



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE DIVISION

**Human Services Advisory Board
November 4, 2021, Minutes
United Way of Volusia and Flagler Counties
3747 W. International Speedway Blvd.
Daytona Beach, FL 32724**

Members present

Jeanne Rademacher, Camille Vickers, Todd Banks, Danny Robins, Terri Malia, Erin LeDuc, Peter Migner, Petrina Onwuemeli, Steve Groner, Rick Forquer, and Barbara Reid (3:41 p.m.).

Members absent

Lelia Koval, Barry Powell, Peter Migner, Christy Gillis, Johnnie Chavis, Ericka Sipp, Christy Gillis, Smiley Thurston

Staff present

Clayton Jackson, Dawna Parent-Phillips, and Carmen Hall.

Call to order

Vice-Chairperson, Terri Malia, called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. EST.

Roll call

Ms. Malia conducted roll call and determined enough members were present for quorum. Quorum was present at initial roll call and Barbara Reid arrived after the meeting had started at 3:41 p.m.

Special order of business

Acceptance of members

Ms. Malia stated there have been five members recently appointed to the advisory board per County Council to represent the public sector. The members are Terri Malia (re-appointed), Peter Migner (re-appointed), Danny Robins (re-appointed), Steve Groner (new appointee), and Richard Forquer (new appointee). Ms. Malia asked for a motion to formally seat the members. Erin LeDuc made the motion

and Camille Vickers seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motioned passed unanimously.

Officer elections

- **Chairperson**- Ms. Malia informed everyone for a member to be nominated for this position they must have served at least one year on the advisory board and a list has been distributed of eligible members. Mr. Jackson noted that this stipulation only applies to the chairperson position and that any member, including those who have just been accepted on the advisory board, are eligible to serve as either the vice-chairperson or secretary. Ms. Malia then called for nominations for chairperson. Ms. LeDuc nominated Terri Malia and Ms. Malia accepted. Ms. Malia asked for additional nominations. There were no additional nominations. Ms. Malia was unanimously voted to chairperson.
- **Vice-Chairperson**- Ms. Malia called for nominations for the vice-chairperson position. Kathy Spencer nominated Camille Vickers. Ms. Vickers declined the nomination stating she already serves in leadership positions in the community and wouldn't have enough time to devote. Erin LeDuc nominated Jeanne Rademacher. Ms. Rademacher asked for a brief overview of the position to which Mr. Jackson informed the primary responsibility of the position was to be ready to serve in the absence of the chairperson and to lead meetings if needed; and additional duties are found in the by-laws. Ms. Rademacher accepted the nomination. Ms. Malia asked if there were any other nominations to which there were none. Ms. Rademacher was unanimously voted to vice-chairperson.
- **Secretary**- Ms. Malia called for nominations for the secretary position. Jeanne Rademacher nominated Kathy Spencer. Ms. Spencer asked was it okay for her to again serve since she has been serving as secretary throughout the previous fiscal year. Mr. Jackson informed her it is permissible. Ms. Spencer accepted the nomination. Ms. Malia asked if there were any other nominations to which there were none. Ms. Spencer was unanimously voted to secretary.

Chairperson report

Ms. Malia thanked everyone for their service to the advisory board and looks forward to serving as the newly elected chairperson. She stated social services are very much needed in the community at this time and is looking forward to helping.

Manager's report

Operational updates

Mr. Jackson informed everyone that intake procedures have not changed, and people may still apply online for electric assistance as well as schedule virtual phone interviews with case workers for housing, water, and other services. The processes continue to be found favorable by both clients and staff. Mr. Jackson did inform members that the funding source, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity ("DEO"), is considering rescinding the virtual options and again requiring persons to physically sign documents, reverting to pre-pandemic procedures. Numerous members asked why they are wanting to do this to which Mr. Jackson stated he and management staff from other grantees have informed DEO this is not in the best interest of the clientele as the new procedures have eliminated barriers associated

with poverty such as transportation, childcare, and taking time off work. Mr. Jackson stated even if they do rescind the virtual options, he is working with the County's internal Information Technology department to develop an intake system allowing for "e-signatures" which are legally-binding, just as if someone was signing a form with a pen.

Strategic plan and community action plan updates

Mr. Jackson stated that the advisory board is required to provide annual updates regarding both the strategic plan and community action plan per Community Services Block Grant ("CSBG") requirements. Mr. Jackson referred members to the information in the board packet regarding the updates and covered each bulleted item.

- Required to provide per CSBG organizational standards.
- Board approved of most recent strategic plan on Aug. 19, 2021, and the FY22 community action plan will be presented in this meeting.
- Intake procedures are still being conducted virtual and over the telephone. This has been beneficial for both staff and clients. Staff are creating contingencies in the event DEO rescinds the signature waiver as previously mentioned in the operational section of this report.
- Households receiving emergency mortgage or rental assistance may receive up to fair market rent value, which is an increase from previous years. However, this will lead to fewer available appointments but in return will provide greater benefit to those who do receive assistance. There are a number of other available rental assistance programs available in the community as well as an upcoming homeowner assistance program that will be operated by the DEO.
- The planning and data collection for the next community needs assessment and community action plan will begin the summer of 2022. It is hopeful the pandemic will be to a point where in-person focus groups may again be held.
- The vision statement, mission statement, and by-laws will all be reviewed during this fiscal year.
- Mobile "intake sites" is also a possibility if the pandemic is better in 2022 allowing staff to partner with other social service agencies for LIHEAP intake.
- Staff have maintained partnerships with current local social service agencies and looking to strengthen them.
- Staff will have received a ROMA training in Nov. 2021 and board members will also have the opportunity for one in 2022.
- Staff still meet frequently to discuss best practices and possible improvements.
- Staff morale is very high.

FY21 annual report

Mr. Jackson informed members the FY21 annual service report may be found in the board packet. Mr. Jackson noted that he thought it would be beneficial to examine the previous three fiscal years as all three have been under different circumstances: FY19 was pre-pandemic, FY20 was in the worst part of the pandemic, and FY21 was still in the pandemic but under better conditions. Mr. Jackson stated he wanted to ensure the services were in alignment if not more for FY21 to FY19. Mr. Jackson highlighted the following from the FY21 annual service report:

- A significant number of more crisis benefits through LIHEAP and EHEAP were provided compared to both previous two fiscal years.

- There were approximately 500 fewer LIHEAP Home energy benefits provided in FY21. Mr. Jackson noted that this may be attributed to a household only being able to receive one of these benefits every 365 days as well as households were wanting to take advantage of it during FY20's pandemic.
- There was a slight decrease in the number of housing benefits provided. Mr. Jackson noted the reason for the decrease may be attributed to, as noted in the operational update section, households starting in 2021 were able to receive more financial assistance resulting in fewer appointments being provided. Mr. Jackson also noted that there are a number of other housing assistance programs available in the community such as the division's internal emergency rental assistance program and the Florida Department of Children and Families' emergency rental assistance program found at www.ourflorida.com. Mr. Jackson also informed members that DEO is developing a program targeting homeowners who have been financially impacted by the pandemic and that program is most likely to be fully administered at the state level, like www.ourflorida.com. Mr. Jackson stated even though it will not likely be a County-operated program it is important for board members to know of available programs so they may inform those who may need such assistance. Mr. Jackson noted that as soon as he receives updates regarding the upcoming mortgage relief program, he will inform all board members.
- There was an increase in the number of water benefits.
- Prescription assistance has consistently remained low due to the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
- Dental assistance remained consistent with the previous fiscal years.
- Final data has not yet been completed for FY21's indigent cremation program but Mr. Jackson noted that there will be a significant number more cases processed in FY21 compared to previous fiscal years.

Board training

Mr. Jackson stated that there will be a virtual board training held on Dec. 2, 2021, at 3:30 p.m. to which all board members will receive an invite. Mr. Jackson informed board members that this is not a required training as the only mandated training a board member receives is their initial training; however, it must be documented that a training was made available to all board members at least once per fiscal year. Additionally, Mr. Jackson stated that if any board member would like a one-on-one training or more information to please let him know so it may be arranged.

Documentation distribution

Staff distributed by-laws, the County of Volusia's advisory board handbook (conflict of interest), and the whistleblower policy along with an acknowledgment page. Mr. Jackson informed members that every active member is required to receive said documents and sign a form attesting they have received such documents each year. Mr. Jackson said this is a requirement per CSBG organizational standards. For members who are not present at the meeting he and staff will be making arrangements with those members.

New business

Approval of Aug. 19, 2021, minutes

Chairperson Malia referred board members to the Aug. 19 board minutes found in the board packet. Ms. Malia asked if anyone had any corrections or comments regarding the minutes. There were no corrections or comments made. Ms. Malia called for a motion. Jeanne Rademacher made the motion and seconded by Camille Vickers. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the quarterly financial report

Dawna Parent-Phillips, Fiscal Resource Manager, presented the quarterly financial report. Ms. Parent referred members to the financial report found in the board packet and reviewed all figures. Steve Groner asked if the overall financial status of the CSBG CARES budget was okay due to the contract ending Sep. 30, 2022, and the overall expenditures are at 78%. Mr. Jackson stated that when the CSBG CARES funds were allocated the summer of 2020 all grantees were made aware that the funds had to be expended by Sep. 30, 2022. Because of the deadline being so far away a lot of grantees were not expending those funds and “sitting on them” to see if something would happen in the near future for them to need to expend. DEO realized the low expenditure rate across the state and informed all grantees if they did not start spending their funds, they would be at risk of having some of their funds redistributed to other grantees. Mr. Jackson stated the situation related to the CSBG CARES is better to proceed with fully expending as soon as possible to prevent funds being redistributed to other grantees and even the possibility of having another grantee’s redistributed to the County of Volusia. Carmen Hall, Community Assistance Director, provided clarity in that the County of Volusia was not just “sitting” on the funds whereas citizens were not receiving services; rather, staff were able to utilize other funding sources to pay for these services. Chairperson Malia called for a motion. Petrina Onwuemeli made a motion and Steve Groner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the FY22 community action plan

Mr. Jackson stated the community action plan is a template provided by DEO that must be submitted every year as part of the CSBG organizational standards. Mr. Jackson stated that a lot of the information in the report mirrors that from the community needs assessment and strategic plan, which were both reviewed and approved by the advisory board during the Aug. 19, 2021, meeting. Mr. Jackson stated the document is in the board packet and will cover a few key points:

- As previously mentioned in the operational updates section, the advisory board will be reviewing the by-laws, mission statement, and vision statement during this fiscal year.
- The top need in the community is housing, as identified through the community needs assessment. This report again identifies the top five needs but also explains how the County plans to address each need directly or indirectly. Mr. Jackson provided information about how the County works with the Agriculture Center and CareerSource to address some of these needs.
- The Family Self-Sufficiency Program (“FSSP”) was temporarily suspended during the pandemic to focus efforts on emergency services; however, the program has again started and looking to improve and expand over the course of FY22.
- Emergency services and LIHEAP/EHEAP plan to continue as long as DEO continues to fund.
- Virtual training has been found very favorable from staff allowing them to view the trainer’s screen and ask questions.

Chairperson Malia called for a motion. Jeanne Rademacher made a motion and Kathy Spencer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CSBG CARES community action plan

Mr. Jackson stated that DEO informed all grantees about two months ago that even though the original CSBG CARES plan had been approved prior to funding being dispersed, grantees who still have CSBG CARES funds must again have their CSBG CARES community action plan reviewed and approved. Mr. Jackson informed the CSBG CARES community action plan is in the board packet and there are no changes to what was previously presented and approved by the board in 2021. Mr. Jackson stated the County still intends to utilize the funds for temporary staff and emergency services such as housing and water bills. Mr. Jackson reminded board members that water bills are excluded from being assisted through the LIHEAP and EHEAP programs.

Chairperson Malia called for a motion. Kathy Spencer made a motion and Petrina Onwuemeli seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public comments

There were no members from the public in attendance or attending virtually. Mr. Jackson noted that he did not receive any public comments prior to the meeting.

Next meeting

Chairperson Malia stated the next meeting will take place Jan. 13, 2022, at 3:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the United Way of Volusia and Flagler Counties. Additionally, Chairperson Malia reminded everyone to look for the virtual training invite taking place on Dec. 2.

Adjournment

Chairperson Malia called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeanne Rademacher made the motion and Camille Vickers seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting concluded at 4:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Recording Secretary

Date

Chairperson

Date