

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

Cynthia A. Brown, Manager  
*Department of Human Services*  
Human Relations Liaison



Francis Jack Russell, President  
Kenneth R. Dement, Commissioner  
Lawrence D. Jarboe, Commissioner  
Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Commissioner  
Daniel H. Raley, Commissioner

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**St. Mary's County Human Relations Commission**  
**December 6, 2006**  
**Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: Maureen Johnson, Rose Everett, Barbara Hendricks, Bernadette Lewis, Norma Pipkin, Jim Hanley, and Mac McClintock.

Excused: Joyce Dyson

Absent: Joseph Bush, Sanjay Apte, Betty Quinn and Pam Oravec

Staff: Stephanie Roach

The meeting was convened by Commission's President Mac McClintock at 5:15pm.

September minutes were accepted with the correction to the spelling of Rose Everett's name. October did not have meeting minutes because there was not quorum but notes from that meeting will be discussed at a later date. November minutes were tabled.

Stephanie provided a financial report. The HRC budget has a current balance of \$2000.

McClintock introduced Dennis Nicholson, Director of St. Mary's County Housing Authority, as the speaker for the evening. Mr. Nicholson provided a broad overlook of the housing situation in St. Mary's County. According to the census there is approximately 9000 rental property with most of them in Lexington Park. He spoke on phrase verses trends. Currently there is an upward "phrase" in vacancy. This phrase could be caused by contractors moving into the area for a short time only. Hopefully this is just a phrase but possibly could change to a trend. This information will not be known until early 07. On a good note, new construction for immediate rentals is on the rise from 4.5% to 6.7%.

Hunting Creeks, newly constructed rental property with 70-2 bedrooms units' price at \$860 to \$900 a month which is still below marketing finance. Other development will give Lexington Park an additional 118 rental units to go into Lexwood and Greenview Knolls. The work force has a great impact on the housing needs. These statistics are being evaluated to determine further housing needs.

St. Mary's County has a wide range of income variation with 13-17% of residents making over \$60,000 and 13% making less than \$25,000. The Housing Authority assisted over 1263 households. That number has remained consistent over the past four years. Housing also assisted First time home buyers. Home ownership is strongly encouraged. Housing receives help on the State level but on the Federal level, their program does not expand enough to help with the growing needs of the county. The state bond is 2% which is below the finance market rate.

The Housing Authority also has a plan of action for emergency housing. During working hours, you can call the Department of Social Services if you find yourself in a houseless situation. The Lexington Park Office number is 240-725-5700 and the Leonardtown Office is 240-895-7000. After hours you can call the Control Center at 301-475-8016.

The Three Oak Center provides temporary shelter for men on campus but also assist families with children, providing them with housing within the local area of the campus. The statistics for the homeless population in St. Mary's County are kept by the Three Oak Center. Because of the location of the campus, people walk-in with various needs for different housing situation. The Housing Authority works with Three Oaks to assist with current pace needs and future housing needs especially for domestic violence victims.

The Chamber of Commerce recently has done a study of affordable workforce housing. The results have not yet been publicized. One main concern is the Violence against Women Act. This Act became a law on January 1, 2006. The Justice Department reorganized the act. At this time it is not known how the Act will affect the county. Mr. Nicholson would like if the State HRC could address this issue. St. Mary's County has organized a group of community members to address the needs of violence against women.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10