



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE DIVISION

**Human Services Advisory Board
January 13, 2022, Minutes
United Way of Volusia and Flagler Counties
3747 W. International Speedway Blvd.
Daytona Beach, FL 32724**

Members present:

Richard Forquer, Terri Malia, Peter Migner, Erin LeDuc, Kathy Spencer, Jeanne Rademacher, Ericka Sipp, Camille Vickers, and Barbara Reid (3:40 p.m.).

Members absent:

Lelia Koval, Steve Groner, Petrina Onwuemeli, Barry Powell, Peter Migner, Christy Gillis, Todd Banks, Danny Robins, Johnnie Chavis, Christy Gillis, and Smiley Thurston

Staff present:

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

Call to order

Vice-Chairperson, Terri Malia, called the meeting to order at 3:36 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 3:40 p.m.

Special order of business

Removal of board members

Ms. Malia informed board members that Smiley Thurston, low-income representative of the Orange City/Deltona area, passed away on Jan. 2, 2022. Additionally, his daughter, Lelia Koval, was Mr. Thurston's alternate and she provided an email to the manager, Clayton Jackson, stating she will no longer be serving on the advisory board.

Ms. Malia stated that the removal of both members will not leave a vacancy on the board for a low-income representative from the Orange City/Deltona area. Ms. Malia informed members that staff are requesting permission to initiate the process of finding a new member for replacement for the remainder of Mr. Thurston's term.

Ms. Malia called for a motion to officially remove both board members and grant staff permission to start the process of seeking a replacement. Peter Migner made a motion and Camille Vickers seconded the motion. Ms. Malia called for a vote which passed unanimously.

Chairperson report

Ms. Malia thanked everyone for taking the time to attend today's meeting. Ms. Malia asked persons in attendance who were not members of the advisory board to introduce themselves if they would like. Guests provided their names and stated they were just interested in learning about the advisory board and what it can do to help people.

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. There are no intentions of changing the current intake and service procedures unless mandated to do so by a funding source.

Mr. Jackson stated he wanted to inform members about the current policy pertaining to households being allowed to apply for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program ("LIHEAP") crisis service. He stated that prior to the pandemic a household was able to receive one crisis benefit from Apr. – Sep. and another benefit from Oct. – Mar., up to a maximum of \$600 for each benefit. Since the onset of the pandemic the LIHEAP funding source, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity ("DEO"), has changed the policy of when and maximum award amount a household may receive through the LIHEAP crisis service. Currently, a household may receive up to a maximum of \$5,000 of assistance through the crisis service in a fiscal year of Oct. 1 – Sep. 30. Ericka Sipp asked does this mean that a household could apply every month for assistance. Mr. Jackson responded that is true; however, he cautioned members that households deciding not to pay their bills each month may impact their credit scores, at some point the demand for services may exceed the ability for a household to schedule an appointment when needed, and DEO may change this policy at any point. He stated this is not meant to be an ongoing or monthly electric bill assistance service; but it is available for those who may need such assistance.

Quarterly service report

Mr. Jackson brought members' attention to the number of crisis services being significantly lower this fiscal compared to the same service period in the previous fiscal year. He highlighted that during this period of the previous year, Oct. – Dec. 2020, staff were overwhelmed with the requests for LIHEAP crisis assistance as this was the period utility vendors started disconnecting for non-payment.

Additionally, Mr. Jackson stated that the amount of assistance per crisis benefit has significantly decreased as last fiscal year in this time period staff were assisting household with past-due bills that had not been paid for months whereas now it is highly likely a client's past-due bill is no more than \$300 to \$400 as they're only a month or two delinquent.

Mr. Jackson reported there was an increase in the number of LIHEAP home energy credits provided. He reminded members that the credit is available to households even if their electric bill is not past-due. He stated if a household resides in Volusia County, meets program income guidelines, and the utility account is in a household member's name they will be eligible to receive the credit. Additionally, Mr. Jackson informed members that effective Oct. 1, 2021, DEO has increased the credit award amount a household may receive; however, as with the crisis policy, DEO may change the award amount and eligibility at any time.

Mr. Jackson continue the service report going over the remaining services. Upon conclusion of reviewing the report he asked if there were any questions and there were none.

2022 summer food program

Mr. Jackson informed members that staff are already planning for and recruiting previous participating sites to again participate in this year's program. Mr. Jackson provided general information about how the program operates and what type of organization may apply to become a site. Additionally, Mr. Jackson stated that the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the entity that funds the summer food program, has not yet informed grantees whether this year's program would remain a "grab-n-go" model authorized during the pandemic or if they would require a return to the traditionally model of requiring children to receive and consume meals on-site. Finally, Mr. Jackson reminded members that it is free for a site to participate. All food will be provided and delivered to each site daily and, if needed, the County can provide a refrigerator for them to store meals. Site applications and more information was available for members to retrieve at the resource table.

Board training opportunities

Mr. Jackson stated that five members participated in the Dec. 2021 virtual training that was held. Camille Vickers asked if there was a recording available of the training. Mr. Jackson responded that there was however, there is also a training video Mr. Jackson developed which covers everything. Peter Migner requested the video to be sent to all board members which Mr. Jackson stated he would get that to all members as soon as possible.

CSBG organizational standards submitted

Mr. Jackson informed members that the fiscal year 2022 organizational standards were due to DEO by Dec. 15, 2021. Mr. Jackson informed members all documentation was submitted well in advance of the set deadline. Initially, DEO was set to have all standards reviewed by the first of Jan. 2022; however, DEO notified that it will be a little longer. Mr. Jackson stated he anticipates the review and scoring of the organizational standards to be ready to present to the advisory board for the next meeting schedule to take place in Apr. 2022.

Notification of DEO's homeowner assistance fund program

Mr. Jackson informed board members that DEO is developing a homeowner assistance fund program to help homeowners who were impacted by the pandemic. He stated that there is no indication or notice that the funds would be provided to local government or nonprofits to administer; rather, the program would be similar in nature to how the Florida Department for Children and Families is operating their emergency rental assistance program found at www.ourflorida.com. Mr. Jackson informed members that information about the program and to sign-up for email emails regarding the program may be found at www.floridajobs.org/haf.

Additional comments

At the conclusion of Mr. Jackson's report, he asked members if they had any questions about what was presented or general questions about services and programs. Erin LeDuc asked if there were any updates regarding the Family Self-Sufficiency ("FSS") program. Mr. Jackson asked Jinni Marcellus, Family Self-Sufficiency Supervisor, to introduce herself. Ms. Marcellus provided a brief introduction and gave an overview of the program including eligibility and available services.

Mr. Migner asked how many households the program typically serves and why has the program been put on hold for so long. Mr. Jackson responded that the program usually takes about 10 to 15 households per year as they each deserve intense case management and receive a fair amount of financial assistance while enrolled. Mr. Jackson stated that the program has been on hold for an extended time as when the pandemic emerged staff were reassigned other duties focused on emergency services, such as alleviating evictions and utility disconnections. Mr. Jackson informed members while the pandemic continues not as many citizens need emergency assistance as funding and programs became available to alleviate such events; as to now the reasoning for restarting the FSS program.

Mr. Jackson continued that once the program is ready to start accepting referrals staff will reach out to previous and potential new referral partners to conduct a training regarding client eligibility and the referral process. Mr. Jackson stated as there are limited spots available to participate in the program the referrals are received on a rotational basis from partners whereas staff will contact the next partner on the list to inquire if they had someone they would like to refer. The program does not and will not accept self-referrals.

New business

Approval of Nov. 4, 2021, minutes

Chairperson Malia referred board members to the Nov. 4, 2021, 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 to approve of the Nov. 4, 2021, minutes as presented. Jeanne Rademacher made the motion and seconded by Peter Migner. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of the quarterly financial report

Dawna Parent-Phillips, Fiscal Resource Manager, presented the quarterly financial report. Ms. Parent-Phillips referred members to the financial report found in the board packet and reviewed all figures. Ms. Parent-Phillips explained the differences between regular CSBG funding and CSBG CARES funds pertaining to the expenditures and timeframe to have each of them fully expended. Ms. Parent-Phillips stated the budget report reflects good financial standing. Ms. Malia asked if there is any concern in running out of the CSBG CARES funds. Carmen Hall notified members that the CSBG CARES funds were additional dollars provided by DEO and once those funds are fully expended staff will then start to utilize regular CSBG funds. She reiterated that the CSBG CARES dollars must be expended first as those dollars must be expended by Sep. 30, 2022, whereas the regular CSBG dollars may be expended until Sep. 30, 2023.

Chairperson Malia called for a motion to approve of the quarterly financial report as presented. Erin LeDuc made a motion and Jeanne Rademacher seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of by-laws committee appointments

Mr. Jackson informed members that per by-laws, a committee of current members must be formed to review the Human Services Advisory Board's by-laws. Mr. Jackson notified members that the by-laws have not been revised since 2016 and he believes it is time for them to be reviewed. Mr. Jackson informed members that the committee needs to consist of at least three members; however, all members have the right to serve on the committee if they choose.

Mr. Jackson explained the process whereas committee members would meet to review the by-laws, provide recommendations for changes to the advisory board, if the advisory board approves, the proposed changes would be reviewed by the County's legal department, reviews and notes from the legal department would then be brought back to the advisory board for final approval. Once the advisory board has approved of the proposed changes by both the by-laws committee and legal, the proposed/updated by-laws would then be taken before County Council for approval.

Mr. Jackson stated that a quorum is not needed to conduct a committee meeting; however, committee meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law whereas the committee's meeting would be publicly announced and members from the public may join to provide input.

Members Ericka Sipp, Terri Malia, and Peter Migner volunteered to serve on the committee. Jeanne Rademacher stated to inform her when the committee would be meeting to see if she could be available as she is very busy over the next couple months.

Chairperson Malia called for a motion to accept the four aforementioned members to serve on the by-laws committee. Camille Vickers made a motion and Jeanne Rademacher 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. There were not persons attending the meeting virtually.

Next meeting

Chairperson Malia stated the next meeting will take place Apr. 14, 2022, at 3:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the United Way of Volusia and Flagler Counties.

Adjournment

Chairperson Malia called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jeanne Rademacher made the motion and Ericka Sipp seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting concluded at 4:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Recording Secretary

Date

Chairperson

Date