

**City of Fort Lauderdale  
Community Services Board  
SPECIAL MEETING  
April 21, 2014 – 4:00 P.M.  
City Commission Chambers – City Hall  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

<b><u>MEMBERS</u></b>	<b><u>PRESENT/ABSENT</u></b>
Wendy Gonsher, Chair	P
Helen Hinton, Vice Chair	P
Benjamin Bean	P
Ann Clark	P
Mark Fillers (arr. 4:26)	P
Wanda Francis	P
Andrew Jimenez	P
Jason King	A
Chris Lovell	P
Jasmin Shirley	A

**Staff Present**

Mario DeSantis, Liaison and Housing Administrator  
Jonathan Brown, Manager, Housing and Community Development  
Marcia Gair, Administrative Aide  
J. Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- **Quorum Requirement – As of April 3, 2014, there are 10 appointed members to the Board, which means 6 constitutes a quorum**

Chair Gonsher called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Roll was called and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

The Staff members present introduced themselves at this time.

**III. CDBG FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS / ALLOCATIONS**

Mr. Brown advised that the Board's recommendation regarding Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public service funding has been sent through the

City's chain of command. He recalled that the City Manager's Office has recommended reducing the \$143,027.05 in CDBG public service funds by \$50,000, which would leave the Board with \$93,027.05 to allocate; however, as stated at the April 14 meeting, the Board plans to recommend allocation of the entire amount. Chair Gonsher reminded the applicants that the City Commission will make the final decision on the amount of funds to be allocated.

The Board members reviewed the scores as listed on the spreadsheet, noting that it has been their policy in the past to award funding to the highest-ranked applicant in each category, assuming that applicant receives a minimum average score of 75. It was confirmed that Housing Foundation of America (HFA) did not receive this minimum score. Average scores were as follows:

- Jack & Jill Children's Center: 90
- Housing Foundation of America: 71
- Women in Distress: 92
- Broward Children's Center: 87
- Legal Aid of Broward County, Inc.: 82

It was noted that Board member Chris Lovell had not submitted scores for the agencies, as April 14 was his first meeting.

Ms. Clark requested that the Board reconsider the requirement of a minimum average score of 75. Mr. Brown clarified that this policy is at the Board's discretion. It was determined that no exception would be made.

The Board members discussed how they would like to adjust the funding amounts for each agency, as they could not provide each agency with its requested amount of \$50,000. Vice Chair Hinton also expressed concern with allocating the entire \$143,027.05, as the City Commission could reduce this amount by \$50,000. Chair Gonsher suggested that this be discussed at the Board's June meeting after the City Commission makes its decision in May.

Mr. Brown also noted that two applicants, Legal Aid and Broward Children's Center (BCC), were currently behind on their spending of the previous year's allocation. He pointed out that the City Manager's Office was likely to share Staff's concern over funding these agencies. Chair Gonsher suggested that instead of cutting each agency's funding across the Board, these agencies' spending should be taken into consideration and their funding possibly reduced.

Melissa McCulkin, Social Services Administrator for BCC, explained that their current City funding goes toward a preschool program, while the funds requested for 2014 would be used in the Respite and Recreation program. Faye Wright-Simpson, Director of Development for BCC, advised that the remainder of 2013-14 funds would be used toward both programs until they are exhausted.

Mr. Brown confirmed that he had spoken with BCC regarding the addition of the Respite and Recreation program, as both programs serve the same clientele of preschool students. He stated that Staff may approve expansion of an agency's services, as long as those services remain eligible for funding. The agencies expect to use their remaining funds by the end of the year.

Mr. Fillers arrived at 4:26 p.m. He confirmed that his scores for each agency were recorded correctly.

**Motion** made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. Bean, that the funds that they have available, assuming \$143,000 and change, be split equally among the remaining four (applicants).

Vice Chair Hinton advised that this **motion** would award \$35,756 to each agency.

Chair Gonsher stated that she was not comfortable awarding this amount to Legal Aid due to their spending shortfall for the previous year, particularly as they will continue to use funds toward the same program. The members discussed the possibility of prioritizing the funding categories based on their scoring rather than equally dividing the funds.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** failed 3-5 (Chair Gonsher, Vice Chair Hinton, Ms. Francis, Mr. Jimenez, and Mr. Lovell dissenting).

The members also discussed the allocation of percentage of funding to each agency, based upon their average scores. It was noted that some applicants receive private as well as public funding; in addition, some agencies may serve more clients than others. The lack of use and eventual redistribution of unused funds by the City Commission for other public purposes was also considered.

**Motion** made by Mr. Fillers that the Board make the allocation of the \$143,000 based on the percentage of total score achieved by the four organizations who are above the threshold, which [is] into the 25.2[%], 26.1% amounts that would be out there, and that would be held un-divvied up. [The **motion** died for lack of second.]

**Motion** made by Ms. Francis, seconded by Mr. Lovell, that the Board allocate \$45,000 each to Jack & Jill and Women in Distress, and allocate the remaining amount of \$53,000 and split that between Broward Children's [Center] and Legal Aid.

Ms. Francis pointed out that the City Commission may ask the Board to justify why they continued to allocate funds to agencies that have not spent their funds from previous years. Mr. Lovell added that Jack & Jill Children's Center and Women in Distress both had average scores above 90. Mr. Brown agreed that the City Commission was likely to request justification of the allocations for agencies that have not spent their current funds.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 5-3 (Mr. Bean, Mr. Fillers, and Mr. Jimenez dissenting).

All four organizations verbally confirmed that they could use the reduced allocations toward their respective programs.

#### **IV. CDBG PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Chair Gonsher recalled that the Board had determined they would await the City Commission's final approval of funding allocations before further discussing the agencies' performance indicators. She requested that each agency send a representative to a later Board meeting to discuss these indicators. Mr. Brown confirmed that the Board members would be sent copies of previous performance indicators by the agencies that have received funding in the past.

#### **V. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**Motion** made by Mr. Jimenez, seconded by Ms. Clark, that the Board use August as the month to take their break for their Board meetings. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

#### **VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chester Bishop, representing Housing Foundation of America (HFA), asked if the Board members had been aware that two agencies had unspent funds before submitting their scores on the agencies' April 14 presentations. Chair Gonsher confirmed this.

Patrice Paldino, representing Legal Aid of Broward County, Inc., thanked the Board for the opportunity to receive CDBG public service funds.

Marcia Barry-Smith, also representing HFA, reviewed some of the agency's recent outcomes, noting that more than 45 members from Fort Lauderdale have received counseling and purchased homes in recent years. She thanked the Board for their service and fairness. Mr. Fillers explained that he had found it difficult to distinguish between for-profit and nonprofit operations when reviewing HFA's application.

Heather Adams, representing Jack & Jill Children's Center, thanked the Board members for the difference that CDBG funds would make for families participating in their program.

#### **VII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

None.

**VIII. COMMUNICATIONS TO CITY COMMISSION**

None.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]