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## Proposal to Provide Executive Search Services Executive Director

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**The preeminent search firm for housing and  
redevelopment executives in the United States**

**7445 Quail Meadow Road ~ Plant City, Florida 33565 ~ 813-986-4441**  
**[www.gansgans.com](http://www.gansgans.com)**

March 18, 2025

[srussoklein@roberts-stevens.com](mailto:srussoklein@roberts-stevens.com)

Susan Russo Klein  
Partner  
Roberts & Stevens Attorneys at Law

Dear Susan:

Thank you for contacting us. I am pleased to present our proposal to provide Executive Search Services for the recruitment of an Executive Director for the Asheville Housing Authority.

We are a minority and woman owned firm with over thirty-five years of experience. We are one of a select group of national executive search firms that specializes in recruitment services for nonprofit housing executives. Because of our incomparable experience and knowledge of the public housing industry, our extensive and diverse data base of housing professionals, we are the search firm of choice for many of our clients, especially those with difficult searches. We have provided executive recruitment services to 5 of the 10 largest housing authorities in the country, and over 85 housing and redevelopment authorities, housing associations, and public-sector entities in 25 states and the Virgin Islands.

We also provide our services to a wide array of other public sector entities such as redevelopment authorities, nonprofits, and private corporations. Many of our clients have retained us on multi-year contracts or hired us for subsequent searches over the years.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this proposal and invite any questions you may have about our qualifications or our proposed approach to serving you. We are available to meet for a virtual interview at your convenience and look forward to the possibility of working with the Asheville Housing Authority again.

Sincerely,

*Simone Gans Barefield*

President & CEO  
813-927-0809-cell

Gans, Gans and Associates  
[www.gansgans.com](http://www.gansgans.com)  
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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *The Keys to Our Success*

gga has been successful as an executive search firm for 36 years because we bring to every engagement:

- A core staff that has **over 100 years of combined experience** and have worked together for over 30 years.
- The successful placements of housing executives in over **85 housing and redevelopment authorities** of various sizes in **25 states and the Virgin Islands**, including **5 of the 10 largest housing authorities in the United States**.
- A comprehensive understanding of housing industry trends and the regulatory, financial, and political challenges that housing authorities face.
- Members of **PHADA** and **NAHRO**.
- A thoroughly researched and detailed understanding of our clients and their needs.
- A carefully crafted job description and a competitive compensation package.
- A laser-like focus on aligning the ideal candidate with each position filled.
- An efficient, **state of the art search methodology**.
- An extensive **data base of over 50,000** housing, nonprofit and public sector executives.
- A proven record of recruiting and placing **diverse candidates**.
- **One year placement guarantee**.

## *Our Results*

**Over the past 5 years gga has placed over 150 housing and redevelopment authority executives.** These placements included the following positions: chief executive officer, executive director, chief financial officer, chief human resources officer/director of human resources, chief operating officer, vice president of real-estate development, chief diversity officer, chief of staff, general manager of finance and information systems, director of modernization, general counsel, deputy executive director, director of housing operations, chief information officer, budget chief, director of development, director of asset management, coordinator of pre-school programs, director of communications, director of Section 8/HCV, director of modernization, director of maintenance, director of contracts and procurement, inspector general, and director of resident services.



## Testimonials



“Working with Gans, Gans and Associates has been invaluable in several Executive level searches conducted at this agency. Their professionalism and persistence to ensure the right match between candidate and position is notable. The attention paid to culture and climate in an organization and skills, ability and personal characteristics of the candidate helps in successful placements”.

**Karen DuBois-Walton, Executive Director, Elm City Communities**



“gga is a proven leader in executive search providing exceptional candidates and support throughout the recruiting process. The entire gga search process is designed to empower the client to select from a strong slate of accomplished and competitive candidates that best fits their organization. Our agency had great success with gga and selected an outstanding candidate that is performing exceptionally well and enabling us to make the right decisions and rapid progress in fulfilling our mission and goals. Much of our accomplishment we attribute to the quality of the search process, guidance, and support gga provided throughout in the selection, on-boarding, and orientation with our new CEO”. **Thomas Lounds, Board Chair, Spartanburg Housing Authority**



“gga is a firm that is well known for its superior HR consulting and executive search services, and it has also developed an equally outstanding organization, management and IT consulting practice. I am recommending gga to you for its HR and executive search services. Gga has been a Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA) strategic partner in HR and executive search for several years. They have performed a range of HR and executive search services for CHA providing strategic HR advice and exemplary executive search services. Gga has conducted executive search that provides advice inclusive of the strategy, planning, surveying of staff, and board to assess concerns and issues that may have affected criteria for selecting executives and a senior management team. They are excellent at understanding the leadership and culture of an organization and matching candidates that are a great fit.” **Fulton Meachem Jr., President/CEO, Charlotte Housing Authority**



## II. Staffing and Qualifications

Throughout our 36-year history, the one constant at gga has been our leadership: Simone Gans Barefield has always been gga's owner, president, and leader. Simone plays a very hands-on role and leads most of the firm's engagements and personally serves as our liaison to all of our clients. As a result of this approach, Asheville Housing Authority can be assured that they will have complete and total access to the individual who is responsible for addressing their needs and that this individual, in turn, oversees all aspects of gga's operations.

Our outstanding team of search professionals identifies candidates through contacts in the public housing industry, their personal resources cultivated through years of recruiting, and gga's own extensive database of outstanding talent. gga's executive search work adds a unique twist that distinguishes us from most search firms; we specialize in presenting our clients with pools of outstanding candidates from truly diverse backgrounds, including women and individual of various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

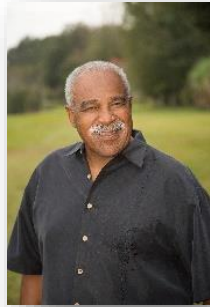
### **Simone Gans Barefield, President & CEO**



Simone would lead the recruitment efforts and be the primary liaison with the Asheville Housing Authority. She is the president and chief executive officer of Gans, Gans & Associates (gga). Under her direction, gga offers a broad array of staffing services, including executive search and contract staffing, as well as assistance with employee retention and development. Simone specializes in presenting executive search clients with pools of outstanding candidates from truly diverse backgrounds, including women and individuals of various racial and ethnic backgrounds. She has personally provided high level successful executive search services to more than forty public housing organizations and city governments.

Simone has developed an outstanding reputation for the design, implementation, and management of a broad array of executive search projects, human resources and management and consulting programs, especially programs that involve assessing and managing diversity in the workplace, in addition, to providing business counsel and insights that are clear and practical. Simone has led successful consulting engagements for public housing authorities including organizational assessment that include organizational restructuring, salary and compensation analysis, position description revision and creation and conducted sexual harassment training. Simone takes a hands-on approach managing client engagements and working directly with her firm's clients. Under her direction, gga serves a broad spectrum of clients throughout the U.S. and internationally in the public and private sectors as well as non-profit organizations.





### **Ernest Barefield, Senior Vice President**

Ernest has extensive public-sector executive, management, and administrative experience. His recruiting responsibilities, for the past twenty-five years, involve sourcing, researching, identifying, and evaluating candidates. He is responsible for the research operation for public sector clients, specializing in housing authorities and city/county governments. He served as deputy chief administrative officer for the city of Atlanta during the tenure of Mayor Andrew Young, managing inter-departmental projects and overseeing budgets and the city's information services operations. He then moved to Chicago as chief of staff for Mayor Harold Washington, supervising the city's forty-four operating departments and \$3 billion annual operating budget. In his capacity as deputy mayor of the city of Philadelphia, Ernest served as Mayor Wilson Goode's principal adviser on policy and legislative affairs, overseeing the city's lobbying of its city council, state legislature, and Congress. Ernest has also done executive coaching for a number of gga clients as part of its executive search practice. He has a bachelor's degree from Southern University and a master's degree in political science from Atlanta University. Ernest has been with gga for twenty-six years.



### **Carl E. Singley, Counsel and Research Consultant**

Carl has been Legal Counsel for Gans, Gans & Associates for twenty-nine years. He is also an expert research consultant. He has provided gga counseling on a wide variety of human resources and labor and employment matters including employee manuals; employment contracts; personnel and management policies; hiring, promotion and termination policies and practices; executive compensation; diversity and inclusion policies; EEOC and other regulatory matters; and internal audits and investigations. Carl is a former dean and professor of law (Temple University) who also has extensive experience as a lawyer. In addition to managing his own law firm, he was a partner in two large law firms. His practice has included public contracting, labor and employment law, civil litigation, and municipal finance. He has advised corporate and nonprofit clients on all aspects of local, state, and federal public-sector procurement. Carl has a bachelor's degree from Talladega College; a Juris Doctorate from Temple; and a Master of Laws degree from Yale.



### **Tracy Rivera, Chief of Operations**

Tracy has been with gga for over 25 years. She is responsible for all aspects of gga's administrative support, procurement, information technology and logistical operations. This includes managing our proprietary, state of the art database of over 50,000 placements and potential candidates; candidate research, profiles, and background checks; travel planning and logistics for candidates and gga personnel; preparation and submission of responses to requests for proposals; and monitoring developments and trends in the housing industry.

## Representative Case Studies



### Community Development Corporation/Housing Authority County of Los Angeles

gga was retained to provide executive search services to CDC/HACoLA to recruit for various executive level positions. gga's role was to conceive and implement a multi-position search process from planning, recruiting, selection, and closing, and to assist CDC/HACoLA in negotiating contracts with the selected candidates. gga developed a sourcing strategy for the nationwide search for approval by CDC/HACoLA. Then gga implemented the approved plan for managing its search process. gga identified several hundred potential prospects. After multiple levels of screening and input from the CDC/HACoLA leadership, gga presented a diverse slate of eligible candidates.

During this engagement, gga successfully recruited the director of housing assistance, director of housing operations, chief financial officer, and assistant director of housing



### Housing Authority Baltimore City

*HABC is one of the nation's largest public housing authorities and Baltimore's largest landlord. HABC owns and manages approximately 8,400 conventional public housing units in 12 developments. HABC serves over 20,400 households*

Over the years, we have placed over **sixteen executives** at HABC: chief financial officer, deputy executive director, deputy director of planning, deputy director of operations, director of housing operations, chief information officer, budget chief, director of development, head start director, director of human resources, ADD housing operations, communications director, deputy director of administration, controller, director of communications, deputy director of development COO-head start, inspector general, deputy commissioner finance & development, and two asset managers.



### District of Columbia Housing Authority (2009 - Present)

*DCHA provides subsidized housing to approximately 50,000 residents, nearly one-tenth of the District's population. The authority also supplies more than 13,000 housing vouchers to District residents, including some 800 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, more than 2,000 Local Rent Subsidy Program (LRSP) vouchers, and thousands from the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP).*

gga was selected in August 2017, to assist the (DCHA) Board of Commissioners in the recruitment of a new executive director to replace the previous executive director we placed five plus years prior. The entire eleven-person Board served as the Search Selection Committee. The strategy included individual and group information sessions with findings reported to the Board. gga conducted 48 stakeholder interviews and facilitated four search process sessions with the Board. We also participated in two executive search presentations to the Board along with two focus group meetings with residents.

gga identified 697 individuals for initial screening. The Board identified 9 potential candidates that met the minimum criteria. Four of these candidates were selected and scheduled to interview with the Board. At this point in the process a new Board Chair was appointed, and it was determined that the Board should re-review an additional group of candidates. After additional review and screening by the Board the original four candidates were interviewed. The DCHA Board selected a finalist, conducted negotiations, and selected a successful candidate.

gga was selected, April 2018, to assist the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) Executive Director, in the confidential recruitment of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The search strategy contained no advertising and strict confidentiality was of paramount importance. We worked closely with the Executive Director and Director of Human Resources and shared each step in the process with them. Four candidates were ultimately interviewed, and a successful candidate was selected. The complete process was done within 35 days.

In September of 2021, we were retained to recruit a senior vice president of property management operation. Within 30 days of the engagement, we presented a slate of five candidates. They interviewed 4 for that position but were so impressed with the slate that they hired three, one for a newly created position called executive deputy director, and another vacant position, the senior vice president for housing choice voucher programs.



### **Charlotte Housing Authority (Inlivian)**

The Charlotte Housing Authority retained gga to conduct several executive search assignments. For each assignment gga developed a nationwide strategy that included outreach to applicants from diverse backgrounds.

We worked with the executive team, procurement, and human resources throughout every step of the process. CHA is a very progressive agency who wanted forward thinking, independent executives who could provide leadership and direction in the Strategic Asset Model (SAM).

gga has successfully placed an executive director, senior vice president for real estate development, chief development officer, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, director of human resources, director of IT, director of public relations, and senior development officer.





### III. References

#### **Housing Authority of South Bend**

501 Alonzo Watson Dr., South Bend, IN 46601  
Stephen Luecke, Vice Chair, Board of Commissioners  
574-876-1317 | [stephenluecke@gmail.com](mailto:stephenluecke@gmail.com)

#### **Raleigh Housing Authority**

900 Haynes Street, Raleigh, NC 27604  
Charles Francis, General Counsel  
919-828-0801 | [cfrancis@thefrancislawfirm.com](mailto:cfrancis@thefrancislawfirm.com)

#### **San Diego Housing Commission**

1122 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101  
Brian Elliott, Search Committee  
619-235-5286 | [BElliott@sandiego.gov](mailto:BElliott@sandiego.gov)  
Debra Fischle-Fauk, Senior VP Compliance & Equity Assurance  
619-533-6387 | [debraf@sdhc.org](mailto:debraf@sdhc.org)

#### **Virgin Islands Housing Authority**

9900 Oswald Harris Court St. Thomas, VI 00802-310  
Adriane Dudley, General Counsel  
340-244-2660 | [adudley@dudleylaw.com](mailto:adudley@dudleylaw.com)

#### **Chicago Housing Authority**

60 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, IL 60605  
Tracey Scott, Chief Executive Officer  
773-709-2084 | [tscott@thecha.org](mailto:tscott@thecha.org)  
Dominick Maniscalco, Deputy Chief of Human Resources & Administration  
312-913-7605 | [DManiscalco@thecha.org](mailto:DManiscalco@thecha.org)

#### **Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority**

435 Nebraska Avenue, Toledo, OH 43604  
Joaquin Cintron Vega, Executive Director  
419-259-9437 | [jcintronvega@lucasmha.org](mailto:jcintronvega@lucasmha.org)

#### **Anniston Housing Authority**

500 Glen Addie Avenue, Anniston, AL 36201  
Cynthia Calix, Chairwoman  
256-454-2332 | [ccalix@annistoncag.org](mailto:ccalix@annistoncag.org)

#### **Metropolitan Development and Housing Authority**

701 S 6th St, Nashville, TN 37206  
Troy White, Executive Director  
615-252-8400 | [twhite@Nashville-MDHA.org](mailto:twhite@Nashville-MDHA.org)

#### **Wilmington Housing Authority**

1524 South 16th Street, Wilmington, NC 28401  
Al Sharp, Board Chair  
910-599-1448 | [alsharpnc@gmail.com](mailto:alsharpnc@gmail.com)  
Lee Backston, Board Vice Chair  
415-637-8302 | [leebackston@gmail.com](mailto:leebackston@gmail.com)

## IV. Search Methodology

Our search methodology utilizes the “best practices” found in much larger firms. We are efficient, disciplined and bring a laser like focus to all of our engagements. We are experienced and effective at listening when you talk and pay attention to your needs. We keep the lines of communication open and will work closely with the Asheville Housing Authority. Our business is meeting your needs, and that means not resting until you are completely satisfied.

To achieve success in recruiting for the Asheville Housing Authority we would use our proven methodology for planning, sourcing, screening, presenting, and placing the right talent with the Asheville Housing Authority.



### Phase 1 – Planning

gga will actively collaborate with the Asheville Housing Authority to develop an effective search strategy that will identify candidates with the requisite experience, intellectual ability and other personal characteristics required for your next Executive Director. We will review the Asheville Housing Authority’s strategic plans, priorities, goals, and key initiatives, as well as financial and demographic information to better understand the Asheville Housing Authority as an operating entity. We also have an extensive database of salaries and compensation for organizations and agencies that are comparable in size to the Asheville Housing Authority.

### Phase 2 – Sourcing and Advertising

gga’s process of searching for potential candidates begins in-house, with our own database – a large, constantly growing repository of individuals whom we have worked with over our 36-year history. This database contains most senior staff members at many of the country’s housing agencies. We would also employ a nationwide strategy of sourcing candidates. gga would also advertise with selected industry publications. Posting could be to specific housing organizations/associations such as NAHRO or PHADA.

### Phase 3 – Screening and Selection

We have developed a customized screening protocol designed to identify and verify the candidates’ skills and experiences. The questions on these protocols are based directly on the job description provided to us during the planning phase, and information provided during our meetings with the Asheville Housing Authority. They are extremely detailed, covering all

of the skills required, all of the experience the Asheville Housing Authority want candidates to have, and all of the tasks you expect them to perform on the job. We use behavioral interview techniques, so we explore the candidates past experiences, seek examples of their accomplishments, and even inquire about the mistakes they have made and the lessons they have learned from them. gga also employs an extensive internal “roundtable” approach to reviewing candidates’ credentials and qualifications, comparing them to both a standard and one another, and then rating them so that we only send the very best to the Asheville Housing Authority; in addition, each candidate interacts with several gga staff members – an additional step that we use to get to know candidates better and from different perspectives. Candidates are provided with information on the Asheville Housing Authority including a position description, Asheville Housing Authority materials, articles, research, and information on our firm.

Once candidates’ credentials have been identified, we will rank and present them to you in resume form. Accompanying each group of resumes is a gga-created matrix that shows the major skill classifications, experience levels, and then compares the candidates in each group to one another in each category. Accompanying the resume and matrix is a profile summary that provides additional information on past positions and summarizes background information not included in the resume. We will also complete social media and other public records checks on each candidate. The Asheville Housing Authority can then determine which candidates they wish to interview.

gga will set up and arrange the schedule for the finalists chosen for interviews. We will notify all finalists and coordinate all travel arrangements according to the Asheville Housing Authority’s travel and reimbursement policy. gga will coordinate and manage on-site interviews of candidates who meet with the Asheville Housing Authority. We would facilitate these interviews, sitting in on them, as appropriate. We would provide materials for the interviews that would contain key information for those interviews. We will also provide interview questions that can be asked of candidates; facilitate discussions following each of the interviews with the Asheville Housing Authority and work with the Asheville Housing Authority to prioritize and make final candidate selections up to and including salary negotiations. If requested, we can provide compensation research and advice.

We will provide weekly progress status reports and will be available for consultation on all aspects of the search process. All candidates will be put through the same rigorous screening process to ensure all candidates are treated fairly and equitably.

#### **Phase 4 - Offer and Close**

When you find the candidate you like, we then will facilitate this entire process including conducting an extensive background and reference check and ensure that the individual is ready to start on the agreed upon date.

## Phase 5 - Start and Assimilate

At gga, we actively ensure that the transition to working at our client site is smooth and positive for both the client and the new employee. Some of the activities we have done to assist with relocation in the past have included: working with a spouse or significant other in seeking employment; identifying places of worship, temporary housing, and schools; and providing cost of living comparisons. We will follow up at regular intervals with both Asheville Housing Authority and the employee to ensure that there is a good relationship.

## V. Fee Proposal

- gga proposes recruiting for the Asheville Housing Authority for a fee of twenty-nine percent (29%) of the first-year salary (base plus sign-on or guaranteed bonuses) plus ordinary business expenses associated with the recruiting.
- gga's fees are to be paid in the following manner:
  - one-third of the anticipated fee at the time each assignment is given to gga and
  - one-third of the anticipated fee at the time of benchmarking and
  - the final one-third, including any adjustments necessitated by the actual starting salary, when the individual search is completed or after ninety days, or if the search is terminated for reasons beyond gga's controls, whichever comes first.

### Expenses

gga charges for ordinary, out-of-pocket business expenses associated with recruiting. These expenses are:

- Candidate travel which may include the following:
  - Airfare
  - Hotel
  - Meals
  - Parking
  - Mileage
- Advertising
- Professional background checks
- Courier Service



# Clients

Annapolis Housing Authority  
Albany Housing Authority  
Atlanta Housing Authority  
Baltimore Regional Housing Partners  
Baltimore City Housing Authority  
Bessemer Housing Authority  
Birmingham District Housing Authority  
Bradenton Housing Authority  
Bridgeport Housing Authority  
Brilliant Corners  
Boulder Housing Partners  
Charleston Housing Authority  
Charlotte Housing Authority  
Chicago Housing Authority  
City of Columbus  
City of Philadelphia  
City of York Housing Authority  
City of York  
Clarksville Housing Authority  
Columbus Housing Authority  
Cook County Housing Authority  
Community Development Commission Los Angeles County  
Corporation to Develop Communities in Tampa  
Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Dallas Housing Authority  
Daytona Beach Housing Authority  
Deerfield Beach Housing Authority  
District of Columbia Housing Authority  
Durham Housing Authority  
Elm City Communities (New Haven)  
Everett Housing Authority  
Fort Worth Housing Solutions  
Fresno Housing Authority  
Hoboken Housing Authority  
Home Forward  
Housing Authority City of Austin  
Housing Authority of Baltimore County  
Housing Authority of Cook County  
Housing Authority of the County of Butler County  
Housing Authority of the City of El Paso  
Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh  
Housing Authority of Kansas City  
Housing Authority of New Orleans  
Housing Authority of South Bend  
Housing Authority of Winston-Salem  
Howard County Housing Commission

Jacksonville Housing Authority  
Kings County Housing Authority  
Lafayette Housing Authority  
Lakeland Housing Authority  
Longmont Housing Authority  
Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Lynchburg Housing Authority  
Marin Housing Authority  
Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency  
Metropolitan Housing Alliance  
Metro Housing Boston  
Miami Dade Housing Authority  
Montgomery Housing Authority  
National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officers  
Newark Housing Authority  
New Orleans Board of Debt Liquidation  
Norfolk Redevelopment Housing Authority  
North Charleston Housing Authority  
Oakland Housing Authority  
Ocala Housing Authority  
Orlando Housing Authority  
Park City Communities  
Partners for Better Housing  
Peoria Housing Authority  
Plymouth Housing  
Philadelphia Housing Authority  
Preferred Properties  
Preservation of Affordable Housing  
Prince Georges County Housing Authority  
Richmond Redevelopment Authority  
Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Authority  
Saint Louis Housing Authority  
San Francisco Housing Authority  
Seattle Housing Authority  
Spartanburg Housing Authority  
Springfield Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Statesboro Housing Authority  
Tacoma Housing Authority  
Tallahassee Housing Authority  
Tampa Housing Authority  
Turnstone Development  
University of South Florida  
U.S. Virgin Islands Housing Authority  
Wilmington (NC) Housing Authority  
Winter Park Housing Authority

## *Performance Guarantee*

gga candidates are guaranteed for one year. Should the candidate not remain in Asheville Housing Authority's employ for one year from the start date, gga will replace the individual for no additional fee. The Asheville Housing Authority would only be liable for out-of-pocket expenses associated with conducting this additional search.

gga will never recruit any candidates placed at Asheville Housing Authority for as long as such individual remains with the organization. If Asheville Housing Authority subsequently hires any candidates presented by gga within a twelve-month period, gga is entitled to a recruiting fee of twenty-nine percent (29%) of the first-year salary (base plus sign-on or guaranteed bonuses) upon employment with Asheville Housing Authority.

