

**City of Fort Lauderdale
Community Services Board
June 9, 2014 – 4:00 P.M.
City Commission Chambers – City Hall
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**

		October 2013-September 2014	
MEMBERS		PRESENT	ABSENT
Wendy Gonsher, Chair	P	7	2
Helen Hinton, Vice Chair	A	7	2
Benjamin Bean (dep. 6:00)	P	6	3
George Bishopric	A	0	1
Ann Clark	A	6	3
Mark Fillers	P	7	2
Wanda Francis	P	8	1
Andrew Jimenez	P	5	2
Jason King	P	8	1
Chris Lovell	P	3	0
Fred Roccanti	P	1	0
Jasmin Shirley	P	8	1

Staff Present

Mario DeSantis, Liaison and Housing Administrator
Marcia Gair, Administrative Aide
J. Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

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

- **Quorum Requirement – As of this meeting, there are 12 appointed members to the Board, which means 7 constitutes a quorum**

Chair Gonsher called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance and roll was called.

II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

New member Fred Roccanti introduced himself at this time. Mr. Roccanti is a longtime Fort Lauderdale resident and was appointed by Commissioner Romney Rogers.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MAY 12, 2014

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. Lovell, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Gonsher reported that at the June 3, 2014 City Commission meeting, which she and Ms. Francis had attended, they learned that Legal Aid Services of Broward County, Inc. had withdrawn its application for funds. In addition, the City Manager withdrew his request for \$50,000 for the Parks and Recreation Department, as the request had not gone through the allocation process. The result of these withdrawals was an overage of approximately \$75,000.

Chair Gonsher continued that the City Commission was hesitant to fund the Broward Children's Center (BCC) for their proposed project, as this organization had not spent the current year's funds in a timely manner. The Commissioners instead chose to fund another organization, which had requested \$50,000 when its federal allocation was eliminated. They asked that this organization be reviewed to ensure that it met Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) criteria and could receive funding through this program. Mr. DeSantis clarified that at Mr. Brown's request, any CDBG issues raised during the Public Comment portion of today's meeting would be brought back to him for further review.

Chair Gonsher concluded that she had advised the City Commission that the CDBG process should be reviewed before its next cycle, as there has been a 39% reduction in federal funds to the City and a 59% reduction in the funds allocated to community agencies.

IV. HOPWA

- **Final Recommendations**

Mr. DeSantis explained that the main objective of today's meeting was for the Board to allocate funds for fiscal year (FY) 2014-15 to the Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) program. He advised that a bill has been submitted that would cut HOPWA funding by another \$40 million for the coming fiscal year. Agencies have been informed that for this reason, HOPWA should not be used as their primary or only source of funds.

He concluded that the Board must make its HOPWA recommendations at tonight's meeting, discussing each agency, reviewing their expenditures, and determining whether or not their requests are appropriate.

- **Agency Discussion**

The Board reviewed the expenditures and request from SunServe, which is expected to spend roughly \$195,000 in FY 2013-14, including funds transferred from a previous allocation to Minority Development and Empowerment, Inc. (MDEI). SunServe is on

target to meet or exceed its contractual goals with the City, and has requested no reduction in its funds for FY 2014-15. Mr. DeSantis explained that although a shortfall of approximately \$1 million in HOPWA funding is anticipated, this amount may be extracted from previously unused funds if that is the Board's recommendation.

The Board moved on to Shadowood II, which provides facility-based housing and has spent most of their funding during the previous two fiscal years. They have experienced some issues with project-based housing expenditures because they have not been able to provide all the housing units they planned to fund. Based on this information, the agency has requested a \$10,000 reduction in 2014-15.

Mr. DeSantis advised that Mount Olive Development Corporation (MODCO) is requesting \$615,000 for FY 2014-15, although they are projected to spend approximately \$475,000 to \$480,000. Sharon Bryant, representing MODCO, explained that the agency incurred some expenses in the current fiscal year that were not allocated in the budget.

Mr. DeSantis clarified that the only outstanding eligible expense that MODCO may bill for is transportation, which he estimated at roughly \$200/month. He concluded that he could not explain the agency's present shortfall in its expenditures. Ms. Bryant advised that this occurred when the agency released 11 housing units because they could not pass quality assurance inspections. MODCO has been serving the 35 clients they are contractually obligated to serve.

Mr. DeSantis advised that Legal Aid Services of Broward County, Inc. provides services to clients facing eviction and other issues that affect the stability of housing. The agency's original funding award was \$258,000; however, based on submissions from September 2013 to the present, they are expected to spend \$180,000 during the current fiscal year.

Patrice Paldino, representing Legal Aid, recalled that Legal Aid had lost a full year of funding due to contract issues in FY 2012-13. They have reached the maximum amount for administrative billing, and an increase in health insurance and related expenses is anticipated in the FY 2014-15 budget. Their grant also allows the agency to subcontract family issues to a sister agency, as there has been less need for these services than originally expected.

Mr. DeSantis moved on to Care Resources, noting that their expenditures have increased due to the reallocation of funds from MDEI. The agency is on target to spend most of its funding for the current fiscal year and is requesting \$191,709.31. Francisco Gomez, representing Care Resource, advised that the agency has three case managers and 375 clients. Half the agency's clients file Short Term Rent, Mortgage, and Utilities (STRMU) or Permanent Housing Placement (PHP) applications; the remainder of staff time is spent helping clients find and maintain housing.

The Board discussed Broward Regional Health Planning Council (BRHPC), which oversees three programs. Because there has been a slight reduction in PHP and STRMU expenditures, the agency is expected to reduce its budget for these two programs; however, Mr. DeSantis pointed out that one reason the figures from FY 2012-13 are so low is the agency only received grant funds for six months.

Mr. DeSantis advised that Broward House has expended all their funds for facility-based housing over the past two years, and is expected to do so again this year. They have requested reductions in their project-based housing program and also plan to reduce the tenant-based voucher program by \$91,000 due to internal cost-saving measures. It was clarified that Broward House operates differently from BRHPC because they deal with more families and therefore have higher subsidies.

Chair Gonsher recalled that the Board originally voted to award \$2.8 million to Broward House, but had ultimately voted to divide these funds equally between Broward House and BRHPC if the two agencies could provide the same services through the voucher program. Mr. DeSantis stated that he did not know if dividing these services between two agencies had cost services to clients, but expected to have this information for the Board before the next HOPWA RFP cycle begins.

Chair Gonsher asserted that she did not agree with the practice of keeping unused funds in a subsidy for this program, as there is no guarantee that these unused vouchers would continue. Mr. DeSantis pointed out that once a client is in this program, s/he cannot be removed from it unless there is a rule violation; therefore if there is a funding cut the next year, the program is still required to honor those clients' vouchers, even if they do not have sufficient funds to do so.

Mr. King expressed concern with the review process, pointing out that the Board does not have insight into how the requested increases are calculated or feedback from clients. Chair Gonsher advised that the Board relies on Staff input to inform them of any issues with the agencies' ability to meet the terms of their contracts. Mr. DeSantis added that as the process is improved over time, the Board and Staff can discuss how to ensure the Board makes informed decisions.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Ms. Francis, to use prior year funds to address issues that may be found in this funding process. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Lovell, seconded by Mr. Bean, that the Board funds SunServe in the amount of \$195,296. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. King, that the Board funds Shadowood at \$919,631.

The Board discussed whether or not it was appropriate to increase the agency's budget in order to allow them to find additional facilities. It was noted that 10% of all units will be inspected by the City as part of the monitoring process. Mr. DeSantis explained that HOPWA inspections use a higher standard than other programs, as HOPWA clients have health issues that could be affected by conditions in the units. It was also clarified that the units rejected by the inspection process have still not been brought up to this standard, and are not being used by HOPWA clients. Shadowood plans to secure four additional units by July 2014 for HOPWA use.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. Bean, that MODCO be restored to the \$481,000 of the [FY] 2013-14 year, not to the \$615,000 that is requested. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Ms. Francis, that the Board fund Care Resource at \$191,710.

The Board briefly discussed their recommendation, made at an earlier meeting, to provide Care Resource with additional funds so they may add more case managers. It was clarified that while case managers work with housing issues, they may also place housing clients in contact with other agencies that can address additional needs.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers for additional funding for Care Resource for the sum of \$50,000 for case management to address [a] backlog of clients. The **motion** died for lack of second.

Motion made by Mr. Bean, seconded by Mr. Lovell, to fund [Broward Regional Health Planning Council] at \$2,542,138. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Lovell, seconded by Mr. Bean, to fund Broward House in the amount of \$3,256,202.

Mr. Fillers expressed concern that the agency's tenant-based voucher program expenses should be more closely aligned with those of BRHPC. Mr. DeSantis reiterated that Broward House's subsidies are different because while both agencies provide the same services to the same number of clients, Broward House serves more families, which affects the subsidy payment by client.. It was confirmed that no funds would be used toward additional staffing.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed 8-1 (Mr. Fillers dissenting).

Motion made by Mr. Roccanti, seconded by Ms. Francis, that the Board fund Legal Aid in the amount of \$200,000.

It was noted that additional funding was intended to help Legal Aid to address the needs of families, for which services are currently being provided by their sister agency.

In a voice vote, the **motion** failed 1-8 (Chair Gonsher, Mr. Bean, Mr. Fillers, Ms. Francis, Mr. Jimenez, Mr. King, Mr. Lovell, and Ms. Shirley dissenting).

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. King, for Legal Aid to be [funded] at \$210,000. Mr. Fillers and Mr. King then **amended** their **motion** and **second** as follows: **motion** to fund [Legal Aid] at the \$220,000 as requested. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Bean left the meeting at 6 p.m.

Mr. DeSantis addressed the request for the Susan B. Anthony Recovery Center, stating that the agency has submitted all outstanding invoices from the previous year and is continuing to build their budget for the continuing year. Based on their average \$7500 per invoice, Mr. DeSantis estimated that the agency will need be \$90,000 for the next fiscal year, but noted that the Center has not confirmed his calculation.

Gene Dalbert, representing the Susan B. Anthony Recovery Center, explained that the previous year, the agency was funded for two residential units, and requests funding for the same number of units in the next fiscal year. It was noted that costs were originally calculated when the agency was not at full capacity; now that they are at total capacity, it is estimated that the Center will carry \$72,000 over into the FY 2013-14 year, and would need another \$10,000 in new funds to cover their expenses for this year.

Mr. DeSantis explained that when an agency has not expended its funds, they are typically not allowed to carry these funds over into the next fiscal year; however, in the case of the Center, they were not provided with new funds and were allowed to use all their older funds until they ran out. Because all funds are for the Center's facility-based housing program, the Center is asking to carry its unspent funds from the current year over into FY 2014-15, with an additional \$10,000 award so they can meet expenses.

The Board, Staff, and agency representatives discussed the Center's billing issues further. Chair Gonsher pointed out that in the past, the City Commission has de-funded agencies that did not spend their funding allocations during the appropriate year; in addition, there have been other problems facing the Center that made her less inclined to provide them with the requested funding. Mr. Dalbert asserted that there were billing issues on both the agency and the City side, and that the agency is now being penalized for having kept its costs low.

Mr. Fillers requested clarification of the expenses for which the Center requested funding, including whether or not these expenses were allowed under the scope of the HOPWA grant. Ms. Shirley advised that the Center's facility-based program provides the same services as other agencies, such as Broward House or BRHPC. Mr. DeSantis stated that any facility-based program may invoice for any HOPWA-eligible expense, including "wraparound" services; these programs do not receive a rent amount, as other programs do.

Mr. Fillers asked to know the total amount the agency expects to spend in the current fiscal year. Mr. Dalbert estimated that this will be \$20,000.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers that the Board fund Susan B. Anthony \$20,000 for the year [20]14-15, consistent with their spending the third year.

Mr. DeSantis explained that the agency was not providing invoices to the City when he first began working with HOPWA agencies; later, when the Center provided invoices, many of the documents included billing mistakes. He clarified that the agency was informed they could not bill for the current year until the mistakes made on earlier invoices were corrected. Mr. Lovell pointed out that the agency has worked through its billing issues with the City and have since spent funds on clients. Chair Gonsler noted that while the agency's request seemed to be for only \$10,000, they were also requesting the use of \$72,000 in carryover funds that would otherwise be returned to the City.

Mr. Fillers **withdrew** his **motion**.

Motion made by Mr. Lovell, seconded by Ms. Shirley, that the Board fund [the Susan B. Anthony Recovery Center] in the amount of \$72,000. In a roll call vote, the **motion** failed 4-4 (Chair Gonsler, Mr. Fillers, Mr. Jimenez, and Mr. Roccanti dissenting).

Mr. DeSantis advised that the agency's proposed carryover funds were not included in the \$2.68 million total of unspent funds. Nor were the carryover funds from Legal Aid, as both these agencies were funded on two-year contracts. He expressed confidence that the Center would expend the full \$82,000 they are requesting in 2014-15.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Mr. Roccanti, that the Board fund Susan B. Anthony for \$20,000 for the year 2014-15. In a voice vote, the **motion** failed 0-8 (unanimous dissent).

Motion made by Mr. Jimenez, seconded by Ms. Shirley, for \$82,000 funding to Susan B. Anthony. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 5-3 (Chair Gonsler, Mr. Fillers, and Mr. Roccanti dissenting).

Mr. DeSantis explained that the Housing Authority was originally budgeted for \$120,000, although historically the agency did not spend this amount in a year. Based on the fact

that their units were not at full capacity, he estimated their needs at \$84,000 to fund eight units and one house during the upcoming year.

Tam English, representing the Housing Authority, clarified that the eight units were given to the agency through a City RFP in 2005. The properties required approximately \$250,000 in renovations, which were funded with HOPWA dollars. He stated that the agency did not receive guidance from City Staff regarding how clients were selected to occupy its units. It was confirmed that the units and house are now expected to be filled by July.

Mr. DeSantis added that the Housing Authority is required to submit a plan for the delivery of supportive services, as they had been cited during the monitoring process for the failure to produce these services. He asserted that he hoped to move forward on this process so clients can receive the services they need. It has not yet been determined if the costs of supportive services are built into the project-based housing program.

Mr. Lovell noted that the Housing Authority's website does not specifically mention that the agency provides housing for persons with HIV/AIDS. Mr. English replied that while he was not aware that there was no mention of HOPWA, there had been conversations with the City to determine whether or not the Housing Authority would continue to provide HOPWA units or return them to the City. He assured the Board that the agency's participation in HOPWA would include referrals to the correct sources so individuals may apply to their programs. The units are committed to be operated as HOPWA units for an additional eight years, or the City must return a percentage of their cost.

Mr. English continued that at an earlier time, the City and not the Housing Authority provided supportive services for clients. In the future, the agency is willing to provide these services under a single contract with the City.

Mr. DeSantis advised that the \$84,000 estimate did not include costs associated with supportive services, but included subsidies and maintenance. Mr. English stated that the Housing Authority will pay for supportive services from the program income. The agency has budgeted approximately \$12,000 for the eight units.

Motion made by Mr. Fillers, seconded by Ms. Francis, that the Board fund the Housing Authority of the City of Fort Lauderdale for \$84,000. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. DeSantis concluded that the Board's recommended funding allocations total \$7,971,977, of which approximately \$884,819.39 will be carried forward from the previously unused \$2.68 million to cover shortages.

V. GOOD OF THE ORDER

None.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marjorie Evans, representing Broward Children's Center, reported that while the City Commission had discussed the funding for this agency at a recent City Commission Conference Agenda meeting, they did not vote upon it. Ms. Evans provided documentation of the agency's expenses, stating that Broward Children's Center has spent \$19,163.64 of the \$32,219.17 provided them. They expect to serve 17 clients by June 30, 2014. She concluded that the agency is on target with its expenditures.

Denise Rusnak, also representing Broward Children's Center, requested greater flexibility when funding percentages are determined for the CDBG program. Chair Gonsler explained that the funding percentages are part of the grant and are established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

VII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

It was confirmed that the Board would not meet in August.

Mr. DeSantis noted that performance indicators for four CDBG agencies will be brought before the Board at their next meeting. He added that he would like to hold a "HOPWA 101" session with the Board to more clearly explain the program to the Board members and answer any questions they might raise. There will also be further discussion of what to do with the unspent funds that were not allocated at today's meeting, as well as analysis of the agencies to determine the best way to streamline costs.

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 7:00 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.]