

HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF MESA
MESA CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
57 EAST 1ST STREET, LOWER LEVEL
JUNE 23, 2005
-MINUTES-

MEMBERS

Ms. Mary Bolig
Mr. Jon Burroughs
Mr. Robert Hisserich
Mr. LaShawn Jenkins (Unexcused)
Mr. Raymond Jones
Ms. Linda Starr

STAFF

Ms. Nichole Ayoola
Ms. Ruth Anne Norris
Ms. Lisa Wilson
Ms. Lisha García
Ms. Kathleen Kelly

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Raymond Jones welcomed those attending the final Housing & Human Services Advisory Board meeting of fiscal year 2004-2005.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

No citizen's comments.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 21, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of April 21, 2005 were not approved during the meeting because not all members received them.

MONTHLY HOUSING DIRECTORS/MANAGEMENT REPORT

Ruth Anne Norris, Mesa Housing Services Director, gave the April 2005 Housing Report. The lease up rate in Section 8 increased to 98 percent by the end of May. Escobedo's occupancy is steady at 99 percent of the units leased. The income from Escobedo has risen significantly this year. Revenues average \$26,000 monthly.

Mr. Robert Hisserich asked how the Housing Assistance Payment program works. Ms. Norris stated that this is the Section 8 Program and is also called the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The applicant waits for the waiting list to open. Once the list is open the applicant completes a pre-application, which includes basic information regarding household size, income, etc. The application is screened for eligibility. Once eligibility is established the applicant's name is placed on the waiting list. People who work in Mesa have preference over those who do not. When the applicant's name is drawn from the list information regarding income, citizenship, social security cards, birth certificates etc. are verified. A background check is completed through the Mesa Police Department and FBI. Once cleared from the background check and based on the household size, they will qualify for either a 1,2,3 or 4-bedroom voucher. The voucher pays for a portion of the rent and the rest is the applicant's responsibility. The housing is inspected by Mesa Housing Services before a contract is signed. The amount agreed upon for the rent has to be fair and reasonable. Housing Services sends the landlord a check each month for the rent. Each month Housing Services sends out 1490 payments for rent and HUD (The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) provides the administration fees to pay Housing Services staff.

Mr. Hisserich asked if there is any motivation for folks to move from this program. Ms. Norris stated that the Family Self-Sufficiency Program helps families establish goals to become self-sufficient. The program is voluntary and serves approximately 80 families.

Expenditures have increased for the Rehabilitation Program. Staff has been working very hard to complete projects during this fiscal year and the Community Development Block Grant funds cannot be carried over into the next year. There were 492 requests for rental assistance. Thirty-three families from the waiting list were housed, 48 new port-in families were absorbed into Mesa's program and 16 families were terminated for various reasons. Housing Assistance payments totaled \$821,114 and was paid to 670 private sector landlords for properties in Mesa.

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD DISCUSSION

The Housing and Human Services Advisory Board will now be known as the Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB). There was a resolution passed to establish a Housing Advisory Board. The duties of housing and human services issues would be split between the two boards. Ms. Norris added that the primary task of the Housing Advisory Board would be to implement the Housing Master Plan that was adopted in 2004. The Board has nine seats available and the Mayor will be reviewing all applications. Once enough of the seats are filled, the Housing Board would be able to hold the first meeting.

ABC DONATION CHART

Ms. Ayoola reviewed the ABC: A Better Community, donation chart with the Board. Donations are slightly up from last year. The Office of Human Services has begun a new marketing campaign. In partnership with the City of Tempe, the Office of Human Services has developed and placed posters inside of the transit buses that travel between the two cities to promote the program and raise awareness.

DISCUSSION OF COUNCIL APPROVED HUMAN SERVICES FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Ms. Ayoola informed the Board that the City Council approved their baseline recommendations. General fund, \$1,085,946; ABC: A Better Community donations, \$217,270; and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), \$151,914 making the total Human Services budget for 2005-2006 \$1,455,130.

Councilmember Claudia Walters asked that staff provide a clear understanding of what programs were being funded. Each program was examined for performance and its impact on police and fire services. Councilmember Walters recommended that only programs that have a direct impact on community safety should be funded. In her eyes, some programs did not fit the model and therefore should not be funded by the City. Five programs—Mesa Senior Services' Prescription Drug Program, Jewish Family and Children's Services' Geriatric In-Home Program, the Catholic Community Service's Hearing Loss, Hearing Health and Technology Program the MARC Center's Early Intervention Program and Advocates for the Disabled—were removed and staff was asked to work with the Mesa United Way (MUW) to reassign those programs for funding. Staff was also directed to review the existing funding guidelines and suggest some that would better fit the support of the Police force and emergency services.

In addition, staff was directed to apply those unused funds to PREHAB's Autumn House and La Mesita and MesaCAN's East Valley Men's Center. The total reassigned amount was \$84,300. Those five programs are now being considered for funding by the MUW. This does not

mean that they would get funded. Agencies must be invited to participate in the MUW application process.

The MUW will make a final decision on June 28, 2005. Those agencies that can't be funded would essentially receive an invitation to participate in next year's application process. Staff has made the City Council aware of the Human Services funding guidelines used when making recommendations. Council is also aware that the Board attends site visits in partnership with MUW during the funding process.

Ms. Ayoola informed the Board that they were commended by the City Council for the work that they have done this year. Ms. Ayoola also stated that Council has given the Board clearer understanding of their intentions for Human Services funding.

Mr. Burroughs added that Board members should contact their City Council representatives to give them feedback on the funding recommendations. The Council does not always get the input from citizen Board members.

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY DESIGNATION

A special study session was held to discuss the Community Action Agency Designation (CAA) and whether the City of Mesa would retain or relinquish the designation. After a lengthy discussion, Council decided unanimously to relinquish the designation. Ms. Ayoola stated that she is in the process of writing the resolution to relinquish the designation for the Council to review and vote on. There will be a process in which the CAA reverts back to the State of Arizona. A procurement process as designated by ADES will take place. The City of Mesa is required to give 12 months notice in a letter signed by the Mayor or the City Manager

Ms. Ayoola reported that the Federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding may be cut by as much as 50%.

FY 05/06 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

The Human Services Board meeting schedule was reviewed. The Board meets every month on the 4th Thursday excluding holidays with no meetings in July and August.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Maricopa Association of Governments has developed a Regional Human Services Plan. They will be hosting a series of community meetings in the East and West valley to gain feedback from the community. On July 11, 2005 there will be a meeting held at the Mesa Utilities Building located at 640 N. Mesa Dr. in Mesa from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. It would be an opportunity for the HSAB to view the plan. Ms. Ayoola offered to send a draft copy of the plan to the Board via email.

ADJOURN

Mr. Burroughs made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nichole V. Ayoola, Human Services Coordinator