

HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF MESA
CITY OF MESA UTILITES BUILDING
640 N. MESA DRIVE
July 24, 2002
SPECIAL SESSION
-MINUTES-

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Greg Holtz, Chairperson
Ms. Teresa Cotton
Ms. Susan Klecka
Ms. Elaine Nelson
Mr. Bob Hisserich

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mr. Len Locke: Excused
Mr. Ken Salas: Unexcused
Dr. Carlos Vallejo: Unexcused

STAFF

Ms. Debbra Determan
Ms. Nichole Wamble
Mr. Bryan Raines
Ms. Kathleen Kelly

WELCOME

Greg Holtz called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

None

REVIEW MINUTES OF May 23, 2002 MEETING

The minutes were approved unanimously with an additional amendment. The group agreed to consider the following allocation recommendations: ESL at \$30,000; Family Violence and Abuse Intervention at \$40,000; Homeless Intervention at \$30,000; Pharmaceuticals at \$45,000; Home Delivered Meals at \$15,000; Early Brain Development at \$15,000; and Student Leadership, Development, and Empowerment at \$15,000.

ABC RECOMMENDATIONS

The members were referred to the packets that were previously distributed. There were 19 requests from 17 agencies. Debbra Determan reviewed the staff recommendations. There were very few proposals turned in for individual and family violence. Each application was reviewed for program content, numbers of individuals that the program would be serving, and the costs of serving each client. Each proposal area was reviewed to see if it met the Boards intention when the plans were established last month.

The English as a Second Language proposal was received from Change Point. They proposed \$30,000 and staff is recommending \$15,000 to Change Point.

Under Homeless Intervention the two programs that had the best proposals were St. Vincent DePaul and Save The Family, both of which proposed \$30,000. Staff is recommending \$15,000 for each.

Home Delivered Meals; Mesa Senior Services proposed \$20,000 and staff thought that it was a good proposal and would meet the required needs. Staff continued the recommendation of \$20,000.

Several proposals were received for Underserved Student Leadership and Development. The two that have a lengthy and reputable tenure in the community are Mercy Housing Southwest and The Boy's and Girl's Club. Both proposed \$30,000 and staff recommended \$15,000 for each. This made the total for Underserved Student Leadership and Development \$30,000.

In the Individual and Family Violence program area, there was only one proposal but because of some issues going on within the community, staff would like to set aside that money. Possibly, to make it available to an agency that can take on responsibilities after transition occurs in the community.

Under Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Indigent Care, the Mesa Senior Services proposed to provide both, a development program and voucher service for pharmaceutical manufacturers. Staff is interested in funding \$35,000 to Mesa Senior Services to develop this program and \$10,000 for the Salvation Army to administer voucher services for those people who are waiting for no cost prescriptions through the Pharmaceutical Program.

The Early Brain Development area had a couple of proposals. Staff is recommending funding the Mesa YMCA for \$13,400. This program is a hands-on program and that's what the Board talked about at the last Board meeting. Staff felt it was important that we look at a hands-on program versus a marketing program and that's why staff made this recommendation.

The previously mentioned program dealing with Family Violence issues has been plagued with financial difficulties and therefore did not receive the allocated FY 01-02 ABC funds. The McCormack Foundation has made that \$10,000 available, which was added to the \$188,400. This brings the total recommended dollar amount of expenditures to \$198,400.

Everyone should be commended for such a quick turn around time in putting these proposals together. People put a lot of work into their proposals and this gives us a good idea about what we will see in upcoming allocation cycles. It looks as though there are quite a number of groups out there that are interested in providing service in the Underserved Student Leadership and Development area. Debra Determan stated that she was pleased there were so many good groups out there that could provide this service. Perhaps some of the agencies that weren't recommended for funding could come back in the next allocation cycle and provide a strong program that we can review.

Teresa Cotton made comments on her experiences with the Boy's and Girl's Club's Smart Girls program. She didn't believe that the money requested could be justified. In her experience, the City of Mesa Police Officer that is provided for the program was not present at every meeting.

"Furthermore, some of the staff that was in attendance was only 18 years old. There was one instance of an 18 year old leading a group of children, ranging in ages 10-17 in the discussion of sex. Basically, in my opinion it was a "Sexual Positions 101" class for my daughter who is 10 years old. She asked me things that I haven't even begun to be ready to discuss. It wasn't appropriate, and it wasn't well developed or thought out. When I told them of my concerns as a parent, I was basically told that I had to submit a request for the curriculum in writing and therefore, since I had signed a permission slip for them to discuss things in their group, I was out of luck. I didn't like their attitude, I didn't like the fact that curriculum is not opened up for the parents to look at and I got the impression that because the parents that use the services there don't have a lot of money that they get to decide for them what their children should be learning and not learning. They used a group approach without someone trained in group therapy. The children could effectively walk out with, not only their problems but, everyone else's also. This activity needs to be very carefully supervised and it needs to be done by an adult, not an 18 year old. If we are not going to fund Planned Parenthood, which has very good curriculum, I think, then we should not be funding something that's not well done at this point and time. I'm not saying they can't be involved or that all programs over there are bad because I do trust my children over there, I'm just saying that this particular program circumvents a parents choice about what should be taught to their children. The children were made to feel that they couldn't speak about anything discussed in the group. I have a real problem with them taking away my parental authority. I tried to discuss that with them and they said that part of their agenda is to lower instances of date rape, gang violence, and drug usage. When I look in their application at the statistics here that say they have pretest and posttest, I have concerns because I know that we should have control groups for this. You're basically giving the same test to the children twice. The second time around they know the answers. They're always going to score better. The jump on prescription drugs went from 25% to 92%. They're claiming 67% good results but they didn't allow for the fact of these kids want to please you and wanting to know the answers. I think that they're statistics are suspicious here and that this needs to be looked at much more deeply and that \$15,000 can't be justified for what they have in place right now. If they have said that they had a dedicated psychiatrist or something like that where they were paying for them to come and work with these children, then I would say yes but they don't."

Robert Hisserich started the discussion on Early Brain Development.

"Perhaps I don't understand this program. I'm struggling to find out how anyone in good conscience can have a program and have it measurable like that. We have programs for kids who can't afford to eat breakfast; we have those at school, where

they can get a balanced meal. I'm assuming this would aid in their brain development. They go to school which aids in their brain development, they have a lunch program which aids in their brain development but yet we have someone here wanting \$15,000 for Early Brain Development. I have a real problem with that. If I had to write that check from my own account and had tons of money, I couldn't do it."

Greg Holtz added that there were 3 agencies that submitted request for Early Brain Development. Greg Holtz then asked Robert Hisserich, about his position on the funding and Mr. Hisserich said his position is not to fund it at all.

Since Jim Gilpin had applied for this funding he was asked to comment on the nature of the Early Brain Development program.

"I think the other organizations that submitted proposal were hopefully doing the same things we were and that is, looking at the issue of early childhood education and the whole component of what makes up early childhood education. Early Brain Development is only part of it which is dealing with the very young even after conception before birth has taken place, about how a mother start to feel, sensitize themselves to a growing individual as they start from birth in those early years. All educational influences, they say is cognitive learning. Cognitive learning being understanding, emotion senses, language, communication, and behavior all starts at zero. It doesn't start when they are fourteen or fifteen years of age. All behavior, that is everything from communication, listening, observation, and response is starting in those early years. Today I think I heard the Attorney General talk about how many of the problems that teenagers face today actually start and take root in those early years. It depends on what kind of caring and nurturing takes place in those 2,3,4 years of age so our program that is being developed is following Dr. Perry's curriculum which is basically brain stimulation, it's cognitive development, developmental education which means you're using body development as your muscles, senses; eyes and ears and all that starts to take place. If you break any of those cycles it breaks your ability to learn when you get to school. It breaks your ability to concentrate; it breaks the natural progression to being able to learn shapes, colors, and sizes when children reach their preschool education. That's why the school district emphasizes more kindergarten education. Head start and early development prepares kids to learn and be a part of a learning environment when they reach the first grade. Hopefully this helps."

Greg Holtz told Robert Hisserich about presentations that were done on Early Brain Development before he became a member of the Board and expressed that this may leave him at a disadvantage. He also stated,

"There is a big emphasis on Early Brain Development now. I know that there is a whole new emphasis on the younger children as opposed to the preteen or older teens. We've had several presentations on this subject. Early Brain Development is probably coining a couple different things in the one term. Other corporations are starting to look at this too so I know it's a big thing."

Teresa Cotton added a few comments.

“Actually, that’s my area because of my work at Head Start. The reason that you want Early Brain Development is because you can give the children a safe environment that they don’t necessarily have at home, and the area that he is directly working in is one of the worst areas in the City of Mesa and the need for that particular support is that you increase the likelihood that the children will finish their high school education and go on to college, you decrease the likelihood that they will be involved in gang violence or drugs, you increase the likelihood that they will be active members of the community. Once you start working with the child, because there is usually a holistic approach to it, you’re also working with the family. You help to resolve family problems and stabilize the neighborhoods and communities in which these programs are located. It’s a very worthwhile thing and it’s part of our mission for preventative work with the board because the truth is, for the little bit of money that we put in for the early years we get much more “bang for our buck” in the long run as opposed to trying to stop crisis later on in life and that’s why it’s an appropriate category for this program.”

Michael Graham made a few comments.

“Is an on going program at the Mesa YMCA where the kids come on in and you serve 64 to 125 children, ages 18 months to kindergarten is an ongoing program?”

Jim Gilpin added that the YMCA is requesting funding for the brand new facility that is to open September 9th.

“We have an early childhood program today over at the Williams Campus at ASU, which is an early intervention program using Dr. Perry’s curriculum again. United Way helps fund this program. This is actually an expansion more than a creation of a new program. “

Michael Graham asked for clarification regarding the YMCA proposal. He wanted to know if the program is a new or existing program. Jim Gilpin explained that this is a new program beginning in September 2002.

Debra Determan told the Board that it is a proposed project that is scheduled to start in September. Other funding that the YMCA will be getting for this program will support it. Jim stated that the program is set up to serve 51% low income disadvantaged. He explained, “Because part of the funding was a CDBG grant to build the center now we’re hoping to help fund the center for the first year of operation. Specifically, the request is for program curriculum and supplies.”

Greg Holtz allowed additional comments about service areas and then reminded the Board that,

“They decided several meetings ago as a Board, that the item in this area English as a Second Language, Homeless Prevention, all of these seven areas, is where we saw the need and we went and solicited requests. It’s a little late now to change any of

these items. What I'd like to do is hear a motion to take these recommendations that are on this list here and make some exception to an item on the list but we can have a motion."

Mr. Holtz said he'd like to go ahead and see where we can approve the bulk with exceptions and then go back where there was an exception and see if there is another alternative.

Teresa Cotton made a motion to accept the recommendations with the exception of the Boy's and Girl's Club. Robert Hisserich seconded. Robert Hisserich made a comment that he would like to remove ESL from the RFP process. He stated,

"I don't ever expect a group of people to agree on everything and this is no exception."

Greg asked the group to vote and the motion failed with a 2 to 3 vote.

Michael Graham made a motion to accept the entire staff recommendation as is. Susan Klecka seconded the motion. Greg Holtz stated that he would also entertain an amendment. Mr. Graham was allowed the floor for discussion.

"I am 100% in favor of these recommendations, because as a Board member prior to all the new people, and Teresa, even though I wasn't here for July's meeting, we had discussed this in various forums and I am in total agreement. I take advice from Teresa, that she's had some problems along the way and there's no doubt about it, I accept that, Robert's new here on the Board, I appreciate that, I think that English as a Second Language is an excellent program. Especially with the ABC funds and where they come from, for the City of Mesa people giving back to them what they need. I don't see that as a problem personally. I think that's a great program for us to put in the \$15,000. I was a little confused on the Early Brain Development...I am in perfect agreement of what staff recommended. In closing, I don't think that you're going to have an over vote but I wonder if people are going to be against it but the essence is that we are going to have enough votes to pass this as we sit here."

Susan Klecka stated that she would like to see progress in eliminating possible problem areas, since Teresa has issues with the Boy's and Girl's Club. A vote was taken and the members voted 4 to 2 to accept Michael Graham's recommendation. Greg cautioned staff to follow up with the Boy's and Girl's Club.

Debbra Determan suggested that the Boy's and Girl's Club clarify exactly how this program is going to be supervised and the ages of the staff along with all of Teresa's concerns.

Debbra Determan stated that Teresa Cotton's comments were relevant and we wouldn't want to move forward with a proposal or a contract with any group that wasn't capable of meeting our expectations. If the Board finds that the group is not willing to meet those expectations then we'll have to bring this back to the Board so other recommendations can be made.

Susan Klecka stated,

“Because we are in some areas that we really haven’t gone before, we’re looking out into the community and I know about Robert’s concern with the ESL and with Brain Development. We as a Board have a right to full accounting as to results and exactly how this is helping and if these programs are effective. And when they come around again and we feel that they are not effective, then that’s it.”

Mr. Holtz stated,

“Maybe as time goes on and within this year, we might want to ask for special information. Follow up with additional information with any one particular agency and have staff come back with results.”

Debra Determan stated her appreciation of Ms. Cotton’s comments and how helpful they will be in how staff will proceed.

HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR FY 2002/2003

Debra Determan asked if anyone had a problem with the dates and times, reminding everyone that we did get the last Thursday of the month for our meeting day. The meetings will be posted on the Website so everyone will know when and where the meetings are taking place.

Greg Holtz pointed out that if a board member can’t make this Board meeting because of a conflict with another City Board meeting, it would not count as an excused absence for this meeting. “My feeling is if you are a Board member of the H&HSAB and if you find it more important to go to another city board meeting rather than the one you’re on at first, then that should not count as an excused absence for this meeting.”

STAFF REPORTS

Nichole Wamble had no Staff Report.

Debra Determan reported on a letter that Vice Mayor Kavanaugh sent to President George Bush. “I just wanted to make you aware that we have been getting LIHEAP leverage dollars on an annual basis and at this particular point those dollars have not been released. They have been appropriated but not released. So, folks within the Community Action Agency system have developed a position paper and I forwarded that to the Mayors office and we have through the City of Mesa sent out a letter to the President asking for the release of those dollars. It’s a very significant issue when the state of Arizona is in its high cooling season. We have a lot of families out there that are going to be in a difficult situation this summer and we are hoping, that with enough push from people, that we will be able to get that allocation leveraged out into the communities.”

She stated that Nichole has been working on developing the contracts for the new fiscal year, which begins July 1. Debra stated that she is working on the major contract that they have through the community action system with Mesa CAN who provides services through the East Valley Men’s Center, client services and neighborhood services.

Since there were no comments for the next Board meeting agenda, it was asked when the next Housing Roundtable meeting would be scheduled. The next Housing Roundtable meeting is September 24th at the Rendezvous Center.

Debra Determan thanked Diane Rutherford for her time and energy spent working on the ABC program and her assistance in developing recommendations for the McCormack Foundation.

A motion to adjourn was moved, seconded and approved @ 6:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Debra Determan, Human Services Coordinator