



*County of Santa Barbara*  
105 E. ANAPAMU, SANTA BARBARA

## HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

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ALLOCATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING –  
ACTION SUMMARY  
March 5, 2015

**Call to Order:** Committee Chair Debby Aceves opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

**Roll Call**            **Committee Members Present:** Commission Chair Lucille Ramirez, Committee Chair Debby Aceves, Commissioners Mickiewicz, Keator, Fairfield, Jensen  
**Non-Committee Members Present for part:** Commissioners Sepulveda  
**Staff Present:** Susan Foley

**Public Comment Period:** NA

**Past meeting notes:** Allocations Committee members reviewed and approved the minutes from their **January 29, 2015** Committee meeting. Commissioner Fairfield made a motion to accept the meeting notes. This was seconded by Commissioner Mickiewicz and passed.

Committee members also reviewed and approved the meeting minutes from the **February 4, 5, 6 2015** applicant interviews. Commissioner Keator made a motion to accept the minutes. This was seconded by Commissioner Mickiewicz. Commissioners directed staff to make a couple of revisions to the PowerPoint related to support documentation for their program recommendations. The minutes were approved with the understanding that staff would make the few revisions.

### **Debriefing of Applicant Interviews held February 4, 5, 6 2015**

**Overall comments:**

Overall the Committee members were pleased with the process and the outcome. Committee members were appreciative of efforts that staff made to ensure that all 116 applicants for the Human Services Commissions' General Fund Program were interviewed. The Committee members thanked staff for all of the helpful review tools and provided positive comments on having an electronic grants system although there were glitches.

Ms. Foley stated that she received a few concerns from applicants who were not recommended for funding. She informed concerned agencies that the Committee would provide an explanation of their recommendations after the March 5, 2015 debriefing. She did remind concerned applicants that the Board of Supervisors asked the Commission to fund fewer programs with higher amounts to achieve greater impact. There were 37 programs recommended for funding with 10 of these being mini grants. The 27 that were recommended for Basic Services and Best Practices funding represents a 42% reduction in the number of agencies funded and a 65% reduction in programs from the 78 funded during the last Human Services Commissions General Fund Cycle (2011-2014). The high level of competition is the primary reason that most were not funded.

Commission Chair Ramirez expressed the importance of documenting all Commission actions, specifically from HCD and CEO staff about the Committees recommendations. The Board of Supervisors has asked for this in past cycles to help them understand the process and recommendations before them. Chair Ramirez stated that review of Bylaws will assist in ensuring that staff roles and responsibilities for both the federal and general fund programs are met.

**Applicant interviews and related comments:**

Ms. Foley asked Commissioners for clarification on applicant interviews, specifically if they were expected to be mandatory. The committee stated that the interviews are not mandatory but the application workshops are. Going forward staff should send out interview schedules with a return receipt to be sure to capture those who don't respond, ahead of the interview date. Another suggestion was to provide a date in the NOFA guidelines for applicants to contact staff if they haven't heard when their interview is scheduled.

In the future only one application should be accepted per tier per agency. Due to limited funding it is not likely agencies will be funded for multiple programs and this will save them time to focus on their highest priorities. All Committee members expressed a desire to have more time for the interviews and in between the interviews and designated breaks. This would likely result in the Committee members having to meet a fourth day (unless removing multiple applications cuts down time).

**Applications:**

Committee members agreed that the applications need work for the next round of funding. Some questions resulted in duplicative answers. The budget section was especially confusing and agencies addressed it inconsistently. Some provided agency budgets and others provided program budgets. The number of new clients (vs. total clients) being served was also inconsistent.

**ZoomGrants and Proposal Review:**

In the future the three tiers (if they are utilized again) should be broken out into separate applications to avoid confusion. The ranking, scoring and percentage columns in ZoomGrants caused some confusion at the public meeting. Only the ranking column is necessary at the public meeting since once all factors were considered they were rolled into a ranking hierarchy. Commissioner Mickiewicz made reminded everyone that the ZoomGrants ranking was not the only factor weighing into the final recommendations. The review of each application, the interviews and Committee discussions all played a role in the recommendations.

Ms. Foley stated that in the future every Committee member should review and rank every application. There would be time built into the public process for Committee members to review their rankings after interviews and before they are made public. There was discussion about dividing up the work of the Committee or having alternates. The Committee members upheld the current process and did not take action to revise the Committee responsibilities.

**Comments regarding recommendations:**

There was some discussion initiated by Commissioner Mickiewicz about the importance of supporting long-standing HSC funded agencies with track records rather than supporting new organizations. Chair Ramirez noted that the agencies awarded mini-grants could evolve into more evidence-based organizations and may have greater capacity next cycle. This cycle of funding supported both new and formerly funded agencies.

Commissioners agreed that there wasn't as much collaboration and partnering as they had hoped to see. All Commissioners were impressed with the mini grant ideas and the Best Practices applications.

**Additional Funding:**

Staff informed the Committee that there was approximately \$40,000 additional to recommend due to double counting the 211 program in the preliminary budget. The Committee discussed several options including dividing up the funding among Basic Services grants that were recommended for funding. They decided there would be greater impact if they were to support the next highest ranked proposal. After some discussion, the Committee recommended funding the Court Appointed Foster Care (CASA) program for \$30,000 rather than their requested \$50,000, consistent with not fully funding any Basic Services grant. They recommended an additional \$1,605 for 2015 mileage due to the need for increased Commissioner site-visits. They recommended the remaining \$9,000 be divided up among seven of the ten mini grants that were not fully funded.

The Committee re-supported all recommendations made on Friday, February 6, 2015 during public deliberations (CDBG federal and HSC General Funds). Commissioners re-iterated that the CDBG recommendation included full funding of the Women's Economic Ventures (WEV) application for \$50,000 of non-public services CDBG funds.

Commissioner Keator made a motion to accept all of the recommendations. This was seconded by Commissioner Fairfield and passed.

**Final Recommendations Support:**

The Committee developed the comments below in support of their recommendations.

- ✦ The degree to which the proposed program addressed Human Services Priorities (seniors, children, access, non-English speaking services, freedom from abuse, low income)
- ✦ The degree to which the proposal demonstrated potential for significant, positive impact and showed how the lives of the target population would be improved as a result of the services
- ✦ The degree to which the proposed services addressed the County Poverty Study by serving a high need population or fulfilling an unmet need
- ✦ The degree to which the grant might assist an agency in advancing to a stronger best practices model
- ✦ Whether or not the proposal was the only program/service available serving a needy population or in a certain geographic area
- ✦ The strength of performance targets and proposed outcomes
- ✦ Agency capacity, past experience and demonstrated success in delivering the proposed service or similar services and achieving outcomes
- ✦ For Best Practices, which agencies had the strongest history of Evidence-Based Practices along with the above criteria
- ✦ For mini grants there was a greater focus on what would achieve the most impact with a one-time investment. Examples included improving agency staff capacity, expanding volunteers, purchasing software to support services, and strategic planning. Proposals that sought funding for something that would be ongoing in nature, such as adding a staff position or continuing to boost or run a current agency program were not considered.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. before the regularly scheduled Regular Commission meeting.