



## Alabama Caucus Agenda

Fri., Feb.19, 2021, 9:00-12:00pm CST Via  
ZOOM

### Take Aways:

1. Positive movement on Jim's 4 Corners: Increased Investment (\$58M of \$100M raised), Expanded Capacity (\$4M grant funds avail. to Members 1<sup>st</sup> half of FY21), Building New Narrative (interviews underway for new Communications Team), Strength in Numbers (hiring Leadership Dev. person)
2. Alabama Caucus Organizing Decisions:  
Tim Thrasher elected as Caucus Chair, will sign formal letter of request to Fahe Board  
Mary Ellen Judah, AL Representative to the Nominating Committee.
3. Upcoming Caucus Meetings:  
**Wed. June 16<sup>th</sup>** 9:30-Noon Central  
**Thurs. Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>** 9am-Noon Central – keep thinking about who else to invite to the mtg.
4. Resource Development Plan – Watch for email requesting volunteers to invest time and brain power for a discussion group on what resources Members need, coming in the next few weeks.
5. Survey on how you prefer to receive information from Fahe. If you did **not** participate in the Poll during caucus, the 1-question survey can be accessed [HERE](#)
6. FHLB - Welcome Home – opens March 1, funds are usually all reserved in the first 6 weeks. Reserve your spot with JustChoice Lending – contact [David Brock](#)

### 1) **Welcome Members** (Vonda Poynter)

**2) Message from Jim King** - Way overdue, the approval of the Alabama Caucus will sail through Board approval. Makes Jim hopeful and happy about what we can do together in Alabama. Expectation/hope, get more friends in the room, would be helpful. As a staff, eager to hear your ideas and Fahe be available in new ways, doing things together. That's the place where we want to be helpful. Start with Vonda, don't hesitate to call him, either.

Quick update on the annual meeting – overall where Jim's mind is at. Idea as we have existed for 40 years, the next generation to bring prosperity that brings the American Dream to life. What do we need to do over the next ten years to move our work – Four Corners of the Foundation (not leaving out rebar).

1. More Capital to the region overall, the region has not had investment that would be anywhere even as to the resources taken out. Appalachian Persistent Opportunity Fund at \$100M dollars – we have raised about ½ of that. We will be making some items available.
2. Build Capacity in the Region. What resources we have and how those go back out to members. How do we support you as leaders. “Theory of Change” – if you want to see change, support what is already at work, the leaders, backed up with capital and expertise. \$4M for Members this year as pass-thru – work more at the state level to make more of those kinds of funds available. First 6 months - \$60M loans closed – largely through the Membership and network.
3. New Narrative – doing real work with real people. That work is building the American Dream for those folks. The experience in Appalachia is not the only region left behind. As we tell our stories, we want to rebuild the American Dream for our communities. This can happen in other parts of the country. We want to raise your voice. NYT – 3 WV Members and Jim were interviewed. That helps to build the narrative, raises your voice – real authentic work is being raised up with our narrative. Washington is disconnected – they need to hear our stories. JK is restructuring the communications department – hiring all new staff to have the talent needed.

4. Strength in Numbers – our identity as an association. Fahe is different/special as to the manner in which we want to build collaboration and approach. If we are going to change and build power in our voice, we are going to need more friends, bring people along in conversations. Even if it's difficult, we will need to do the work. What kinds of conversations you have in your community may be where we can help. Leadership Development Position is where we hope we can help create a unified voice.

### 3) AL Caucus Business

- a. Election of a Caucus Chair – Mary Ellen nominated Tim Thrasher, Tim Thrasher nominated Mary Ellen. Since Tim was nominated first, Vonda asked for a second, Aron seconded the motion and it was approved. This is a one-year post, June of 2022 we will come around again to either confirm or elect a new chair.
- b. Appoint a Nominating Committee Representative (not eligible to serve on the board)
- c. Formal Request to Fahe Board to recognize the Alabama Caucus
- i. Board will formally recognize the Caucus; initiate process for Alabama Caucus Board seats for next scheduled election in Spring 2022
  - ii. Review of Caucus formation process from Member's perspective  
MEJ – 2-fold reply. We didn't have very many Members pushing the agenda – how do commit the resources on the Fahe end. It may have had some effect of not fully participating Members. Smart to take your time. As we look to grow the Membership in AL, maybe we can look at a more expedient process. We need to capture someone's attention, we don't want to lose their interest. COVID has had the benefit of making remote participation has.  
Lisa – that's a great point – think that we should continue to consider the time/cost involved in participating with in-person meetings. Not feasible to get to TN.  
Tim Thrasher – same – adding Members is very important for the strength in numbers that AL has add'l Members.
- d. Determine dates for June and October Caucus Meetings  
Wed. June 16<sup>th</sup> 9:30-Noon Central & Thurs. Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> 9am-Noon Central

### 4) Caucus Member Conversation – “around the square” What's going on?

**CAPNA** – Tim Thrasher, busy with Achieving Excellence, will be hopping off at 11 for that call. Continuing dev. 56 unit Sr. in Cullman. Wrapping up another in Bell City. Rehab 2 prop. In Montgomery, secure that area, complete in the summer. Applying in SC for a LIHTC prop. Completing a head start facility to be ready for next school year, April 1st open house. Moved through COVID pretty well, some rental assistance and some CDBG from City of Decatur and some private funds – WF, NWA. Continuing Weatherize homes for the grant year ending in March. NWA Rural Initiatives – 4 in Lawrence County and 1 in Morgan County (up to \$40K). Utility Assistance, new in AL, for up to \$1000 (3 to 45 months). CARES Act – 150% of poverty level and have issues related to pandemic. Children's services: this week was odd with snow but most are back in the facilities, very few quarantines in their programs. Going through OAD review with NWA, March 1 - 4 . Distributed via AHFA – and 7 municipalities – it has a utility piece. \$360M in the ERA.

Josh noted the Dec. bill – created a new 4% floor for LIHTC rehab projects.

Aron - Very excited about that at CAPNA.

**Neighborhood Concepts** – Mary Ellen: Busy, wrapping up const. on a 56 unit Sr. dev. in Huntsville, many delays, will be bringing 200 Bond Allocation units. RFP – local housing mixed use property in Huntsville. Props. Doing well, many - \$65K rental asst. being pushed out – have spent almost all of it. CDFI – small business clients are adapting, 1-2 still struggling a bit and needing help. Biggest year last year and good pipeline for 2021.

There is some interest from corporate investors now – are you experiencing that? Good year for funders. Fahe stepped up to make a loan for the loan fund. Last year they received a WF

award \$500K – allowed them to impact businesses of people of color. PNC buying BBBA – some of it may be motivated by the need to demonstrate very generous funds. Redstone just re-upped a \$5m at very favorable rates and terms. North AL market is attractive to investors, investors/funders want to get \$ to those most impacted – CDFIs seem to be the way to do it as there are less regulations than some banks.

Jim: NCRC has invited Fahe to be part of the Community Benefits Plan drafting – it may be a pretty hot item in AL. Racial unrest and negative impact of C19 has really brought CDFI's to the attention of funders. Have you all seen any interest from larger funders for CDFI? Mary Ellen is the Chairperson of Building AL Reinvestment (from NCRC). Bob Dickerson is the NCRC chair, he's the ED of Birmingham Business Resource Center. Looking at what the Community Benefits Plan can move in these markets. NCRC has had some conversations with PNC – they want to continue to do good. The potential benefit for our communities is something we don't want to let slide.

Jim – Very glad to hear that! Sara Morgan is representing Fahe in those conversations. If there are people to invite into that work, please let him know.

**Alabama Rural Ministry (ARM)** Lisa Pierce, Allison Porter: Since March 3, 2019, we have opened 97 cases and currently, we have 7 cases remaining and 4 of those are already in construction. Since the beginning of this year, we have begun focusing more on completing the veteran's housing project we have been renovating and the Maple Street duplex is scheduled to be ready for occupancy sometime before June. We also have been working with the city of Auburn's CDBG and will have assisted three Auburn families through that program by the beginning of May. ARM was awarded a \$168,000 USDA HPG grant that we will be working with this year in Lee and Macon County. Our goal is to use this grant to assist a few other communities that might not have organizations to support rural housing. We will be hosting volunteer teams again this summer and have teams scheduled for 6 of the 8 open weeks. These groups will be smaller in size than our 2019 summer volunteer teams as we are still expecting the pandemic to be present over the summer. Allison going to law school – need a housing director (she started with case management). Wants to stay in housing.

## 5) Advocacy (Alex Dadok, Josh Stewart)

a. State priority update: Weakening third-party opposition to AL AHTF

Josh - Jim noted bringing along new partners that can sometimes be difficult to engage. That is where we are on the state priority – those folks that were pushing back on legislation to fund the AHTF – realtors and homebuilders. Josh provided a memo on status – he has been blanked.

Mary Ellen asked about talking to local Homebuilders Association, like Montgomery, that could be an “in” and feed up to the state level.

Aron noted that CAPNA is part of a revitalization group and can check and see if there is a connection to the MHBA.

Mary Ellen noted that if AHFA would get on board with the Housing Trust Fund, stretch their dollars. Aron mentioned, David Young, Barbara Wallace – Mary Ellen can call and talk to her.

Josh: Anything else to consider while we are together?

After the Dec. meeting, Mary Ellen connected Josh with LICHCA – Josh talked and they were supportive of reaching out to make in-roads. LIHCA – legislation presented this year? Is LIHCA driving the train? Should we look for someone to bring this legislation? Build the connections, relationships this year for presenting the legislation next year?? If no bill this year, the strategy should be different if there is a bill out there this year, getting ahead of the bill. LIHCA is working with Alabama RISE and AARP to lead their lobbying efforts. LIHCA board meeting next Tuesday and she will share information.

Aron – Alabama Affordable Housing Assoc. involved? Made efforts there previously.

AHTF notes that the \$ goes to nonprofits – may have been short sighted – and AAHA (very influential) – Mary Ellen will check on that next week LICHCA board meeting.

Tim: Good next steps.

b. Federal update: (Josh) Federal Action over the last year – tracking the large amounts of money moving around. Hot news when he wrote talking points on Tuesday, but Biden Administration extended forbearance and HO protection until June 30. Currently some language moving around on HO.

The rental eviction protections were not extended – expires on March 31st. Ties to the ERA via the AHFA – Emergency Rental Assistance AL – accepting applications on March 1. One month to get folks in line for rental assistance. Landlords can begin the process on behalf of tenants, work jointly. Tell your folks to gather their information now and be ready on March 1.

HO assistance fund may be coming via Budget Reconciliation process on the relief bill, some versions passed. Deadline for passage is mid-March when federal unemployment extension expires. Several high profile housing provisions that match up well with Fahe Members information that was shared. Fahe helped a little bit by talking to DC partners. Relief bill /HO Assistance fund looks like Hardest Hit Fund from 2008 Companion to ERA but for HO. \$9.9B; ERA is \$19B in this bill in addition to Dec. bill. Housing Counseling Funding via NWA – foreclosure mitigation counseling. \$5M investment in HOME, prioritized to tenant based rental assistance, can be used for existing HOME uses. Purchase/Rehab of non-congregate shelter for permanent housing. \$5B for new housing choice vouchers – 532,000 new vouchers that are temporary (10 yrs.). Targeted to folks experiencing housing instability in CV-19 – how that interacts with waitlists, etc. remains to be seen. They don't turn over – if someone doesn't need it before the ten year term, it goes away. Generous and stingy.

Mary Ellen: Vouchers: everyone in MF affordable world – pays rent... LIHTC investors are looking at 15 years – curious on other thoughts? Investors will likely not be excited about the voucher program – the rental assistance they are interested in. If project based, that might make it more attractive even if for 10 years.

c. Strength in Numbers – covered by Jim

d. Hiring update from Advocacy Department - Advocacy Director: New, will focus on managing the dept. and really focusing on the state pieces. Working closely on the issues and working with the Members on their state priorities. Pushing to work together on state by state advocacy. Send recommendations their way if you know someone that would be good in that position. Josh will cover Federal issues which fits his experience & location.

## **6) Establish Caucus Friends Email List**

USDA contacts – Quintin Harris – regional directors; Housing advocate; Melinda George is the State Director;

June may be too soon to start inviting others, but perhaps for the Oct. meeting – other potential partners as well as AHFA, ADECA. Be thinking about who to include.

Pam will go through some old folders that had listed folks we were interested in back when we started working in Alabama and see if we have some other organizations.

## **7) Member Recruitment Strategy** – reviewed engagement grid and placed potential partners in regards to how well they match up with the existing Members as to alignment with our work and with impact (see grid following page)

## **8) Fahe Updates** – Memo Attached

a. Member Updates (Vonda)

- Reporting – QE 12-31-20: fell from 98% QE 9-30-20 to 78% for QE 12-31-20. Information on TN the Fahe Network in the packet. We are working on the Impact Model but the information gathered via your reporting is how we tell our collective story. It also bring Members NWA training slots (VTI this week...).

- Training for 2021; Member Trainings below; we are working on a way to share that

information back out with you for your use as well. Our FY21 trainings have dealt with operational capacity – the next one is Thursday and is a 502 refresher – great for new staff or a review. Some opportunity for housing counseling certification by HUD – being mindful of the deadline August 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Carol M. Peterson Housing Funds (Jackie Weiss): Jackie shared on the Carol Peterson Housing Funds when they are identified by FHLB, we will share out training opportunities and dates should you need to work with Fahe for reserving your CMP funds.
- Jackie shared a poll on communication – being mindful to use our time best for the Members, we want to know how Members prefer to receive Fahe Membership communications. This will be revisited when Fahe has restructured the CommTeam.
- b. **Resource Plan** (Sara Morgan): Talked about how capital is raised for the network with a 3 year plan. The Persistent Opportunity Fund – closed a \$4M loan with Truist; 10 year money that is priced at a great rate and it goes out to members in an affordable way. Sara is going to need some help from Members on what kinds of resources that Members want. Free Money with no strings is what we want – but haven't found a money tree. What is the flavor of resources that Members need to be impactful in your community i.e. in KY, HOME CHDO proceeds recycling has improved the KY Members. Sara will be looking to build out a model that helps inform Fahe better to move your organization forward. Chris Osborn (TN) noted CITC which has been key for everyone else. HSetn is finding out that now, the CITC is being committed for the year or even for next year based on revenues, maybe tax credit developers. Knoxville banks for instance. Banks incentivized to lend at 4 below prime; how can we bring that to other states? Banks' current appetite for the credit is reduced; an alternative to that program would be useful. Used as an EQ2 investment. Sara is working on a plan to put together a group of Members to discuss this topic. Do you want to be an advisor and plan in that space? Watch for an email to come out requesting volunteers.
- c. **Lending**
  - Community Lending still has the referral program and is available to work with you on Guaranteed Bond Program funds – let Dwain know if you have a need.
  - Just Choice Lending – Welcome Home Flyer is in the back of the packet – opens March 1st and per Cassandra, it is gone by mid-April and there are less funds available this year. Fahe tried to reserve all of our available \$200,000 each year. The Member only DPA program that was open last fall will open again this spring so watch for that opportunity.

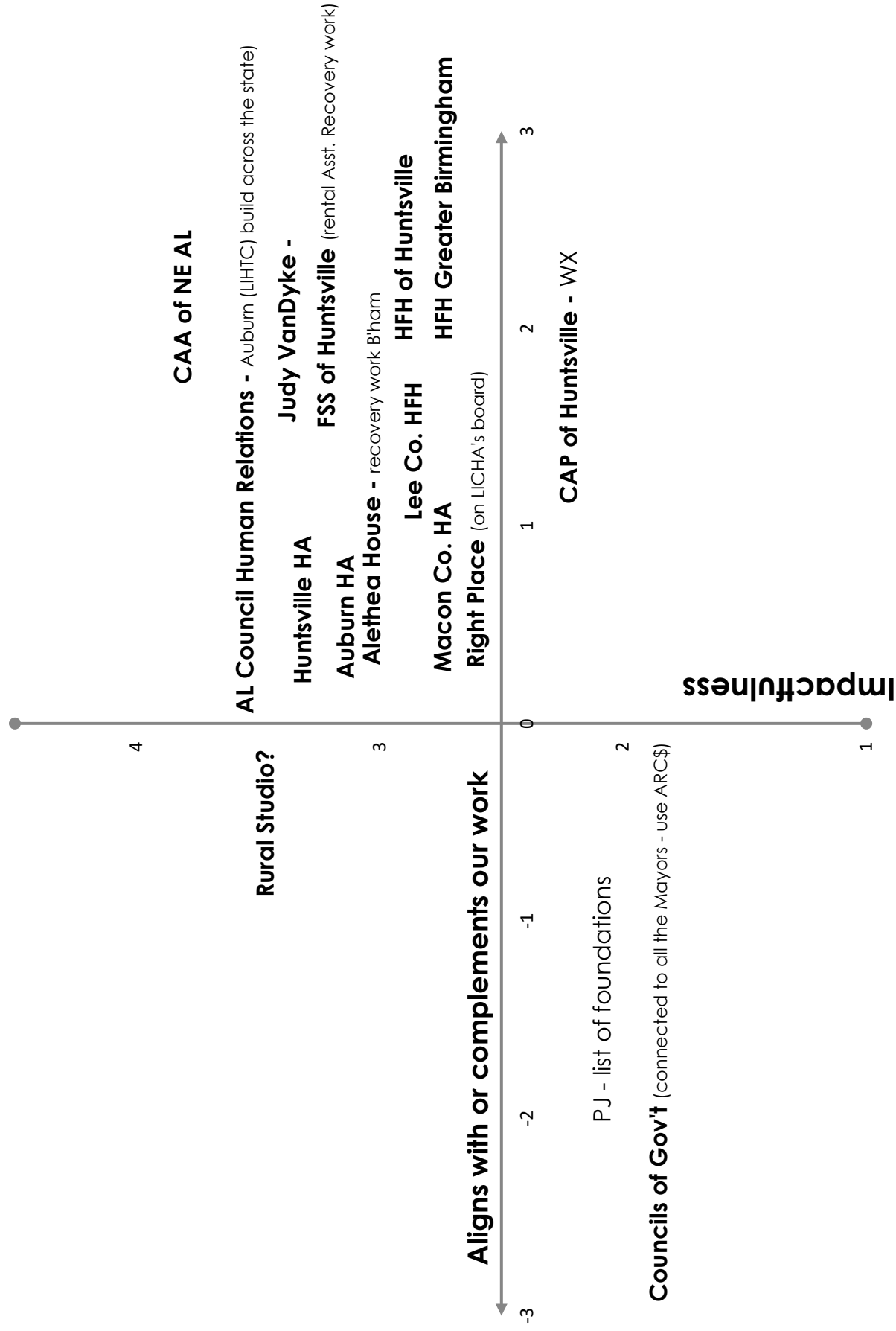
### Upcoming Events

- **2020 MIT Student Report/Review Webinar** coming soon
- **Thurs. Feb. 18** – 2 pm: Monthly Training Webinar – 502 Updates/Refresher
- **Thurs. Mar. 25** – 11am: Monthly Training Webinar – Fair Housing Workshop
- **April 21/22 - Fahe Spring Retreat/Executive Director Symposium**
- **Thurs. May 27** – 11am: Monthly Training Webinar – TBD
- **Wed. June 30** – TN Caucus Meeting - if interested
- **Thurs. June 17** – 11am: Monthly Training Webinar – TBD
- **Sept. 21/22/23** – **Fahe Annual Meeting**
- **Wed. Oct. 20** - TN Caucus Meeting – if interested

**Sept. 21-22-23 - SAVE THE DATES!!**

**2021 Fahe Annual Meeting, MeadowView Conference Center, Kingsport, TN**

**Definitely in Consideration**



Not a good fit for Membership