

Social Service Human Relations Board
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, Thursday, March 23, 2006

1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER: President Bonta called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. Present: President Bonta, Members Dome, Hollinger-Jackson, Franz and Hanna. Absent: Member Chen and Vice President Wasko. Staff: Beaver. Member Franz recused himself due to his affiliation with one of the recommended subgrantees, and stepped off the dais.
2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the February 23, 2006 meeting were carried over to the April meeting.
- 3A. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS RE: CDBG PUBLIC SERVICE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS Beaver noted that this item is referred to the Board annually by the City Council and that recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council in conjunction with a hearing on April 18. Terri Wright, CD Programs Manager, now administrator of CDBG funding in Base Reuse and Community Development Division (BRCDD) was introduced.

Wright stated that twelve proposals were received and reviewed by BRCDD staff using criteria provided in the packet. The ; proposals were evaluated for timeliness, completeness and accuracy. A total of 120 points were possible; the ratings ranged from 80 to 109 points. There is approximately \$249,000 available. Nine proposals are being recommended for funding. Eight of the nine are current subgrantees. Two agencies currently receiving CDBG didn't submit proposals this year, so there is a slight increase to remaining subgrantees in the coming year.

Wright noted the funding recommendations are available on line and in DSD office. City council will hold a hearing on April 18, including the Board's recommendations. Once approved, grant agreements and scopes of work will be prepared and agencies will be able to start using the funds July 1, 2006. A two-year funding cycle is being implemented. Funding in the second year is subject to the City's grant from HUD and each subgrantee's satisfactory performance in 2006-07.

Wright stated there is a great deal of uncertainty related to CDBG in coming years. There was a ten percent drop this year, but a comparable level of public service funding was maintained because of additional program income. The President's budget proposal is bleak and could result in a 30% cut. Although Congress has been successful holding off major cuts, significant reductions may be necessary in the future.

In response to Hollinger-Jackson's question, Wright responded that while there is high demand, public services are capped at 15% by HUD so more cannot be allocated to these activities.

In response to Bonta's question. re: likelihood of more program income, Wright explained that the forecast is based on the monthly loan portfolio receipts and anticipated payoffs only. There may be additional payoffs, but they have to base the budget only on what is known.

In response to Bonta's question; Wright responded that the two organizations s currently receiving funds that didn't apply for 2006-07 are AUSD's WOW Afterschool Program and ARPD's RAP Afterschool Program.

In response to Hanna's question whether agencies receiving substantially less than requested are going to be able to deliver services, Wright replied that the recommended funding is consistent with services

provided in past and that additional money would have funded additional FVLC staff to work in APD and that other resources will be sought for this position.

Bonta noted that the Food Bank requested more money and that they had received a allocation to purchase a modular unit earlier this year.

Bonta noted that 3 organizations were not recommended for funding and that their scores are lower. In response to his question, Wright stated that the main reason is lack of funding and that existing contracts covering services are already in place and would have to be de-funded. ACAP has other resources to operate their program; the Goodwill program has a high price tag, they too have other resources and the City already funds other homeless services.

Wright further stated that although not recommended for funding, BAIRS gets an “honorable mention.” The concept is good, but there are confluence of issues affecting the city, such as federal requirements re: handling of translation and services to limited English speaking populations. BAIRS received a lower score on capacity to deliver the services. They think BAIRS is good candidate for technical assistance to see if we can get the Director certified to provide the services.

Jim Franz, Red Cross Bay Area, thanked the Board for supporting reprogrammed funds earlier in the year and noted that so far only \$2,500 has been disbursed because of mild weather, but recently there has been a spike in calls. He hopes the Board will approve the recommendations of staff that support safety net services, not just the ARC but the Food Bank as well. He noted a plan to increase ASC meetings from 3 to 5 per year to bring agencies and providers together, knowing there will be tighter times in the future, and collecting referral sheets from each agency and working with the libraries to get that information out in the west end.

Cheri Allison, Family Violence Law Center Executive Director asked the Board to approve the recommendations of staff. FVLC has provided services in Alameda for at least 6 years, including domestic violence (DV) counseling, accompanying women and children to court and helping with restraining orders. They have been trying to get a DV advocate stationed in APD. The number of people they're able to help goes up astronomically. When they can they send a staff attorney to court on DV day (Friday) to assist the court in counseling people who don't have representation. Recently they entered into an operational agreement with Building Futures with Women and Children to conduct DV restraining order clinics at APC. They have an Active Board of Directors and are working on a five-year strategic plan, including sustainability strategies. A recent fundraiser netted \$51,000.

In response to Hollinger-Jackson's questions, Allison responded that they connect with women needing FVLC services through trainings, referral cards given to victims by the police and other referring agencies, and through another program in Oakland, not funded by Alameda, that assists APD in placing victims after hours.

In response to Bonta's question, Allison stated that they attend the Alameda court and that they have 6 staff attorneys, 2 of whom are Spanish speaking and also volunteer attorneys who mostly work on long-term and/or complicated cases. They go through a DV training course and are screened by Alameda County Women's Bar Association.

Shar Escobar, East Bay Community Mediation, stated they train people to become community peacemakers by giving them basic communication skills, and problem solving and dispute resolution

techniques. Two years ago Berkeley and Oakland programs merged. Between the two agencies, 30,000 have been trained. This proposal will build capacity in City of Alameda through volunteer training. Not a legal organization, they don't provide legal advice, but create a positive environment to get people talking and working together. He urged support of the staff recommendations.

In response to Dome's question, Escobar stated there is outreach and recruitment to targeted communities; it is a stepping stone for people who want to be mediators professionally. They've had a big influx of people who want to be mediators so have to be selective. They work with City agencies, police department, council members, planning and other managers and some court referrals. They try to get people into mediation before they get to court.

In response to Bonta's questions, Escobar stated the top 3 issues are family concerns (e.g. retooling custody, elder care, parent/teen disputes); landlord/tenant concerns (but they refer to legal resources if eviction involved) and small business and workplace disputes. They have a sliding scale fee, but no one is turned away. Landlord/Tenant fees are \$40 for each side (if they can) and business/commercial is \$80 session. The process starts with listening, counseling, coaching for a specific situation of one caller. If both parties are willing, set up convenient time to meet with team of mediators who find out issues, facilitate discussion and empower them to resolve their own conflicts.

In response to Hollinger-Jackson's questions, Escobar noted there is a huge need for translators, mostly Spanish speaking and that they are recruiting low-income/under-employed Alamedans to train and practice on the job, transfer skills into their own lives.

In response to Hanna's question, Escobar stated their offices are at Preservation Park in Oakland and they are looking for places in Alameda where they can conduct mediations.

In response to Dome's question, Wright stated that the performance goals in the chart are from the first two quarters of FY 2005-06. Programs that have met more than 100% of goals already are ones that sign all their members up at the beginning of the grant period.

Hanna commented that the process looks like a lot of work and the distribution appears to be fair. Hollinger-Jackson stated it is very clear, consistent with our recommendations re: needs. Bonta asked about "approved for funding" in non-public service categories and Wright explained that Technical Assistance helps the agencies that provide services to the community and it has been broadened to serve a number of agencies. She noted that the East Bay Mediation program is seen as a one-time/one-year investment to build a cadre of volunteers in the community. Money may not be available next year. She noted that even though one-time funding, will they be able to do it because people they train will stay in their volunteer base.

Bonta noted that the first 3 SSHRB priorities are clearly being met but the fourth is somewhat usual and is there anything that speaks to this priority. Wright noted that the chart in packet shows focus areas covered by each proposal.

Bonta stated that the report to the Council should recognize the fact that we were able to accommodate the requests that were made. Hollinger-Jackson stated there should be a comment re: support for the one-time funding for EBCMS and that there should something said about the focus areas. Bonta will review and sign the letter but can't be at the meeting on the 18th. Hollinger-Jackson will attend on behalf of the Board.

M/S (Hollinger-Jackson/Hanna) to send a report to the Council supporting the staff recommendations was approved 4/0.

3.B. RECOMMENDATION TO CO-SPONSOR THE ALAMEDA SERVICES

COLLABORATIVE APRIL MEETING Staff explained this luncheon event organized by the Red Cross and typically co-sponsored by the SSHRB. The April meeting will be on the topic of mental illness and in conjunction with the Youth Collaborative's monthly meeting. M/S to co-sponsor the April ASC Meeting (DH/RB) was approved 4/0.

3.C. WORK GROUP PROGRESS REPORTS

Alamedans Together Against Hate: Hanna reported that the Work Group met last week and is meeting again next week to continue working on its mission and work program. Hollinger-Jackson said the No Room for Hate stickers handed out at the Lunar New Year Festival got a great response and it would be good to get pins or flags that would be more lasting. Staff will look into costs. Hanna reported he is working with Jim Franz and the Fourth of July Parade Committee on the trolley.

Assessment and Awareness Work Group: Bonta reported they are still working on the Needs Assessment and that after the next meeting they will be ready to circulate a draft for Board review.

Family Services Work Group: Reporting for Wasko, staff stated the Work Group met last week and primarily discussed the Festival of Families coming up on May 13. There are good early sign-ups from CBOs; Jody Moore of the Commission for Disability Issues spoke at the last meeting about her idea for a socialization group for special needs children and their families.

Sister City Work Group: Reporting for Chen, staff stated they are still waiting for a date from the Mayor to schedule the trip to Wuxi.

4. BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Bonta announced he will attend a hearing on quality preschool and childcare to be held next week.

Staff reminded that work group accomplishments and work programs are due April 17 to prepare a report for the joint session with Council.

Dennis announced he is resigning from the Board due to time constraints and feeling that there are many people who will be able to carry out the Board's mission. He plans to stay on until the end of May, 2006.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS None.

6. ADJOURNMENT President Bonta adjourned the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Beaver, Secretary