

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM BOARD MEETING

Tuesday - February 17, 2009

MINUTES

Members Present

Dr. Yvette Coursey, Chair
Vince Goodman, Vice Chair
Angelina Fowler
Jerry Kelly
Tombalena Guyton
Phylis Clark
Mildred Edwards
Teresa Johnson
Yvette Jakes
Asleen Stepherson
Easie LaRose
Kathie Beeson
Shane Weaver
Evelyn Palencia
Roland Williams
Pam Williams
Ann Simpson

Members Absent

Robert Walker
Autrie Moore-Williams
Lynda Charles
Anax Pompilus
Lillie Pettigrew

Staff:

June Lucas
Roland Williams
Claudia Tuck
Linda Evans
Sheila Thomas
Gayle Love
James Scott
Myrna Silvas
Joyce Frank
Kathryn McNealy
Mary Allen
Cynthia Hatton
Deneen Schexnider

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Dr. Yvette Coursey, followed by a period of introductions of those present. A quorum was present at this time. ***A motion was made by Vince Goodman to amend the agenda to include Old Business, motion***

second by Jerry Kelly and unanimously carried.

Dr. Coursey introduced and welcomed Shane Weaver an Attorney with Legal Aid Society of PBC representing the Business/Social Service sector and seated as the replacement for Tequisha Myles, who resigned in December.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES /OLD BUSINESS

Prior to the approval of the minutes, Mr. Goodman commented to the board that every set of minutes approved by this board is a legal document, "that we understood what we read and we agreed with the minutes that we approve." Dr. Coursey also added that the minutes are also an accurate portrayal of what took place.

Mr. Goodman also commented that at the last meeting, we tabled an item in regards to the Dialysis person. He would like to bring that item back under Old Business, so that we can make a motion to approve or disapprove to keep the position of the Dialysis Driver. The reason why he wanted to bring that up, is that a lot of things in the December 16th minutes he does not agree with. "For example, at the Board's last meeting, we agreed on the LIHEAP grant, but the grant that we voted for was not the grant that was approved by the County Commissioners." When Mr. Rich informed the Board that the County Commissioners had approved the grant, that was not the approved grant by this board, we approved ten permanent positions that was in the original grant, which was later revised to only include two temporary positions in the grant. I want to know who revised the Grant after the Board's approval?"

Dr. Coursey said that we have two different issues here. When we approved the minutes, we are approving that whatever is in the minutes is what actually took place. Mr. Rich did actually say that, so we cannot change that, but what we can do is look into what happened to what the Board approved that was altered. But what the Board of County Commissioners approved was reflected in the minutes of December 16th.

Mr. Williams was asked if he could shed some light on this discussion as to what happens after the Board votes on something here and getting to the County Commissioners. Mr. Williams indicated that once something is voted on by this Board, then it goes to Mr. Rich. It would be his assumption that Mr. Rich would get back to the Board if any changes are made; however, in this particular situation, he does not know exactly what happened, as he was not very close to the process at all. "My first appearing on this committee was at the December 16th meeting when I made a presentation to the board, so I cannot give a real definite answer on this issue."

Claudia Tuck commented that she was not here nor involved in any of these discussions, but from her reading of the minutes, she said that it appears while the Advisory Council was making recommendations on the LIHEAP grant, in between then came out the percentages that we were going to have to look at in the budget deficit and the board of County Commissioners couldn't authorize hiring more people when other people would potentially be layed off.

Jerry Kelly commented that he thinks the issue here is, does the State require this board to approved the revised application? That is separate from the minutes

themselves, as Dr. Coursey was saying.

The minutes of the December 16, 2008 Board Meeting were reviewed, there were no changes or corrections to those minutes, ***There was a motion on the floor to approve the December 16, 2008 CAP board minutes as presented, moved by Teresa Johnson, second by Easie LaRose, one nay from Vince Goodman, motion carries.***

Before going on to staff reports, Dr. Coursey wanted to take a brief moment to make the Board aware that Maureen Perrault was no longer the Executive Director of the Community Action Program.

STAFF REPORTS - DR. ROLAND WILLIAMS

Dr. Williams indicated that he has a power point presentation to show the Board shortly. However, he would like to inform the board that he has been asked to become the interim Coordinator for the Community Action Program. Previous to becoming the Interim Coordinator, I had a very different role, and that particular role was to find a way to bring more people into working with the LIHEAP Program. We decided to look at Human Services and Senior Services staff other than the ten new staff that were proposed to be into the new program. We had a summary of information that I presented to you, and I'm going to start with that summary tonight. I'm combining these two roles now, that is, I still have that role of bringing these two groups together and we are well on our way as you will see tonight. I've made some commitments to you that we were going to give updates and I have those updates tonight.

Since the last meeting in December, I did not anticipate being into this particular role. I'm playing a dual role right now, and hopefully the first role will be over very soon. I'm not sure how long the interim position will last but I plan to move forward with everything. I'm going to combine a couple of things. First of all, the State audit, to talk about what happened a week ago when Jim Zimmerman came down. There are some items that maybe a little bit of a challenge to some of you, some of you may perceive some things differently from what I'm about to present.

Dr. Roland, informed the Board that if they desire a copy of this presentation, he would gladly supply it, also as we go through this, please don't hesitate to ask any questions. Looking at the slide presentation, here is the summary of what I presented to you the last time we were together. I really want to go back and talk about one key item on this. When I was first asked to look at this program, Jon asked me to see whether or not that we could pull Community Services together for this project. He did not say, that this is the way its going to be. He said, I want you to report back to me, whether you feel this could work, so he kind of left that in my hand and what I saw right away along with the support that I received from Human Services and Division of Senior Services, I thought the program could work. I'm going to tell you throughout what I did to make this whole thing happen and I would solicit any questions that you may have.

Dr. Roland discussed the Summary of the Home Energy Assistance Initiative as presented on the slide presentation. This presentation included the following:

- Set a new standard for customer service

- LIHEAP Application training
- Serve more clients at more locations (from 8 to 14)
- Less wait time for services
- Enhanced monitoring, reporting & quality assurance
- Better quality in the overall program
- Customer/Community Awareness
- FPL - (Online Bill Review) Training

A copy of the brochure was handed out that included the added locations of Human Services and Division of Senior Services sites for LIHEAP services to be rendered.

Easie LaRose wanted further clarification as to whether or not the brochures are a done deal or was Mr. Williams just bringing this back to the committee for further review? Easie further went to explain “that it looks as though, from looking at the brochure that you have already combined these three agencies into one, can you elaborate?”

Dr. Roland said that if you may recall at our meeting on December 16th, he made a presentation to you in the direction that we were going, so that was all outlined, in fact, the summary that we just talked about was what we talked about at that meeting. I believe that the Board said that was a workable idea.

Easie indicated he was under the impression that these were suggestions, he does not remember the board taking a vote on any of this. “According to the name on the brochure, has LIHEAP been turned into a new department?” “If that is the case, there is no sense in having a Community Action Board.”

Mr. Goodman commented that the report was given at the last meeting and the Board did not respond either way, so silence gives consent.

Roland commented that we brought the full presentation of what the plan was to the Board and I remember very clearly that Mr. Goodman said that was a great idea. Madame Chair, you might have some input on this process, but it was my understanding that was the way that we were going to go by the questions asked of Mr. Van Arnam and from Mr. Rich.

Dr. Coursey commented that it was her understanding that it was presented as the way that we’re going and I think Easie is right, we didn’t actually vote on it.

Easie further commented that the By-laws does state that any major decision made requires a vote from the Board.

Pam Williams indicated that she thinks the confusion may be that we were under the impression that when the presentation was done, it was talking about cross training the two divisions on LIHEAP, and that’s where we were. Before Dr. Williams came on board, the big elephant that was in the room was where does the Community Action Program stand in relation to Human Services, that has always been a problem and we have not received a direct direction from that. However, the brochure indicates that everything has already been worked out.

Dr. Williams indicated that the brochure was part of his brain child. If you would notice,

everything that I have reported up until this point had to do with training.

Pam also commented that she also remembers one question that stood out really strong, between Community Action and Human Services, as for as the LIHEAP money, who was going to be charge of that, that was still left out, because we did not know exactly where that money was going to be pulled and someone made a statement that we where going to use the money for all three services.

Dr. Williams responded to the question commenting that as far as who controls the money, the Feds say that this grant comes through the Community Action Program and they control the grant. The board has the authority to say how Community Action operates, so there is no doubt about your role and who controls that, its very clear.

Claudia Tuck commented that this is a one time cash infusion that Jon and Roland were trying to work out a way to address. This goes away next March, the big dollar amount. The intent was to try and pull together as much staff to spread this throughout the community to reach as many individuals as possible throughout the county. We received notice today that its expected that the dollars may role back to the '08 level come March 31st. So this is an attempt to do a temporary role out of a program, it will still be coordinated though Community Action, it will be one pot of money, one computer system, and the training will be coordinated by the LIHEAP Supervisor.

Ann Simpson commented that she did leave the December meeting with the impression that Community Action was still in control and that it would be branched out to add the other programs to serve the community, that it would be part of a team effort. As in the past, we even felt that this board was sitting here as a rubber stamp process.

Dr. Coursey commented that she had that same understanding, but to take it a step further, we had that discussion earlier about the ten positions, it was my understanding that Roland was looking at another means, in lieu of the ten positions on how we can spend those supplemental funds without having to bring on permanent people. There was no vote, but her sense was the questions raised, board members felt that they had received an answer.

Easie commented that the only problem he has, is according to our By-laws page 7 says, any grant or any policies that is passed has to be voted on. His problem is more procedural than anything else. If no one says anything or does not object, does that mean we agree? In the future, if we can work out procedures to vote on various issues.

Mr. Goodman asked Claudia who determines or divides the money up between the divisions?

Claudia commented that there is no money being divided, its all one pot, everybody will get access to the same system and Roland will be responsible for monitoring it. Further clarification, Jon Van Arnam asked Roland and myself to work together and support each other.

Ann Simpson, reiterated again that this board does not want to be seen nor treated as a rubber stamp board. The Community Action Board needs to be treated as a volunteer

board that does not want to be rubber stamp and procedurally, I agree with Easie, we do need to vote.

Dr. Coursey, "I do agree with Easie and Ann, but for the sake of time, we are in the middle of Dr. Roland's presentation, perhaps we can let him finish his presentation and then we can come back to those issues."

Dr. Roland commented that he does not see this Board as being a rubber stamp. He perceives his role as the interim is to work for this Board, because it is your responsibility to set the direction of the program and that's by law. There are certain things that I will bring to you for your approval, but I will not ask you to just go along with what I say. As we transition into this, I think that you will see a very different approach to the way in which we have done things in the past. Dr. Williams preceded with his presentation.

Dr. Williams commented that during the audit, Jim Zimmerman pointed out some issues that we are going to be sited on:

- This board stated it would have 7 meetings in a year, we only had 4 (those without quorums were not counted)
- Our contracts are always late
- Client files are incomplete - Eligibility (we need more than one paycheck to determine eligibility)
- The Board must be actively involved, if its not reflected in the minutes, it didn't happen.
- Membership needs to be revamped - It has not been properly tracked as to how each board member got here. As to the A to Z process, we were not able to show that, June is working on that right now.
- He talked mainly about the poor sector, that it should show how the community was actively involved in the process of nominating a representative to this board.
- Minutes need to actively reflect board discussion.
- Not achieving CSBG National Goals
- Not effectively working with both grants, we have two grants, we were mixing the two and that should not be. I will be talking with the CAP staff at its next meeting about this in detail.

Right now, this is just a warning that this is coming, when the full report comes, it may not reflect a hundred percent of what we are saying here, but this is what he talked about in the exit interview.

Angelina Fowler asked how long would you surmise that all these errors have been made?

Dr. Williams, indicated that Jim did indicate that some items were not corrected since the last site visit 2 years ago. I am so glad that the monitoring had come in at this point, it will give us an opportunity and a road map on where we need to go.

In terms of the CSBG goals, Dr. Williams informed the board that we need the low

income people to become more self-sufficient and there are ten areas we can work with. He is convinced that staff is doing an excellent job in CSBG, but it is not recorded all of the time, and we're going to have to do a better job at recording this information. I'm convinced that jobs are at the top of the list, as well as food and housing. These are some top priorities we need to be focusing on today.

Dr. Williams commented that some of those items Mr. Zimmerman pointed out, we are already beginning to work on.

Dr. Williams briefly gave the board a history of his background.

- Served 24 plus years with IBM; his last 15 years was in Management Development, developing Managers, challenging them to be their best. Just prior to that, IBM asked him to serve a branch office in North Carolina. I had 85 people in my branch, I was responsible for ten counties.
- Another part of my responsibility was with NASA. I did strategic planning with NASA which has a 25 year strategic plan, we had to go outside of the box to get there.

Here is my challenge to you. How will this program look 1 year from now. I personally see an excellent organization with all the challenges, issues and concerns we talked about. I certainly appreciate you bringing them out to talk about those, lets get them on the table to deal with them, and then lets move forward like we know that we can. With no further questions, that will end my presentation.

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

Dr. Coursey thanked Dr. Williams for his presentation to the board. However, before we get into my report, there is some old business we need to do. We did not vote on the presentation given by Dr. Williams at the December 16th Board Meeting. A motion was made by Vince Goodman to approve the report given in December by Dr. Williams, second by Ann Simpson discussion: Easie LaRose commented on what does the approval mean, what exactly are we approving? In response to Easie's question, Teresa Johnson commented that the board is moving in the direction that was presented to us at the December meeting regarding the cross training; and utilizing the existing staff to increase the capacity to carry out the LIHEAP grant.

Easie commented that we need to be clear on what we are actually voting on.

Mr. Goodman rescinded his motion.

After discussion on how to word the motion, ***Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the concepts and ideas that was presented to the board at its meeting of December 16th as a course of action to be taken by the LIHEAP Program, second by Pam Williams, one nay by Vince Goodman, motion carries.***

Pam Williams commented that the reason why we are having such problem tonight is that at the December meeting we had a lot on the table, we tried to do everything at that

meeting and then we were off for 2 months. In the future, if we can't handle everything in one meeting, then we need to table those issues.

Phylis Clark wanted to know if a decision had been made in regards to James Scott's position? Dr. Coursey responded, not to her knowledge. Also, did the merger already happen or are they still working on that? Dr. Coursey commented that no, we are still working on that, which is something that Pam mentioned earlier in terms of trying to work together to resolve it. Jon Van Arnam promised me that he was pulling that off the table for right now and has given us an opportunity to work with him on that.

Mr. Goodman commented that he wanted to bring up under Old Business, an issue that was tabled at the last board meeting. However, he wants to bring that back to the board to address. It was the board's decision whether or not to keep the Dialysis Driver or to dismiss him.

Dr. Coursey asked Pam to clarify what was actually on the table. Pam stated that It was not the Dialysis Driver position that was on the table, it was the fact that the transportation of the dialysis patients and eliminating that particular position would save the county \$107,000. In lieu of that, that program could save two other people's job. We researched this thoroughly, and Palm Tran is already providing this same service, its like a duplication of service. She called and talked to every patient and each one of them was very pleased with the service and the driver. That was not the issue, it was the money. As a sub-committee, we only presented the information, we could not make any decision on it. Nothing has been done thus far since it was tabled at the last meeting.

Teresa commented by adding that was one of the core program's that CAP has been providing from day one and along the way, the county's Palm Tran Service also started to provide that same type of service. It would be hard to justify CAP continuing to provide a service that is being provided by Palm Tran to the same population and to the same locale.

Mr. Goodman commented that he understands all of that, however he would like to make a motion that we keep our dialysis bus, second by Phylis Clark, followed by more discussion. Pam Williams whole heartedly expressed her concern with keeping the program and also the fact that Jon assured her that the driver will be placed in another job and that the patients will be seen and taken care of through the transition.

Claudia Tuck also commented that dialysis transportation started because there was a need for it at that time, Community Action identified the need and carried it out. We need to look at it in the opposite way, Community Action succeeded at having a need met and now someone else has picked it up. Now we need to move on, what are the other needs that need to be addressed. That is what Jim Zimmerman talked about, Community Action needs to be a grass roots advocacy program that identifies the needs within the community, sets up the targets to accomplish it, and then move on. ***Dr. Coursey informed the board that the motion still stands, it is on the van and not the position. Several nays by the Board, the motion was to retain the bus and no one voted in favor of it.***

BOARD COMMENTS AND/OR CONCERNS

Dr. Coursey informed the board that she had the opportunity to meet with Jim Zimmerman when he was here and he is very concerned about the board and the board carrying out its role as a board. He thinks that we have to be actively involved, and there are several things he suggested we do, 1) We need to review our By-laws and we need to follow our By-laws. He was very concerned. One of the things I will be asking for is a committee of three people to work on the By-laws. The following people volunteered to be a part of that committee: Easie LaRose, Angelina Fowler, and Shane Weaver. Dr. Coursey asked that the committee be prepared to report back to the full board at its next meeting.

Jim also talked about training, I think it is important that we as a board receive training not only in government, but the rules and guidelines as it relates to Community Action. Although we don't have a board meeting scheduled for next month, I am asking that we meet the third Tuesday in March for board training. I will ask that Dr. Williams either do the training or have someone here to do the training. Dr. Williams agreed to do the training and will also have the County Attorney here to talk about the Sunshine Law.

Ann Simpson, wanted to see what information Dr. Williams could get on what other Community Action Programs are doing on a national level. Dr. Williams said he would get information on Broward and Dade County Community Action Programs.

Dr. Coursey continued, commenting that training for board members is now a requirement, it doesn't mean that every board member has to attend a training, but we do have to be represented. The State Association will be meeting here in March in Palm Beach Gardens. I don't have anymore information, however once more information is received, I would like some board members to attend.

We also talked about the Work Plan and we now have additional supplemental funds in CSBG. We have to review our Work Plan and it has to be submitted by March 30th. It has to go before the Board of County Commissioners by the 17th. We had talked earlier about the three priority areas: jobs, food and shelter, if there is an agreement on that, we can do a motion and I will need a committee of three to review and modify our Work Plan. We don't have to make any major changes, but let me suggest, that when we review our plan, lets make sure it durable because we're going to be monitored on it. So if we have to make some amendments and modifications, now is the time to be sure that what we say we're going to do is something we actually can do. Here again, one of the things Jim stressed was active involvement, we need to know what's in that Work Plan, we need to have input in developing that Work Plan. The three volunteers for the Work Plan committee was as follows: Pam Williams, Ann Simpson and Teresa Johnson.

Teresa Johnson suggested a strategic planning session to include those three major areas of need.

Motion on the floor that we focus the Work Plan on jobs, food and shelter, moved by Vince Goodman, second by Jerry Kelly and unanimously carried.

Dr. Williams wanted to talk about one more item. Jim talked about, in his monitoring, that there is a consultant group out in Iowa, of which he has contacted, that goes in, makes an assessment for an Organization and recommendations on how they can move forward to be an excellent organization. I have contacted that group, the state really whole heartedly says that is a good idea that we bring that group in. I'm suggesting that we bring that group in to look at our whole operation, to do an outside assessment and it would be kind of like Jim, but only from a consultant kind of view that would be looking for ways to determine which way we can go and come up with a work plan on how we can get there. We can probably do that with the supplemental funds we have available in CSBG, which amounts to approximately \$48,000.

Dr. Coursey commented that one of the things Jim pointed out to me was that as a board, we do have a lot of power; that we should really thoroughly know our community and we should be out of the box and looking at how we can change the face of poverty in Palm Beach County, I would hope that this firm would be able to give us some suggestions in terms of how we can do that.

Ann Simpson commented that on the face of poverty in Palm Beach County, the Children Services Council publishes a "State of the Child" which also includes family, also FAU did a study on poverty we can use those as a tool.

A motion was on the floor to bring in the Consultant from Iowa by Vince Goodman, a second by Jerry Kelly and unanimously carried.

Another motion on the floor for the Board to accept approximately \$48,000 in supplemental funds and to use some of those funds towards the consultant that would also be geared towards our Work Plan which is going to focus on jobs, food and shelter, moved by Jerry Kelly, second by Teresa Johnson and unanimously carried.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Board Secretary: