

## ECRA Minutes of Steering Board Meeting @ 3pm, 23 September 2020, Sailing Club/Zoom

### Present and online:

1. Reinhold Probst (Chair)
2. Lana Russell (Treasurer) (online)
3. Carol Lynn Terrells (online)
4. Scott Patterson
5. Junior Mernard (online)
6. Frank Knowles
7. Stafford Patterson (Executive Team)
8. Monica Cook (Executive Team)

Advisor: Ingrid Elliott (also taking draft minutes)

### Apologies:

- Mari Matthews
- Kristina Malone
- Andrew Charles

*[Noting: James Boyce tendered his resignation on 21st September 2020]*

All resolutions passed by the Board are underlined in the Minutes below.

### 1. Vacancy on the Steering Board

- i) The Steering Board accepted the resignation of James Boyce who tendered his resignation on 21 September.

The Board wishes him well and thanked him for his service. The Chair noted that various community members had expressed an interest in joining the Steering Board. Ingrid said she would check and advise the Board on the vacancy filling process. The Board also noted the requirement of Board members to attend meetings and that if directors do not attend, there may not be a quorum to make decisions. The Board agreed to reach out to any repeated non-attendees to ask their intentions and commitments.

The Board also noted the possibility of extending the number of Directors on the Steering Board to 15 maximum.

*[Note: Ingrid has advised that the By-Laws allow the Board to fill vacancies between AGMs and regular elections, through a vote at one of its meetings. She noted the requirement to consider under-represented groups when considering nominations. The Board may also increase the number of Directors but only to odd numbers (due to voting considerations).]*

### 2. Board Approval of New Programme

The Chair put forward the New Draft Programmes Paper for discussion. It had been circulated one month ago for consideration.

- A. i) The Board voted unanimously to approve the Extra Hand Programme (as detailed below for clarity and reference) noting the importance of helping those most vulnerable as decided by the Community Survey.

### **An Extra Hand for those Most in Need or with Vulnerabilities**

In line with the community survey on priorities and in awareness that there are many members of our community who have greater vulnerabilities who are still not in their home or are struggling to create a safe, clean space to live, ECRA is announcing an additional package of assistance for those people to get back into their homes or make their homes liveable.

### **Who is Eligible?**

- Those with homes who were full-time residents on Elbow Cay, Tiloo Cay or Lubbers Cay immediately before Hurricane Dorian (including those who had to be off island for medical treatment); and
- Are within the following categories:
  - Senior citizens (over 65 years old)
  - People with significant health issues and medical bills
  - Those with special needs children or dependents
  - Widows or female only households

### **What help is being offered?**

A small tranche (up to a maximum capped amount) of financial assistance through either (a) buying materials/appliances or paying for labour, OR (b) remuneration for receipts for materials or labour to cover the following:

- Electrics and a/c repairs including rewiring needed through water ingress or reconnection/electrical assessment or repairs required for reconnection.
- Internal walls, ceilings, floors, windows or doors which need repair or closing in after the hurricane.
- Kitchens (cupboards/shelves and basic appliances like oven and fridge where they were damaged and need repaired or replaced) and bathrooms (basic three piece bathroom set – showers, sinks and toilets where they need repaired or replaced due to storm damage)
- Hurricane shutters where need repair or replaced.

ii) The Steering Board also unanimously voted to allocate an initial tranche of \$150,000 to fund this programme and to get work started asap. The programme should be widely advertised, and we should ensure all those eligible are aware and are encouraged to apply. We can also review the existing list of those who applied for help initially. Any money not used will be reassigned back for use in other programmes.

- B. i) The Steering Board unanimously voted to approve and start the Total Loss Programme (as detailed below for clarity and reference), noting that this was a group who had not received help yet and many were hoping that HTU's Homes Programme could help. ECRA's programme would give initial help but do not have the resources for a full rebuild programme and would not duplicate what was already being planned by HTU.

### **Preliminary Help for Total Loss of Homes**

HTU has a total loss/total home rebuild programme, and this should be emphasized to all those who need total rebuilds. We don't have the kinds of funds which can help total or completion of homes for everyone. However, we understand that this group of homeowners may need some preliminary assistance to understand how to proceed so we are offering to pay for professional services (up to a similar cap as the other home assistance programmes) which may allow them to move forward and make decisions about their homes.

### **Who is Eligible?**

- full-time residents on Elbow Cay, Tiloo Cay or Lubbers Cay immediately before Hurricane Dorian (including those who had to be off island for medical treatment); and
- With homes which were totally or almost completed destroyed, requiring either tear-down or almost complete rebuild; and
- They received no insurance pay-out which would allow them to rebuild.

### **What help is being offered?**

A small tranche (up to the usual capped maximum) of financial assistance either through (a) paying for, or (b) remuneration of receipts for any of the following services:

- Structural engineer survey or advice,
- Architect plans,
- Planning approval process/fees,
- Shoring up or rebuilding the foundation,
- Insurance advice or helping challenge a settlement offer, or
- Tear-down.

ii) The Steering Board also voted unanimously to allocate an initial \$100,000 to this programme to get it started and subject to budgeting and need. Any unused or unbudgeted funds will be reallocated back for other ECRA community programmes.

- C. The Steering Board also unanimously voted to approve the Long-standing Haitian Members of the Community Support programme. The Committee discussed the importance of supporting this group in recognition of their membership and contribution to our community. The main aim is to help any in need of regularising their legal status. The Committee noted the complexity of this issue, given the responsibility on Employers to get work permits and also to ensure safe working and housing for their workers. The Committee also noted how hard it might be for individuals to approach authorities to get their situation legalised, as there is a fear of deportation.

As part of this programme, there needs to be an exploratory phase to 1) try to open channels within immigration to discuss this group and issue (not as individuals), 2) to open discussions with Employers about their obligations and responsibilities, and 3) to see whether the provision of legal advice for individuals would help resolve issues. The Committee also noted that housing for long-standing members of the community remains a critical issue, and this includes and acutely affects long-standing Haitian members of our

community. The Executive, assisted by others and in liaison with Hope Town Council, will undertake this exploratory phase and report back with concrete proposal for this programme to ensure it can be effective and helpful.

### **3. Board Approval to Design and Explore new programming**

The Board noted that there is a section of the community that ECRA has not helped yet – and it is those without homes. It also noted the acute issue of lack of rental homes and **housing for local community members**. The Board noted the Local Rentals issue as one which we need to discuss and see what could be done. Further discussions and development of a detailed proposal will be undertaken. A Sub-Committee approach may help focus on this problem.

The Steering Board also took note of **the Back to Work programme** outline and deferred consideration until a later date, while research can be undertaken to assist the community to understand what assistance programmes already exist through Abaco Chamber of Commerce and the new Mercy Corps programme.

The Board also deferred further consideration of an education support programme until further development and work could be undertaken. The Executive noted that there may be the possibility of partnering with an organisation to get a small grant focused on supporting education and the younger members of our community. A detailed proposal will be put to the Board for consideration at a later meeting.

Stafford also raised the issue of restimulating tourism on the island. He and Carol Lynn will meet to discuss further and will put forward any proposals to the Board at a future meeting.

### **4. Other Resolutions put forward**

With the clinic project moving forward as a joint development between a number of organisations, the possibility of a **Hurricane Rapid Response Centre** on the same plot is now a realistic possibility. The Board noted the importance of rapid response and how it could have really helped people after Dorian.

- i) The Board unanimously voted to move forward with planning and development of such a response centre as a crucial element to resilience and recovery.
- ii) The Board also unanimously voted to allocate an initial \$50,000 budget to this project and work.

The request to assist with **the housing costs of the Police Officers** was raised again. Other organisations have been approached to cover interim costs to provide security and law enforcement, seen as critical given recent events and break-ins, etc.

- i) The Board unanimously approved to contribute \$600 as part of October's rent but that it was a one-off given that the responsibility to provide law enforcement and home government employees was a government responsibility.

### **5. Executive Team**

The Steering Board noted the volume of work currently being undertaken by both members of the Executive Team, and in particular the daily load on Monica particularly in relation to

problem solving, debris issues and the current (and recently completed programming). The Board noted the new programming now approved and the need to ensure effective implementation, and well as community engagement and communication about the work. The Board unanimously agreed the need to maintain current staffing levels.

The Board also noted the need to increase communication about the work of ECRA and its Executive Team. Submission of worksheets should be maintained weekly, for record keeping but also to report to our members and community. The work and programmes need to be updated on the website regularly as well.

The meeting was adjourned.