



COMMUNITY ACTION ADVISORY BOARD “REGULAR MEETING”

Belle Glade Library
725 NW 4th Street
Belle Glade, FL 33430
Date: August 15, 2023
Time: 5:30pm

Members Present

Cynthia Ridley
Carol Jones-Gilbert
Steve West (Z)
Mary R. Wilkerson
Diane Lewis
Lisa Vreeland
Michaela Key (Z)
Raynold Sam (Z)
Yves Saint Hillien (Z)

Members Absent/ Excused

Kevin Jones (E)
Guillermo Carrasco (E)
Sandra Wright (E)
Linda Williams (E)
Xzavious Wiley

Staff Present

Dr. James Green (Z)
Regina Bohlen
Natalie Diaz Rodriguez
Yrinea Del Bosque
Adriane Marcelle
Dr. Poulomy Chakraborty (Z)
Stessy Cocerez (Z)
Sabrina Cornish
Jocelyn Cameau (Z)
Tempie Nesbit (Z)
Zaida Gonzalez
Andrea Scott

Public

Steve Wilson
Corey Wilkerson
Jennifer Ford
Samantha Wallace
Alma Funderburk
Mary Evans

Seat Representation

Low Income Sector
Private Sector
Public Sector
Public Sector
Low Income Sector
Private Sector
Low Income Sector
Public Sector
Low Income Sector

Seat Representation

Public Sector
Public Sector
Private Sector
Private Sector
Low Income Sector

Organization/Title

Director, Community/ Human Services
Admin to Commissioner Sara Baxter
CAP Program Manager
CAP Program Coordinator
Grant Compliance Specialist I
Program Evaluator
Program Evaluator
Case Manager II
FRS Fiscal Reviewer
Community Outreach Specialist I
Community Outreach Specialist II
Employment Counselor

Organization/ Title

Mayor, City of Belle Glade
LETCO, Inc., CEO

I. CALL TO ORDER

- **Invocation-** A brief invocation was led by Mrs. Natalie Diaz Rodriguez.
- **Roll Call-**The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM. A quorum was present.
- **Introduction of Committee Members, Staff and Guests-** the Community Action Advisory Board meeting began with introduction of the attendees.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

- **Additions, Deletions and Substitutions.** There were no deletions or substitutions.
- Motion to adopt August 15, 2023 Meeting Agenda was made by Carol Jones-Gilbert. Motion was seconded by Diane Lewis. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. **The Meeting Agenda was adopted by quorum.**

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

- Motion to approve May 16, 2023 meeting minutes was made by Carol Jones-Gilbert. Motion was seconded by Lisa Vreeland. **May 2023 minutes were approved by quorum.**
- **LIHEAP Quarterly Financial Update:**
 - LIHEAP PY21 NFA# 40230 - Allocation = \$5,055,844. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$933,353.82 with \$729,139.19 in direct client assistance category ends 6/30/2023. HEA balance = \$303,668.35; CBC balance = \$240,353.01; HVAC balance + \$186,117.83; WRC balance = \$0.
 - LIHEAP PY22 NFA# 041247 – New Allocation = \$5,214,899. The balance until 6/30/2023 budget was reduced to final spending limit of \$68,608.57 with \$0.00 in direct client assistance category; Funding ends 09/01/2023.
 - LIHEAP ARP NFA# 40037- Allocation = \$4,273,460. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$0.00 with \$0.00 in direct client assistance category ends 3/31/2023. Budget was expended and closed.
 - LIHEAP ARP NFA# 042658- Allocation = \$4,697,292. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$4,697,292 with \$4,697,292 in direct client assistance category ends 6/30/2024. Budget began July 1, 2023- 6/30/2024.
- **CSBG Quarterly Financial Update:**
 - CSBG PY22 NFA# 041192- New Allocation = \$1,094,998. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$584,233.19 with \$490,555.24 in direct client assistance category ends 9/01/2023. Direct client assistance is being used for vocational training.
 - CSBG PY22 NFA# 042716- New Allocation = \$1,192,923. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$1,192,923 with \$1,192,923 in direct client assistance category ends 6/30/2024. Budget began July 1, 2023- 6/30/ 2024. Direct client assistance is being used for vocational training.

- **LIHWAP Quarterly Financial Update:**

- LIHWAP CAA PY22 NFA# 41304 – New Allocation = \$2,819,508. The balance until 6/30/23 was \$2,801.58 with \$2,248.42 in direct client assistance category; ends: 09/30/2023. Budget was reduced to final spending limit of \$167,226.15. Clients may receive up to \$1,000 per year to prevent disconnection of water services or reconnect services (drinking water and waste water).
- LIHWAP ARP NFA# 41274 – New Allocation = \$2,234,474. The balance until 6/30/2023 was \$515.53 with \$108.37 in direct client assistance category; ends: 09/30/2023. Budget was reduced to final spending limit of \$773,190.71. Clients may receive up to \$1,000 per year to prevent disconnection of water services or reconnect services (drinking water and waste water).
- Carol Jones-Gilbert asked, were the budgets reduced from approximately \$2,800,000 to \$167,000? Natalie answered yes.
- Carol Jones-Gilbert asked, what is the name of this new Department? Florida Department of Commerce.
- Mary Wilkerson asked, if there is money available to assist with relocations? Natalie replied ‘yes’. For rental assistance, there is a new prioritization process based on need and we will discuss later in the meeting.

Diane Lewis asked if she could bring a resident who benefitted from this program to the next board meeting to share her testimonial. Natalie answered, “yes you sure can”. Diane Lewis asked if the HVAC funds have been exhausted. Natalie answered, no they are not. By the way, the County has replaced over 200 AC units to date.

Mary Wilkerson asked how many of those were for residents of the Glades. Natalie answered, “I can’t say right now, but I can find out for you? However, I can let you know that over 80% of the applicants are seniors; the average age of the AC units are 16 years old; and the average cost of replacement per unit ranges between \$8,000- \$9,000”.

Carol Jones-Gilbert asked can we record the testimonials of residents regarding the services that have been provided. Natalie answered ‘yes’.

Carol Jones-Gilbert asked if portable window AC unit still qualify for participation in the program. Natalie, answered, ‘yes’.

Mary Wilkerson asked, “Does this include mobile homes?” Natalie answered, “yes this also includes mobile homes”.

- **LIHEAP Quarterly Programmatic Reports:**

- LIHEAP: Served 1509 clients
- LIHWAP: Served 348 clients
- HVAC: 49 replacements

- **CSBG Quarterly Programmatic Reports:**

Family Self- Sufficiency program- April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023:

- Total clients currently enrolled: 14
- Total started a training: 29
- Total completed a training: 14
- Total participants who became employed: 8

Mary Wilkerson commented that a lot of people want the CDL training, what can we do? Natalie responded that we are completing the new contract with the provider as we speak.

- **Committee Reports**
- Executive Committee- Board Seats Update:
 - Private Sector- Finance (Seat 8) is open. The CAAB Member formally holding this seat has retired from this sector.
 - Public Sector- Elected Official (Seat 2) will become vacant as of 9/30/2023. The County will reach out to public elected officials for nominations.
 - Public Sector- Elected Official (Seat 5) is eligible for one additional year. However the seat will expire as of 9/30/2023.
- Natalie expressed that nominations have not been provided in search of a replacement for this sector. Carol Jones-Gilbert suggested a nominee from Valley Bank and Sabrina Cornish suggested a nominee from PNC Bank.
- Motion was made to initiate contact with both nominees to secure a candidate for this seat by Carol Jones-Gilbert. Motion was seconded by Mary Wilkerson. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. **The process for securing the Banking/Finance Candidate (Seat 8) was adopted by quorum.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- **NFA Funding Availability Updates**
LIHWAP is closing. Therefore ERA funds will be the only funds available for this service. There will be a final cut-off date of 9/22/2023.
- **New Board Member Orientation 2023**
Save the Date 10/13/2023
Where: Vista Conference Center 2300 N. Jog Road West Palm Beach, FL 33405
Time 11:00am- 1:00pm
- **Annual Retreat 2023**
Save the Date: 12/15/2023
Where: Vista Conference Center 2300 N. Jog Road West Palm Beach, FL 33405
Time 11:00am- 1:00pm
- **Ethics Training**
An email with the link to the Ethics Training Video was sent out to each CAAB Member. Please view the ethics training video, print, sign, and scan back the acknowledgement form to Adriane if you have not already done so, and at your earliest convenience please.

Cynthia Ridley asked, are appointments being taken or online for water only? Natalie answered that everything is online. However, if a person needs hands on/in-person assistance, that person may call the call center or come into one of the participating library sites on rotation or a senior site in-person for assistance.

Cynthia Ridley asked for a copy of the participating library site. Natalie responded, yes absolutely.

○ **Call Center Application Process-**

Cap has limited ERA dollars available for services and may have a limited amount of ad valorem dollars due to budget cuts. Therefore Cap has to prioritize spending for the remaining budget using a screening/pre-screening process. A series of questions will be asked of each caller to determine assistance and at what level. A point system will be applied to determine how the dollars may be utilized. There is a point system in place that requires a minimum score of 19 or more to continue the application. If the person needs assistance with documents, an appointment will be made for a case manager to assist them. Pre-screening is now a mandatory prerequisite for certain services such as eviction assistance. The online system is open for relocation assistance and does not require pre-screening.

Carol Jones-Gilbert asked, what is the dollar limit available to each household? The dollar amount is \$25,000 or 18 months of rental assistance, whichever comes first.

Carol Jones-Gilbert asked may the client continue to get services until they reach \$25,000? Case Manager-Sabrina Cornish responded that there are other factors in consideration that may affect the client's ability to receive continued financial assistance, such as the time frame. The eligibility period began in 2020 with Covid-19 and many are near or have already exhausted the household limit. The limit may also be combined with the other amounts received from the state or other providers. The client must have a new crisis with each request for assistance. The client must also have followed up with referrals and other prerequisites recommended upon prior requests for assistance. Some of these factors may affect the actual limit each household is able to receive.

Cynthia Ridley asked, what is the normal timeframe to go through the process. Natalie answered that the timeframe varies based on the need, the ability to document the crisis, or landlord cooperation are common delays in completing the application process. It involves multiple processes including outside participation such as the landlord. The number of applications and the number of available staff may also affect the approval timeline.

Cynthia Ridley asked what is the purpose of the mobile van coming into the Delray Beach area? Natalie answered that there is a mobile outreach service deployed to different areas to provide technical assistance for potential and current clients. She stated she would look into this with the Department Director.

Mary Wilkerson asked, "Is losing income a crisis?" Natalie answered 'yes'.

Diane Lewis asked, if 19 is the score needed to continue services? Natalie answered 'yes'. A score of 19 or more the client may continue the application for assistance. A score of less than 19 will be referred to other agencies.

Mayor of Belle Glade asked:

- 1.) Is HVAC done by sub-contractors? Natalie answered, 'yes'.
- 2.) How do we know it's not a scam? Natalie answered, "the online application process is protected. There is a list of approved vendors sent directly to the client. There is an approval process assisted by the CAP staff and then the notice and permits happen. This process reduces the chances of scam."

- 3.) Can we have the demographics per city and per zip code for this program? Natalie answered, 'yes'.
- 4.) Can we market this program via the churches in the Glades? Natalie answered, 'yes'.
- 5.) What is the response time for this program? Natalie answered, the Call Center response time depends on the issue. Peak-time of the year can also affect the response time.

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – LETCO Inc. is sponsoring its first “3-on-3 Basketball Tournament.” The organization raises money to assist in leadership and development training and to issue scholarships to students in the Glades Tri-City area.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Submitted by: Natalie Diaz Rodriguez, Program Manager

Draft Submitted to Department Director, Date _____

By: Natalie Diaz Rodriguez

Approved by Advisory Board:

Date

Meeting Chair, Carol Jones-Gilbert