



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

APPROVED
City of Fort Lauderdale
Community Services Board
November 15, 2018 – 4:00 P.M.
City Commission Chambers, City Hall
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

October 2018-September 2019

MEMBERS		PRESENT	ABSENT
Wanda Francis, Chair	P	2	0
Jasmin Shirley, Vice Chair (4:06)	P	2	0
Jonathan Bennett	P	1	0
Laurel Bolderson	P	2	0
Thais De La Cuba	P	0	1
April Kirk	A	1	1
Richard Morris	A	0	2
Marisol Simon	P	1	0
Noah Szugajew	P	2	0

Staff Present

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager
Simone Flores, CDBG Grants Administrator
Christopher Leonard, HOPWA Housing Inspector
Jamie Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communication to the City Commission

None.

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

- **Quorum Requirement – As of November 12, 2018, there are 9 appointed members to the Board, which means 5 constitutes a quorum**

Chair Francis called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and all present recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present at the meeting.

II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

New Board members Jonathan Bennett and Marisol Simon were introduced at this time.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 13, 2018 Minutes

Motion made by Ms. Bolderson, seconded by Mr. Szugajew, to approve the Agenda and minutes from [the] August 13 Board meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

IV. CDBG UPDATES

- **2018-2019 Contracts**

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Administrator Simone Flores reported that the 2018-2019 CDBG contracts are currently awaiting execution.

- **Using leftover CDBG funds for Homeless Priority**

Ms. Flores advised that the idea of a homeless priority initiative was sent to Staff by the outgoing City Manager. The City is reconciling all prior fiscal years to determine if any CDBG funds remain. Thus far it appears that roughly \$100,000 is left over. The City Manager has requested that the Community Services Board (CSB) partner with the United Way on a new homeless initiative that would provide rooms in a renovated hotel as transitional housing for homeless individuals.

Although the 2018-19 CDBG award cycle has already passed, the United Way has been sent a CDBG application in recognition of the need to address homelessness. Once the agency has determined what their project would involve, this application will be brought back to the Board for review.

Vice Chair Shirley arrived at 4:06 p.m.

Chair Francis requested additional information on the proposed project. Ms. Flores confirmed that both United Way and the City are looking at the property for this proposed use. United Way's application will provide information on the supportive services clients would receive through this project. Ms. Flores emphasized that the intent is to provide transitional rather than permanent housing.

The hotel is located in unincorporated Broward County. It would not be purchased from its current owner, and the City would rent the transitional space. United Way is expected to make a full presentation to the Board possibly as early as January 2019. The project will use a combination of funding sources, including CDBG.

- **Priorities for CDBG Public Services in preparation for the five-year Consolidated Plan**

Ms. Williams explained that 2019 will be a unique year, as Staff must begin the planning process for the five-year Consolidated Plan. This plan determines how the City communicates to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and uses entitlement funding within its jurisdiction. A community meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2019 to solicit feedback that will inform the Consolidated Plan and its strategies.

V. HOPWA UPDATES

- **Changes in the spending requirements for HOPWA**
- **HOPWA Contracts**

Ms. Williams stated that Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) contracts have been executed, although spending may not begin until January 2019. The City has not received any funding for this program thus far. Agencies have begun to incur their costs in expectation of future reimbursement.

Ms. Williams provided a handout for the members including information about this year's HOPWA performance, including the City's budget and expenditures through September 30, 2018.

- **Changes to the current HOPWA housing model in preparation for the new five-year Consolidated Plan**

Ms. Williams advised that she had invited representatives from HOPWA agencies to today's meeting so they may make suggestions in advance of the January 2019 meeting.

Leonard Jones, representing the Ryan White Part A Program, recommended that the Board engage with other community partners as well as HOPWA providers so they can offer input and ensure the model is working for clients. He emphasized the importance of housing as a key aspect of health care for individuals with HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Williams advised that at present, the City is spending almost all of its HOPWA budget, with an additional unmet need of 560 clients on a waiting list for the tenant-based rental voucher (TBRV) program. Because vouchers are expensive and use a significant portion of funding, the City hopes to identify a better way to maximize its resources and serve more clients.

The January 2019 meeting will provide another opportunity to discuss other housing models and seek to identify a more efficient way to serve clients. Ms. Williams recalled that at a previous meeting, there was discussion of a new housing model that proposed four clients live together in leased homes with private landlords. Case management staff will be on-site to prepare the residents for employment and eventual transition from the program into independence. The success of this model may determine whether or not the Board chooses to fund similar programs in the future.

Ms. Williams continued that HUD is also moving away from stand-alone HOPWA facilities, due in part to federal regulations ensuring privacy. Mixed housing allows the City to partner with private developers or community-based organizations in a similar

manner to partnerships in affordable housing. She cautioned that the county's HOPWA allocation is likely to shrink further in the future.

Another component that brings in revenue is the necessity that HOPWA clients must pay 30% of their household's income toward rent. With the use of vouchers, landlords receive not only this payment, but a subsidy. In the newer model, the 30% will come back into the HOPWA program to help it self-sustain. Vice Chair Shirley suggested that some agencies may want to partner on a collaborative model of their own as fewer funds become available.

Francisco Gomez, Housing Case Manager for Care Resource, expressed concern with the new model, asking if private landlords will understand the population moving into their property, as well as how long clients may live there. He also asked how case management will establish criteria for participation in the new model, and concluded that HOPWA providers will want more information before they are asked to switch to the new plan.

Vice Chair Shirley suggested that providers reach out to the entities participating in the new program for more information. Ms. Williams confirmed that Mount Olive Development Corporation (MODCO), which is testing the new housing model, developed the model themselves and has trained their housing case managers on how to best work within it. They will come back before the Board and provide a presentation on its success at a later date.

Tiffany Ariegas, Director of Case Management for SunServe, reported a new initiative by SunServe called Educate, Employ, and Empower, which reaches out to all members of a household who are able to work. The initiative began in October 2018 and is working, with four clients participating to date. She felt this was another option to help maximize HOPWA dollars and empower households through self-sufficiency.

Alisha Hurwood, Housing Supervisor for Legal Aid of Broward County, advised that the process for helping clients with legal services related to housing has been streamlined. More permanent housing placement (PHP) clients are coming in for lease review, and clients receiving short-term mortgage, rental, and utility (STRMU) assistance are coming in for case management and housing support. Legal Aid works closely with SunServe, Care Resource, and Broward Regional Health Planning Council to provide these services.

Michele Rosiere, representing Broward Regional Health Planning Council (BRHPC), explained that barriers have been identified for some clients in the TBRV program, which prompted the organization to determine if there are other opportunities for local policies to address these issues. Of BRHPC's TBRV 93 clients, 67 are disabled and may earn no more than \$10,000 to \$14,000 per year; however, there is no policy that requires individuals to work if they can. This is something the agency is considering as an option. Another issue is that some clients only accept jobs for very short periods of

time and then leave, as not all clients understand that the program seeks to help them reach self-sufficiency.

Ms. Williams noted that HUD regulations do not require a HOPWA client to work, but they do state that a client should pay 30% of his/her household income. It would not be farfetched for the City to implement policies requiring that TBRV clients must have an ongoing source of income in their households; however, HUD does require due process for the termination of a client from the program. She confirmed that this does happen multiple times with certain clients, who do not understand that the program is intended to be temporary.

Ms. Rosiere explained that her intent was to create awareness of this situation. Ms. Williams advised that it may be necessary to enact policies to address the issue, which may be difficult, as stable housing is important for positive health outcomes. The Board may make recommendations on policies which would be drafted by City Staff.

Vice Chair Shirley spoke in favor of agencies having clients discuss topics related to this issue, as each individual's circumstances may affect their situation and the policy may help or hurt them. She cautioned against the perception that a majority of clients are trying to use the system improperly.

Ms. Rosiere added that HUD has regional technical assistance centers that may be able to examine programs and determine best practices. Agencies or the City could request an overview of the program to develop the best model to address concerns.

Chair Francis asked if there is follow-up with clients to determine why they no longer have a job. Rhode Rosume-Rock, also representing BRHPC, replied that most clients cannot provide a reason. She also pointed out that because Florida is an at-will employment state, most employers do not inform the agency why an individual no longer has a job. She reiterated Vice Chair Shirley's point that leaving a job immediately after certification was not indicative of most clients' behavior.

Ms. Williams addressed the waiting list, stating that in the past, Staff and HUD discussed the need to stop adding vouchers. With the modernization of HOPWA, the City was scheduled to lose 5% to 10% of the support they now receive over a five-year period. This would mean adding more people to the voucher program was unsustainable unless other programs were eliminated. The current discussion focuses on how to help individuals who are still on the waiting list, particularly as funding will continue to decrease.

Another concern is that the waiting list does not prioritize potential clients who may have the greatest need. Ms. Williams advised that if the Board chooses, it is possible to change from a waiting list model to a need-based model, using the self-sufficiency matrix and vulnerability index used during intake to assess clients.

Sharon Bryant, representing MODCO, clarified that when a person receives disability, s/he is able to work as many hours as possible for the first nine months; however, after that time, s/he may not work over an allotted number of hours or it will result in reduction of disability payments. Individuals receiving disability may earn up to \$1010/month.

Chair Francis encouraged the agency representatives to attend the January 14, 2019 public meeting with additional ideas and/or policies the Board may wish to consider. Vice Chair Shirley requested that Staff look into creative crisis or transitional housing solutions underway in other cities.

VI. GOOD OF THE ORDER

None.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

VIII. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Ms. Williams advised that she would email the current HOPWA Administrative Guide to the Board members.

It was decided by unanimous consensus that no Board meeting would be held in December 2018. Ms. Williams reminded the members that the January 2019 meeting may be lengthy, as it will review multiple funding programs.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS TO CITY COMMISSION

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

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