRO-exclusive meeting with a HUD secretary is a first for us, and it shows how maintaining an active and constructive relationship with HUD and Capitol Hill in Washington can make a difference for our members.



FAHRO President bids HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan good by after a productive meeting in Orlando.

I also want to take time to recognize and thank Marcus Goodson for his willingness to serve FAHRO and accept the role of president-elect. Marcus now has a full plate, overseeing the FAHRO committee structure as well as continuing to chair the State Affairs Committee. Marcus is a great partner and will make a great president less than one year from now.

Thanks also go to Miguell del Campillo for his willingness to fill the vacancy (left by Marcus) of VP/treasurer. Miguell has been a true advocate and a workhorse on the FAHRO board, recently chairing the Budget & Audit Committee and diligently getting our current year's budget put together at an early date so



FAHRO President-elect Marcus Goodson and FAHRO President Bill Russell look on as HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan addresses FAHRO members about issues facing the public housing industry.

we could get it out to the board and membership well in advance of the annual convention.

I believe FAHRO is at a point of real strength, but we can sustain that strength only with *your* continued participation—which will definitely pay off as we continue to provide much-needed housing in our communities. 🌱

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Miami HA Showcases Improvements During HUD Visit

by Miguell Del Campillo, Executive Director, Housing Authority of the City of Miami Beach

On Friday, Oct. 29, 2010, the Housing Authority of the City of Miami Beach was honored with a visit from three HUD officials: Ed Jennings, Jr., regional administrator, Atlanta Regional Office, accompanied by Armando Fana, field office director, and Jose Cintrón, director of public housing, from the Miami Field Office. During the visit, we conducted a tour of our facilities at Rebecca Towers, where recent improvements have been completed, including the elevator modernization and the installation of high-impact windows. In addition, ARRA-funded activities such as sealing and painting of the public housing building, installation of tankless water heaters and water-conserving toilets were showcased.

Also during this visit, we held a very productive meeting where the HACMB's entire management team had an opportunity to discuss our progress and to exchange ideas with the visiting officials. Several U.S. HUD initiatives were discussed, including SEVRA, PETRA, HUD-VASH and Section 3. Finally, while addressing collaboration between PHAs, I informed Mr. Jennings of FAHRO's current initiative of conducting regional meetings of executive directors and key staff. He was very supportive of this concept and suggested that it be taken a step further by hav-



HUD officials tour the Miami Housing Authority. Pictured here are Armando Fana, Jose Cintrón, Miguell Del Campillo and Ed Jennings, Jr. HUD officials conduct weeklong working visits to other agencies around the state in an effort to foster best practices.

This successful visit concluded with Mr. Jennings addressing our residents during their Halloween party. 🎃



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Lakeland HA Receives a Second 21st Century DOE Grant Program Award

In 2006, Lakeland Housing Authority was awarded its first Florida Department of Education 21st Century after-school program grant of \$2,682,768 for a five-year period. LHA's Emma Turner Center provided expanded academic and enrichment opportunities for at-risk students and their families in a neighborhood called Paul A. Diggs (PAD) in the northwest sector of Lakeland, Fla. There were 908 families with students under 18 years targeted for this program.

LHA was awarded \$519,450 as part of a second five-year grant award totaling \$2,285,580 from the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach for the HA's 2009-2010 21st Century Westlake Community Learning Center. LHA's program includes a broad array of academic and enrichment programs for both students and their parents.


The Westlake Community Learning Center Program provides expanded academic enrichment opportunities and supportive services for disadvantaged students (K-8) attending schools particularly in need of improvement. LHA's program assists students with low academic scores raise their math, reading, science and FCAT scores. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The goals of LHA's 21st CCLC program are to provide opportunities for both students/parents of disadvantaged communities to establish or expand activities that focus on



21st Century Community Learning Program participants (students, parents and staff)

- Improved academic achievement and enrichment services for students and parents that reinforce and complement the academic program of the community; and
- Improved family literacy and related educational development services.

The 21st Century Westlake Community Learning Center Program follows the curriculum design of LHA's very successful 21st Century Emma Turner Community Learning Center Program that has provided academic enrichment activities for students/parents that reside in the Paul A. Diggs Neighborhood, which is a U.S. Department of Justice federally recognized Weed and Seed Neighborhood. 



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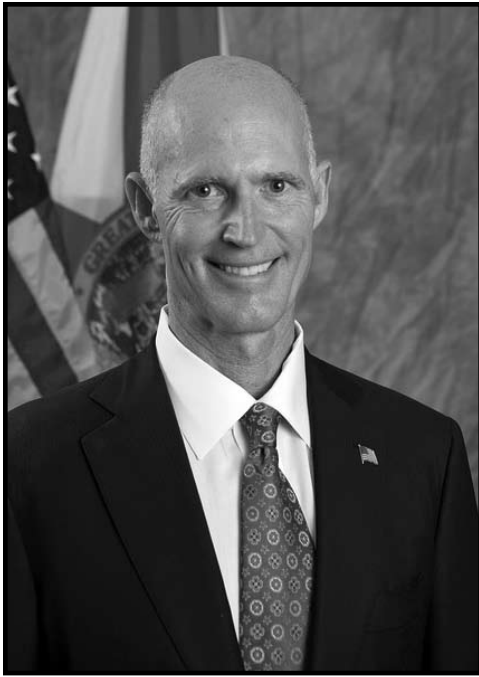
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Governor-elect Rick Scott

of Community Affairs” was one of the few statements he made during the entire campaign that even hinted at a policy position he would initiate as governor. Remember, the reauthorization of the

Department of Community Affairs comes back before the Legislature during the 2011 Regular Session.

The governor-elect is expected to have an extended “honeymoon” with the legislative branch, in fact, better and longer than most new governors in recent history. His “cut government” persona is expected to fit right in with a Republican Legislature that now has 81 of 120 House seats and 28 of 40 Senate seats.

However, from our FAHRO perspective, “all politics are local,” meaning, if you know your local state representative and your local state senator, it is still the best hedge against anything bad happening to public housing. Particularly since the 2010 elections ushered in many first-time legislators, now is the time to invite your legislators to stop by and say hello during an upcoming housing authority board meeting or to take a brief tour of your facility. All it takes is a phone call to invite them.

Another way to introduce your housing authority to your legislators is to attend one of the upcoming legislative

delegation meetings for your county. During the next few months and leading up to the 2011 Regular Session in March, all of the House and Senate members representing your respective county will meet on a monthly basis to hear from the general public regarding legislative issues of interest. Attending one of the delegation meetings on behalf of your agency to simply introduce yourself helps your state lawmakers place a face with your agency as well as to understand the critical role your agency plays in the affordable housing delivery system. Asking one of your housing authority board members to attend with you is also a good idea.

FAHRO Headquarters tracks the times and locations of all 67 county delegation meetings. Please, while you’re reading this and it is fresh on your mind, call FAHRO Headquarters and ask for the date and time of the next delegation meeting for your county.

I expect 2011 to be a great session for us. With your help at the local level, I will guarantee it! See you in Tallahassee. 🌿

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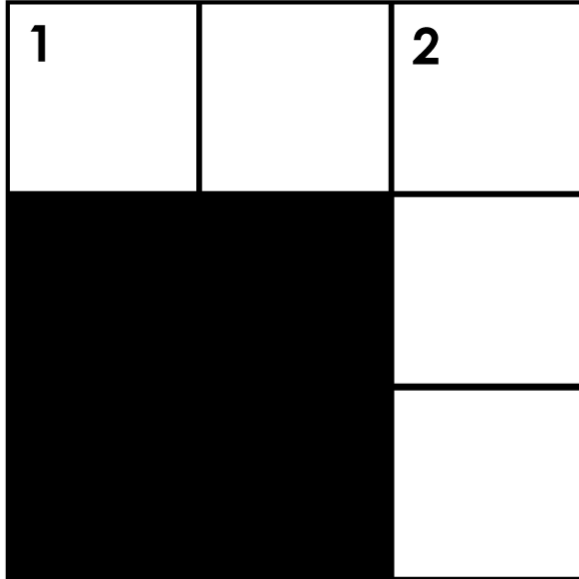
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Mission Statement

FAHRO is committed to the professional development of the people who provide public and assisted housing in Florida by offering a network for increased communication and education. We will continue to support legislation for the improvement and development of affordable housing and economic opportunities.



FHARMI

**Committed to quality,
cost-effective risk-sharing
coverages and services
for members**

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**FHARMI is grateful for your
continued interest and
support.**

**We wish everyone involved in
the Florida Public Housing
Community**

A joyous holiday season ...