



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE 700 NW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33311  
 April 8, 2024 – 4:00 P.M.

**APPROVED**  
 Meeting Minutes  
 City of Fort Lauderdale  
 Community Services Board  
 Department of Sustainable Development

<b>MEMBERS</b>		<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Christi Rice, Chair	P	7	1
William J. Dunne, Vice Chair	P	5	2
Wismy Cius	P	4	0
Latrisha Greaves	P	7	1
Gary Hensley (dep. 6:55)	P	1	0
Sharon Hughes	P	5	3
Ronald Pierre	P	7	3

**Staff Present**

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager  
 Eveline Dsouza, Administrative Supervisor, Housing and Community Development  
 Karen Cruitt, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- **Quorum Requirement – As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, there are 7 appointed members to the Board, which means 4 constitutes a quorum**

Chair Rice called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 11, 2024**

**Motion** made by Mr. Hensley, seconded by Mr. Cius, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**IV. CDBG FY 24-25 GRANT APPLICATION PRESENTATION (3 minutes for presentation and 7 minutes for Q&A each agency, per program)**

Chair Rice noted that all presentations by applying agencies would be made via Zoom. She noted that the Board members have read the applications in advance.

### **1. Broward Partnership for the Homeless**

Nick Green, representing Broward Partnership for the Homeless, stated that the agency is the largest provider of homeless services in Broward County. Their request is for \$50,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which would cover the emergency food and shelter program at their Central Homeless Assistance Center, which is located in Fort Lauderdale and has 230 beds. They serve approximately 1000 individuals annually.

The requested CDBG funding would be broken up into three parts:

- \$28,000 for food services: this is one of the agency's core programs
- \$12,000 for supplies and shelter: most individuals at the Central Homeless Assistance Center have no income for basic personal supplies
- \$10,000 for transportation: this includes bus passes and van service to take clients to and from appointments

The funds would provide a solid core of the agency's services to their clients, which include behavioral health assistance, job placement, and housing navigation. They provide 133 permanent supportive housing units throughout Broward County, and recently opened a 72-unit housing development in Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification of how the \$10,000 limit for transportation was determined. Mr. Green replied that this includes the cost of bus passes, which may be daily, weekly, or monthly, depending upon where the individual is within the program. He estimated that at least 50% of clients need bus passes.

Ms. Greaves asked if the \$10,000 amount is based on the specific costs associated with the bus passes. Mr. Green advised that he is a grant writer for the agency and did not know the itemized cost of bus passes; this aspect is overseen by program staff. He added that this is the amount allocated consistently to bus passes over the last five years.

Ms. Rice noted that the amount of a bus pass may vary depending upon whether it is a daily, weekly, or monthly pass. Ms. Greaves explained that she had wished to know whether the agency is purchasing a certain amount of each type of pass, as each type comes with a different cost. The passes may also have different costs from one year to the next.

Ms. Rice asked if \$10,000 was the agency's entire budget for bus passes. Mr. Green clarified that this is only the amount associated with today's CDBG request. He added that clients are not immediately given longer-range bus passes, but are provided with

them as they work toward the goal of leaving homelessness. They must also prove that the passes are used toward appointments, interviews, and other needs.

Ms. Greaves also noted that the agency's application refers to a cost of \$11.66 per meal, and states that clients are provided with three nutritious meals daily. She requested an example of what one day's meals might be. Mr. Green replied that the agency provides nutritiously balanced meals which take dietary restrictions into consideration. A typical meal would include protein and vegetables. Lunches are packed for clients who are working so they do not have to spend earned money toward meals.

Ms. Greaves asked if the meals are prepared by a chef or pre-packaged. Mr. Green stated that the agency contracts with a culinary institute.

Vice Chair Dunne commented that while he felt the application was strong, some of the performance indicators may be in need of adjustment so the agency can directly quantify the impacts of the funding provided.

## **2. Jack & Jill Children's Center**

Gregory Musser, representing Jack & Jill Children's Center, stated that the agency's request is for \$50,000 for eight to 12 scholarships for the Promising Futures Empowerment Program. Jack & Jill Children's Center provides high-quality early and elementary education which focuses on enabling children to grow emotionally and physically in a safe and nurturing environment.

Funding the Promising Futures program supports families by providing the child care and benefits necessary for a high-quality education. Parents are able to attend school, remain employed, or pursue advanced careers. Allowing children to attend educational programs also bolsters the agency's Support Program, which is a health program that provides full access to a nurse who works with children and families on-site. There is also a telemedicine program which assists on school property and can reach families in their homes as well.

Families are also strengthened through case management and emergency assistance. When children are on campus, they are provided with two hot meals each day as well as snacks. The CDBG funds would allow children not only to attend early and elementary school, but also provides them with health programming services, financial assistance, and financial coaching.

The requested funds would fund eight to 12 scholarships in the Promising Futures Program, which would encompass not only the scholarship for education but a health program, family program, and support services.

Ms. Greaves asked what dollar amount the scholarship recipients would receive. Susan Stanley, also representing Jack & Jill Children's Center, explained that the amount is calculated using a sliding scale: it is based on household income and how many individuals live in that household, as well as the age of the child and the program in which they are enrolled.

### **3. South Florida Institute on Aging**

Suze Vedrine, representing South Florida Institute on Aging (SoFIA), explained that the agency requests \$50,000 in CDBG funds to provide a monthly stipend and mileage reimbursement to their Senior Companion Program volunteers, as well as to a portion of staff which oversees that program and a portion of the CEO's salary.

Volunteers are committed to aiding elderly and disabled adults in maintaining their independence through the Senior Companion Program as well as Rapid Response Services. Rapid Response Services apply to individuals facing severe limitations, such as limited mobility and cognitive challenges, who cannot access virtual assistance. The program's efforts have empowered over 500 individuals to continue living independently at home through regular volunteer visits and active engagement.

Volunteers receive a \$4/hour tax-deductible monthly stipend plus mileage reimbursement based on the distance from their homes to the clients they are serving. Volunteers' hours may vary from five to 30 or 40 hours per week. They undergo training, attend bi-monthly in-service meetings, orientation sessions, and on-site programs which equip them with the essential skills to assist clients and caregivers. Daily activities include coping strategies and sensitivity training.

Volunteers are provided with information on community resources covering areas such as dementia, health services, housing, mental health, nutrition, and security. Volunteers complete a respite education and support program, which prepares them to offer respite support to caregivers of individuals with disabilities and various health care needs. Volunteers are also stationed at adult day care centers and offer on-site training to assist clients who may have dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and disabilities.

Mr. Hensley requested clarification of SoFIA's physical address. Cresha Reid, president and CEO of the organization, stated that the address is a post office box in Fort Lauderdale, as they do not have a physical building.

Mr. Hensley also noted that the resume of an individual named in the application stopped at the year 2005. Ms. Reid confirmed that the individual is still with the agency.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification of whether a senior companion would be working or volunteering each week. Ms. Reid replied that these individuals volunteer their time and receive a \$4/hour stipend. This amount was calculated because the Senior Companion Program is part of AmeriCorps Seniors, which establishes the stipend.

Vice Chair Dunne requested clarification of the amount of the CEO's salary that would be paid using CDBG funds. Ms. Reid estimated this was less than 5%.

#### **4. Women in Distress of Broward County**

Susan Evans, representing Women in Distress of Broward County, stated that the agency provides assistance to victims and families experiencing domestic violence in Broward County. They are the only state-certified domestic violence center serving this county, and provide temporary emergency shelter, advocacy, and other crisis intervention services to empower victims and families to heal from the trauma of domestic abuse and begin new lives free of violence.

The agency's request is for \$50,000, which would subsidize the cost of providing emergency shelter and support services to Fort Lauderdale residents who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is the leading cause of homelessness among women and children globally. The \$50,000 requested represents 2% of the \$2.2 million annual cost of operating the emergency shelter. The requested amount will pay for salaries and benefits of shelter staff, with the balance to go toward other program costs such as recruiting and training staff.

With the requested funding, the agency plans to serve a minimum of 50 Fort Lauderdale residents who use shelter services, outreach, or non-residential programming. It will also fund 500 nights at the shelter and a minimum 200 hours of advocacy. Last year's CDBG allocation helped the agency provide Fort Lauderdale residents with more than 13,000 nights at the shelter, or 28% of total nights provided, which was 46,865 nights. This amount was an organizational milestone.

The previous year, Women in Distress of Broward County also provided more than 4500 hours of advocacy, counseling, therapy, and other support services to Fort Lauderdale residents. Legal services were provided to 76 residents seeking injunctions or restraining orders for protection. They also vetted 116 crisis line calls.

Ms. Hughes asked how much of the requested funding would go toward recruiting. Ms. Evans replied that this would be \$4545. In addition to recruiting new staff, this amount could also be spent in onboarding, training, licensing, permitting, and fees associated with operating the shelter.

Mr. Cius stated that he had reviewed how the organization's outcomes were evaluated in the previous fiscal year and expressed concern that these outcomes did not reflect what was projected in terms of client achievement. He requested clarification of how outcomes would be measured. Ms. Evans replied that because Florida law prohibits the keeping of client records, all information is submitted into the client database used by all domestic violence centers in the state of Florida. Whenever a service is offered or provided, it is noted in this system.

Ms. Evans cited the example of safety planning, which is done upon intake and registration and recurs frequently. She added that linkage and referrals to other services within the organization are provided, such as on-site child care services, a pet shelter, health care services, legal services, and economic empowerment services. Everyone in the shelter receives food, clothing, baby care items as needed, over-the-counter medications, transportation to medical visits, advocacy, and crisis counseling. This information is entered into the database and regular reports are produced.

Mr. Cius explained that he was seeking a more qualitative than quantitative response, which would describe the process through which scores are achieved.

Ms. Greaves asked if staff is available on a 24/7 basis to provide support to victims, recalling that there were staffing concerns for Women in Distress in the past. Ms. Evans confirmed that the shelter operates 24/7, and advocates are in the shelter at all times. The organization is constantly working to improve pay and benefits for its employees.

Ms. Greaves asked if any clients have been turned away. Jeff Metcalf, also representing Women in Distress of Broward County, replied that at the intake process, individuals who do not need to be in the emergency shelter are identified and their needs are addressed through outreach. He emphasized that the organization will never leave an individual in danger. At times this may mean placing an individual in another place, such as a hotel room, if there are no beds in the shelter.

Vanessa Bongiorno, also representing Women in Distress of Broward County, further explained that referrals are always provided to 2-1-1 Broward or other organizations in the community. There is a significant network of community partners.

## **5. HOMES, Inc.**

It was clarified that HOMES, Inc. was applying for CDBG funds in the Community-Based Development Organizations (CBDO) category, which is separate from the Public Services category under which other CDBG agencies applied.

Linda Taylor, representing HOMES, Inc., stated that the organization has served the Broward County community for 25 years and is applying for CDBG funds for its self-sufficiency program for young people who have aged out of foster and relative care. The program's goal is to help these young people create self-sufficiency and avoid predatory situations.

HOMES, Inc. has a two-acre campus near Downtown Fort Lauderdale with offices as well as 13 apartments including 21 bedrooms for young people who live with their small children. If a two-bedroom apartment is shared with a roommate, both

roommates pay \$300/month; a resident in a one-bedroom apartment pays \$400/month.

HOMES, Inc. requests \$125,000 to assist with the programmatic costs of this program. Their budget is roughly \$700,000. Some urgent costs recently experienced include increased insurance as well as maintenance and repairs of units. The self-sufficiency program requires that all young people work toward their goals. All participants are required to work and go to school at the appropriate level.

HOMES, Inc. provides several wraparound services to ensure that participants are successful in their efforts. Each young person is assigned a life coach who helps them with basic needs, such as seeking insurance or completing food stamp applications. There is also a paid internship program in which HOMES, Inc. pays \$16/hour for participants who work 20 hours/week. The goal is to provide on-the-job training skills in a friendly environment.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification between programs that pay participants \$14/hour and \$16/hour. Ms. Taylor explained that there has been an increase from \$14 to \$16 in this program, which is funded by the Children's Services Council of Broward.

**V. HOPWA FY 24-25 GRANT APPLICATION PRESENTATION  
(3 minutes for presentation and 7 minutes for Q&A each agency, per program)**

Chair Rice noted that Mr. Hensley has submitted paperwork related to a conflict of interest and will refrain from participating in this portion of the meeting. She also reminded the Board members that some Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) applicant agencies are applying for funding for multiple programs.

**1. Broward Regional Health Planning Council**

Michele Rosiere, representing Broward Regional Health Planning Council (BRHPC), stated that the agency has been a nonprofit for 42 years. Its board members are appointed by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners. Some of its strong points include financial capacity, unqualified audits with no findings, and financial monitoring with no corrective actions. Five of the six members of its leadership team have been present for all 16 years in which BRHPC has received HOPWA funds. The HOPWA allocation represents 2.5% of BRHPC's budget.

Support services provided by BRHPC include centralized eligibility for 8146 clients living with HIV/AIDS in Broward County. They provide medical care and case management, services for individuals living with HIV who have insurance, and insurance benefit management for the state of Florida. They also provide supportive services such as rental assistance and case management for families.

Sharon Alveranga-Jones, also representing BRHPC, advised that 95% of applications are approved. She reviewed numbers of clients participating in the agency's programs.

Chair Rice requested clarification of how many clients BRHPC proposes to serve per program. Ms. Alveranga-Jones replied that a total of 427 clients will be served through the short-term rent, mortgage, and utility (STRMU), temporary emergency hotel voucher (TEHV), and permanent housing placement (PHP) programs.

Mr. Cius requested additional information on how BRHPC's programs assist clients in achieving their best health outcomes. Ms. Rosiere replied that the organization is co-located with additional services and ensures that clients are linked to the Ryan White Foundation or other funding sources for medical care. This will screen clients and determine their eligibility for insurance. They also offer insurance premium assistance as well as assistance with out-of-pocket medical payments.

## **2. Broward House Inc.**

Matthew Patterson, representing Broward House, stated that the organization's facility-based program has served 103 clients over the past year. He recalled that the facility was damaged by the April 2023 flood and was required to shut down for approximately half of that year; however, they were still able to serve 60 clients, all of whom eventually transitioned to stable housing. The organization met all of its outcomes and is now located in a new facility.

Clients receive intensive day treatments and case management. Broward House leverages different sources to provide clients with the greatest stability and support to help them be successful when transitioning away from the facility. Its assisted living facility is slated to reopen within the next few weeks.

44 of the facility's 74 beds are funded with HOPWA funds, with an additional nine beds available in reserve if needed. They receive funding through the Ryan White Foundation for emergency housing and through Broward County for medical respite. The all-inclusive facility provides 24-hour nursing care, three meals per day, and snacks.

Ms. Greaves asked why some clients receive Section 8 housing vouchers rather than returning to their families. Mr. Patterson replied that staff performs a housing assessment when a client comes into the facility; not everyone who receives HOPWA funds for transitional housing qualifies for Section 8. Some clients leave the facility and move to halfway houses, sober homes, or back to their families if it is safe. Others may use different HOPWA services to move into independent living. For some clients, Section 8 vouchers may be the end goal rather than full self-sufficiency.

Mr. Cius asked for a description of how the facility-based housing program assists clients toward the best outcomes. Mr. Patterson explained that Broward House is a



housing-first initiative: they recognize that it is difficult for an individual to focus on their health until their basic needs of shelter and safety are met. Clients often come in from the streets with nothing and may have multiple health concerns, such as substance abuse disorders or failure to secure medication. The transitional housing provided by the assisted living facility gives them time to stabilize. He emphasized the importance of housing as a foundational step.

Mr. Patterson continued that unlike other housing-first agencies, Broward House does not put clients into an independent living situation without the skills necessary to thrive in that environment. They provide structure from the beginning, asking clients with income to pay 30% of that income as rent. Should they fall behind, this is addressed on a case-by-case basis with counseling. A new service offers stabilized clients the opportunity to have their own rooms in the facility so they can learn skills and form good habits before moving on to the next level of housing. He concluded that housing is the number-one indicator of whether or not treatment for substance abuse is successful.

Mr. Pierre asked how long clients have to stabilize before they move on to the next step toward independent living. Mr. Patterson emphasized that Broward House works on a case-by-case basis. Clients work with an integrated care team which focuses on behavioral health, case management, and medical support. The typical length of a stay is 152 days. Last year, because of the flooding, this was slightly longer at 165 days. The organization seeks not to keep clients in transitional housing for too long a time.

Mr. Patterson continued that Broward House has a bank of halfway houses with which they regularly work, as well as landlords who accept housing vouchers. They are working to increase this list.

Tamika Weaver, also representing Broward House, addressed the project-based rental program, which focuses on providing clients with the tools to achieve independent living. They teach clients how to use different tools in a home environment to keep their homes secure, and show them how to maintain areas of their homes. They also teach clients how to work within a budget. The project-based rental program helps them to understand how to maintain a healthy budget on a fixed income.

The project-based rental program focuses first on small successes and outcomes. Many clients in this program are raised to self-sufficiency, whether through a tenant-based housing program or through Section 8 housing.

Chair Rice noted that Broward House's projected client count for the project-based program is 77 clients.

Ms. Weaver moved on to Broward House's tenant-based rental voucher (TBRV) program, emphasizing the importance of strengthening relationships with landlords to this program. They provide orientation for landlords to explain what the TBRV program includes, and also assure them that case management will be implemented into these relationships. Case managers visit rental units regularly.

Chair Rice noted that the projected client count for Broward House's TBRV program is 130 clients.

Chair Rice recalled that in previous years, the TBRV portion of the HOPWA grant has been underused, and asked if the improved landlord relationships may address this concern. Ms. Weaver stated that not all landlords clearly understood the TBRV program, which made it more difficult to move tenants into those units. Building relationships with landlords so they understand that a case manager will remain involved can make landlords feel more at ease with the program. She hoped the program will serve more than the projected 130 clients.

At this time Chair Rice invited the BHRPC representatives back to present on their TBRV program.

Ms. Rosiere stated that one of the first aspects of work with a client is the housing stability assessment, which reviews benefits, resources, potential barriers, housing preferences, and budgeting. This is followed by a focus on increasing client income by training in budgeting, finances, and credit. The agency has a partnership with Consolidated Credit. There is also a focus on HIV outcomes and treatment to ensure that the latest information is available in relation to case management, medication, and insurance, as well as third-party benefits such as Medicare or Medicaid.

Ms. Alveranga-Jones offered examples of working with clients to use supportive services toward achieve independent living.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification of the projected client count for the TBRV program. Mike DeLucca, also representing BHRPC, replied that this is estimated at 250, depending upon rental costs. He pointed out that each different rental building has a different price; however, the organization feels they can reach at least 250 clients.

### **3. Mount Olive Development Corporation**

Dr. Rosalind Osgood, representing Mount Olive Development Corporation (MODCO), stated that the organization requests to continue providing project-based rental services. They currently serve 32 clients and hope to continue this service with a focus on housing-first care as well as providing stable medical care.

MODCO's program offers supportive service program management as well as property management. They have added a partnership with Consolidated Credit to allow financial literacy and budget education, and encourage their clients to have their own bank accounts. Case management remains a strong component of what MODCO does in connecting clients to medical and other services.

MODCO has had to increase its food giveaways, as food insecurity is a major issue and the cost of many items is increasing. Their program also includes training in emotional tolerance which is intended to help clients when dealing with other community-based organizations. There is also a parenting component which helps develop parenting skills.

Mr. Cius asked how MODCO uses its programs to assist clients in achieving their best health outcomes. Dr. Osgood replied that MODCO works to stabilize their clients in their housing situations as well as teaching them how to care for their units. She emphasized the importance of stable housing for clients who are trying to put their lives together. They also work closely with clients to assist them in accessing medical care, and share information on medical services which are close to MODCO's facility, as having to travel a significant distance and change buses can become a barrier to treatment. A list of medical service providers is shared with clients to give them options and minimize any barriers.

Ms. Greaves noted that MODCO's application states it currently serves 22 clients and 34 individuals; however, only seven clients have moved into permanent housing. Dr. Osgood explained that MODCO tries to work with clients to transition them into permanent housing. Some individual clients have been identified as needing to remain with MODCO rather than transition to permanent housing. She clarified that some clients will transition into housing opportunities for those aged 55 and older, while other clients may be unable to work and cannot transition elsewhere.

#### **4. Care Resource**

Maryfer Lacruz, representing Care Resource, stated that the agency has received HOPWA grant funds since 2009 to assist the HIV/AIDS population with housing services. They have served more than 7000 unduplicated clients with moving funds, rental and mortgage assistance, and utility assistance. They also assist with supportive services such as medical, dental, pediatric, and behavioral health needs. They provide housing case management, permanent supportive housing, and rapid re-housing.

Rafael Garcia, also representing Care Resource, advised that the agency also provides clients with referrals to other services outside their organization, including other housing services. They assist clients in applying for housing assistance and with access to technology, transportation passes, housing navigation, and preparing resumes.

In the current fiscal year, Care Resource has assisted 145 unduplicated clients. Mr. Garcia anticipated reaching the agency's goal of 300 unduplicated clients by the end of the year. For clients who have scheduling issues due to work, Care Resource provides special accommodations to them with evening/weekend times as well as appointments.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification of the total number of clients served as noted in the application, noting that this is lower than the amount of clients who are referred to Care Resource. Francisco Gomez, also representing Care Resource, replied that while the goal is 300 clients, the agency typically serves more than this number during the time of their contract.

Mr. Cius asked how Care Resource uses its programming to help clients achieve the best outcomes. Mr. Gomez emphasized the importance of ensuring clients have stable housing. They work with several landlords and property managers in the community to place clients in housing as soon as possible, and provide case management for clients.

## **5. SunServe**

Brenda Rentas, representing SunServe, stated that the organization's goal is to serve 500 HOPWA clients in the coming fiscal year. She emphasized the importance of meeting every client with kindness, acceptance, and responsiveness to ensure that they are met with every service they need. This can include medical case management, mental health, senior services, food services, bus passes, and more. SunServe also advocates for clients and assists them in obtaining supporting documents. A record number of clients have applied for assistance this year in comparison to previous years.

Ms. Hughes asked how clients come to SunServe. Ms. Rentas replied that many clients learn about their services through word-of-mouth, as well as by other agencies which refer them to SunServe. She emphasized that most provider agencies work together as a community to help clients. Tony Lima, also representing SunServe, added that the organization does some marketing within the community, and has public relations and media efforts at community events.

Ms. Hughes asked if SunServe has ever turned clients away. Alex Spriggs, also representing SunServe, advised that 8000 clients are helped across a range of services within the agency. Ms. Rentas added that the organization does not turn clients away: if they are not program-eligible or income-eligible, they are referred to other agencies.

Mr. Cius asked how SunServe clients are helped to achieve their best outcomes. Ms. Rentas replied that when clients come in for assistance, staff makes sure that they are

not discriminated against in a way they may have previously experienced. Clients are educated so they are better prepared when they go into the community and know what their rights are.

Mr. Lima advised that SunServe provides services in English, Spanish, and Creole to ensure that the agency is as expansive as possible and mirrors the communities that it supports in Broward County. Mr. Spriggs added that a number of in-house support groups are available to clients.

## **6. Legal Aid of Broward County**

Edwin Cordova, representing Legal Aid of Broward County, stated that for the past 12 years, the organization has worked closely with case management agencies to help clients achieve housing stability and keep them on the path to self-sufficiency. Working with case management helps clients prepare specific comprehensive housing plans.

Legal Aid's proposal is for grant funds to cover a portion of salaries for staff. He emphasized that staff seeks to make clients feel welcome and safe, noting that confidentiality is one of the most important needs they can meet for clients. During the previous year, they saw 196 unduplicated clients; thus far in the current fiscal year, they have already seen 134 clients, which is 70% of the number seen the previous year.

Ms. Greaves requested clarification of how many clients Legal Aid expects to serve in the current fiscal year. Mr. Cordova replied that the organization usually anticipates 105 unduplicated clients, but reiterated that they have already seen a large number of clients halfway through the current fiscal year. He concluded that they may surpass 200 to 220 clients this year.

Mr. Cius asked how Legal Aid services can help their clients achieve their best outcomes. Mr. Cordova stated that clients are referred to Legal Aid through housing case management agencies, at which time Legal Aid determines their legal needs. These needs are often concentrated on housing, although they may include other needs as well. Legal Aid works with clients to determine what is attainable for them and what is not. They also work closely with housing case management.

## **VI. BOARD REVIEW FINAL SCORES AND RECOMMEND ALLOCATION**

- **CDBG FY24-25 Grant Applications**

Mr. Hensley rejoined the Board at this time.

The Board members reviewed their CDBG scores, with Ms. Greaves noting changes to her score for Women in Distress of Broward County. There were no other changes by the members.

Ms. Dsouza advised that \$196,207.95 is available for CDBG allocation. She noted that the agencies' scores ranked them in the following order from highest to lowest:

- Broward Partnership for the Homeless
- Jack & Jill Children's Center
- Women in Distress of Broward County
- SoFIA

Ms. Dsouza clarified that HOMES, Inc. is ranked separately from other CDBG agencies, as that agency is seeking funding in a different CDBG category.

**Motion** made by Mr. Hensley, seconded by Mr. Cius, we've got \$200,000 requested, we almost have the amount available, I would say the top three scores get their \$50,000 and then the balance goes to SoFIA.

It was clarified that the top three scores were for Broward Partnership for the Homeless, Jack & Jill Children's Center, and Women in Distress of Broward County.

The members discussed the **motion**, with Ms. Greaves stating that she was not in favor of the allocation to Women in Distress, as she felt that agency is turning a lot of people away. She also recommended that when future presentations are made by CDBG agencies, the Board members have at least 10 minutes to ask questions of the applicant agencies. She recommended that the allocation proposed in the **motion** for Women in Distress be reduced.

Vice Chair Dunne advised that he would not be in favor of any allocation that gave Jack & Jill Children's Center more than twice the amount they spent in the previous year. He pointed out that in the past, this agency has had difficulty spending all of their allocation.

Chair Rice confirmed that this had been an issue in the past, but requested clarification from Staff regarding whether or not this has been addressed by the agency. Ms. Williams recalled that historically, Jack & Jill has used all of their funding; however, after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, additional federal funding became available, and the agency was not able to use all of its allocation. She pointed out, however, that the situation has returned to normal following the pandemic, and she did not feel this would be an issue again, as the additional funds had come in a one-time allocation. It was also noted that many families and children remained at home during the pandemic, which made it more difficult for the agency to use its funds.

Ms. Hughes recalled that during the previous year's CDBG presentation and allocation, Jack & Jill had indicated they did not have enough applicants for their scholarships. She had not believed this to be accurate, as she was aware of clients who had been turned away from the scholarship program. She was not in favor of funding the agency.

Ms. Dsouza advised that an internal opportunity has also arisen for the allocation of CDBG dollars. The Public Works Department is seeking funding to go into partnership with the Housing Authority of Fort Lauderdale on a "Food Forest" program, which would create fruit and vegetable gardens that would give residents access to fresh food. They are requesting \$10,000 for that program. She concluded that the Board may also consider this request when allocating CDBG funds.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** failed 3-4 (Vice Chair Dunne, Ms. Greaves, Ms. Hughes, and Mr. Pierre dissenting).

Chair Rice noted that few details are available on the internal program Ms. Dsouza had mentioned. If the Board has funds left over after its CDBG allocation to applicants, representatives of the Department proposing the program could attend the next Board meeting and provide greater detail.

Vice Chair Dunne asked if the Board would consider granting agencies more than they had requested. Ms. Dsouza clarified that the maximum award in the Public Services category is \$50,000.

Ms. Hughes noted again that Jack & Jill Children's Center is likely to come back to the Board at a later date and return funds they were unable to spend, which had happened in previous years. Mr. Cius suggested that the Food Forest request be funded at \$10,000. Chair Rice observed that there is currently not enough information on that program to make an allocation to them at this time, but funds could be set aside for the time being.

Mr. Cius asked how many clients were expected to be served by the proposed Food Forest program. Ms. Williams replied that this would be determined by the number of residents on Housing Authority campuses.

Chair Rice suggested that the Board hold \$10,000 back from allocation for now, and see a presentation on the Food Forest program at the next meeting, at which time they could determine whether they would like to fund it. Ms. Dsouza advised that she would send the request Staff had received for the Food Forest program on to the Board members.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Dunne, seconded by Mr. Pierre, to set aside \$10,000 for future consideration. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Dunne noted that this leaves \$186,207.95 in CDBG funds to be allocated. If three agencies were funded at their \$50,000 requests, this would leave \$36,207.95 to be allocated to the fourth.

Chair Rice pointed out that Jack & Jill has a higher score than SoFIA, based on the members' averaged scores. She recommended funding the agencies according to their overall scores rather than giving more funding to an organization with a lower score than to an organization with a higher score.

**Motion** made by Ms. Greaves, seconded by Ms. Hughes, to reduce Women in Distress by \$10,000.

Mr. Cius asked how the remaining \$10,000 would be allocated. Ms. Greaves replied that it would be divided among the agencies other than Jack & Jill. Chair Rice advised that this would require further discussion, pointing out that \$10,000 has already been set aside for further consideration.

Ms. Dsouza pointed out that the ceiling for CDBG funding is \$50,000. No agency could receive more than that amount.

Mr. Cius asked if any funds not spent by agencies at the end of the fiscal year could be rolled over into the next year. Ms. Williams explained that the agencies may request an extension. Chair Rice noted that the agencies will also provide the Board with reports throughout the year to show whether or not they are on track to spend all of their allocation.

Ms. Greaves observed that she had felt there were several "gray areas" in the agencies' applications, which she felt were not being executed as proposed.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 4-3 (Chair Rice, Vice Chair Dunne, and Mr. Hensley dissenting).

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Dunne, seconded by Ms. Greaves, to fund Broward Partnership and SoFIA at \$50,000.

Chair Rice reiterated that it would be unusual to fund lower-scoring organizations at higher levels than organizations with higher scores.

Mr. Hensley commented that he has interacted with all of the agencies in the community over the past several years and has some knowledge of their work. Vice Chair Dunne stated that the scoring does not take the previous year's expenditures by the agencies into account, which he felt was a major factor.

Ms. Hughes advised that in addition to the scoring, she has heard community feedback about some of the agencies which is very different from what was included in their applications.

Chair Rice noted that she has also worked with the applying organizations, and acknowledged that different members may have encountered different situations to



take into account. **She emphasized the importance of judging the applications based on the scoring rubric.** She added that she believed Jack & Jill to have been very transparent regarding the challenges they had faced with their scholarship program, keeping the Board and Staff informed of how they were addressing these challenges.

Vice Chair Dunne **restated** his **motion** as follows: **motion** to fund Broward Partnership and SoFIA at \$50,000.

Mr. Cius noted that while some agencies may expend all of their funds, it does not necessarily mean they will meet all of their performance indicators. There may be services not provided or needs not met within the community which are not reflected in the applications. He requested clarification of Staff's recollection of the agencies' performance.

Ms. Williams explained that agencies present information on their performance to the Board on a quarterly basis. She recalled that all the agencies presenting today typically meet or exceed their goals. Jack & Jill was a recent exception, and had explained what had occurred to the Board.

**Ms. Williams also addressed the members' comments regarding outside experiences, pointing out that the applicants were told a specific rubric would be used for scoring. She recommended that the members abide by that rubric. If, for future grant application cycles, the Board members wish to add other scoring criteria, they may do so at that time; however, only the rubric used in scoring was advertised in the current cycle, and should be adhered to for purposes of liability.**

Ms. Williams further clarified that the rubric uses the total ranking and cumulative scores for each agency rather than individual members' scores. Chair Rice reiterated that Broward Partnership received the highest score, followed in descending order by Jack & Jill, Women in Distress, and SoFIA.

Vice Chair Dunne noted that the HOPWA allocation is also a greater amount than what has been requested by those agencies for funding, and pointed out that some other discretion will need to be used to determine allocations, which may potentially be outside the scoring rubric.

Ms. Williams explained that funding is not part of the rubric: funding is allocated based on rankings. This does not mean, however, that an agency will receive its full requested amount of funding, even if it is the highest-ranked agency. She stated again that when the cumulative scores are calculated, the agencies are ranked according to those scores, which serve as the basis for deciding how funds will be awarded.

**Ms. Williams concluded that there will need to be a very strong argument, supported by the scoring rubric, to determine why an agency ranked #1 might receive a lesser allocation than an agency ranked #4.**

Mr. Pierre recalled that it was stated earlier that all funds do not have to be allocated at today's meeting. Chair Rice confirmed this, but noted that all of the applying organizations are serving distinct needs in the community, have all previously met their reporting requirements, and have good reputations and long histories in the community. She was not certain that it would be useful to leave money on the table when it could be used immediately toward serving an agency's target population.

Mr. Pierre asked what happens to money that is not allocated. Chair Rice replied that the Board can consider other programs, but acknowledged that they have not always had the best experience when doing this in the past. She added that all nonprofit agencies had the opportunity to apply for CDBG funds, but the agencies which presented today had attended all of the required meetings and gone through the extensive application process.

The Board further discussed how funds might be allocated among the applying agencies. Chair Rice noted that at a later meeting in the year, the Board can reevaluate the scoring rubric so it is clear that the members and the applicants are all on the same page regarding what is expected and how the agencies will be evaluated.

Chair Rice also pointed out that the decision made by the Board is ultimately a recommendation to the City Commission, and that a City Commissioner might also question a decision in which a lower-ranked agency received more money than a higher-ranked agency.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** to fund Broward Partnership and SoFIA at \$50,000 each passed 4-3 (Chair Rice, Mr. Hensley, and Mr. Pierre dissenting).

Ms. Greaves asked if it was possible that more than \$10,000 might be allocated to Food Forest once the Board has heard more information about that program. Ms. Dsouza replied that it is not customary to offer an applicant more than their requested amount, although this decision should not be made until after the Board has seen a presentation from them. She also pointed out that if the application had come from a source other than the City, it would not have been considered.

**Motion** made by Chair Rice, seconded by Ms. Hughes, to allocate that remainder to Jack & Jill.

It was clarified that the remaining funds came to \$46,207.95.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed 6-1 (Mr. Hensley dissenting).

Chair Rice explained that her motion had been based on the motions previously passed.

The Board next addressed the CBDO application by HOMES, Inc., which requested \$125,000. Chair Rice noted that HOMES, Inc. was the only applicant in that category.

**Motion** made by Mr. Hensley, seconded by Ms. Hughes, to fund them. In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

- **HOPWA FY24-25 Grant Applications**

Mr. Hensley left the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

The Board discussed the HOPWA applications and their scores, with Ms. Hughes making changes to her scores for each of the HOPWA applicants.

Ms. Dsouza reviewed the housing subsidy applicant agencies' scores as ranked from highest to lowest:

- Broward Regional Health Planning Council (BRHPC)
- Broward House
- Mount Olive Development Corporation (MODCO)

Ms. Dsouza stated that the total HOPWA funding available is \$6,846,840.47 in the housing category. There was a difference of \$2,289,755.18 between what has been requested and what is available in this category. Ms. Williams further clarified that the funding allocation is a projection of what is expected at this time, based on the City's prior awards in this category. They have not yet received their award notification.

Ms. Dsouza advised that the TBRV program provides permanent vouchers. The allocation for this program is \$3.3 million and will not change, although the allocations provided to agencies applying to this program may change. BRHPC is requesting the entire allocation to serve 250 clients, and Broward House is requesting \$1.4 million to serve 130 clients.

Vice Chair Dunne recalled that in the previous year, BRHPC spent \$1.391 million on the TBRV program, and their current request represents a significant increase. Also in the previous year, Broward House spent \$1.157 million.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Dunne, seconded by Ms. Greaves, to allocate \$1,822,303.47 to BRHPC and \$1,495,074 to Broward House.

Chair Rice also noted that there is a significant difference in the number of clients that would be served by each of these agencies. Ms. Dsouza noted that the proposed division of the TBRV allocation would mean BRHPC would serve 120 clients and Broward House 130 clients for a total of 250. It was noted by the Board members that BRHPC had indicated they could serve "at least" 250 clients.

Ms. Williams advised that the projected \$3.3 funding allocation represents clients who are already in the TBRV program as well as new clients to be served by the two TBRV agencies. She suggested looking at the numbers of clients the agencies are currently serving. Ms. Dsouza clarified that Broward House has 79 clients and BRHPC has 94 clients.

In a roll call vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (6-0).

It was clarified that BRHPC requested a total of \$860,000 for its STRMU, TEHV, and PHP programs. It is the only agency applying in that category. The total amount available for these programs is also \$860,000.

**Motion** made by Chair Rice, seconded by Vice Chair Dunne, to fund [Broward House's] full request at \$860,000. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The Board next addressed facility-based housing. Chair Rice noted that just over \$1.3 million is expected to be available for this program. Broward House is the only applicant for that program and has requested \$1,474,056 million.

**Motion** made by Chair Rice, seconded by Ms. Greaves, that we fund [Broward House] at the full amount we have available.

Vice Chair Dunne pointed out that the next category, which is for project-based housing, would be significantly reduced if the facility-based category is funded at the full amount requested. It was clarified that the Board may move funding between the different housing categories, with the exception of the TBRV program, which has existing clients.

Chair Rice **withdrew** her **motion**.

Ms. Dsouza noted that Broward House and MODCO have made requests in the project-based category. The total amount available for project-based housing is \$1,346,128 for 92 units. MODCO has 22 units, while Broward House has 72 units. MODCO has requested \$352,000 in the project-based category and Broward House has requested a total of \$3 million across both the facility-based and project-based categories. The total amount requested exceeds what is available by \$774,681.

Chair Rice observed that the funds available in the project-based and facility-based categories can be considered for either or both categories. She requested clarification of the percentage by which both allocations must be reduced in order to fund both programs.

It was noted that while Broward House had indicated they hoped to serve 103 clients in the facility-based program, they only have 54 beds available which are assigned to HOPWA.

Vice Chair Dunne advised that if each request was reduced by 22%, both programs could be funded.

Ms. Williams noted that although Broward House had requested additional one-time funding from the Board for another 14 beds following the April 2023 flood, these funds have not been expended thus far. She recommended that this be considered when determining how to bridge the funding gap. Chair Rice stated that she would prefer to keep this consideration separate from the FY 2024-2025 funding allocation discussion.

Ms. Dsouza recalled that in prior years, HOPWA has funded Broward House for only 44 beds; when they lost the funding for another nine beds, the Board had allocated them an additional \$500,000 from reserve funds for another two years.

**Motion** made by Vice Chair Dunne, seconded by Ms. Greaves, to award as identified:

- BRHPC:
  - STRMU: \$530,648.00
  - PHP: \$269,352.00
  - TEHV: \$60,000.00
  - TBRV: \$1,822,303.47
- Broward House:
  - FBH/FAC: \$1,145,000.00
  - PBR: \$1,270,000.00
  - TBRV: \$1,495,074.00
- MODCO:
  - \$254,463.00
- Total: \$6,846,840.47

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Rice noted that the total non-housing allocation is estimated at \$780,000. The total requests between Care Resource, SunServe, and Legal Aid of Broward County are just over \$1 million. Care Resource and SunServe provide housing case management and Legal Aid provides legal services. The scores for the three agencies are very similar, and all three spent most of their previous allocations.

**Motion** made by Chair Rice, seconded by Vice Chair Dunne, to fund Legal Aid at 100%.

It was clarified that Legal Aid's request was for \$190,000.

In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The Board discussed Care Resource's and SunServe's requests, noting that Care Resource has requested \$350,000 or a minimum of \$300,000. Chair Rice noted that

this agency expects to serve an estimated 546 clients. SunServe also estimates they will serve 500 clients. Both estimates are consistent with the previous year's performance.

**Motion** made by Ms. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Pierre, that we give Care Resource \$300,000 and SunServe \$290,000.

It was noted that this would mean Care Resource would be funded at an increase of \$30,000 over the previous year's allocation, while SunServe would be funded with \$40,000 less than the previous year.

Ms. Hughes **withdrew** her **motion** at this time.

**Motion** made by Ms. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Pierre, that Care Resource gets \$266,500 and SunServe gets \$323,500. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair Rice thanked all the applicants for CDBG and HOPWA funds. She reiterated that the HOPWA amounts are projections, and if there is a difference of greater than 10% between what was estimated and what is allocated, Staff will bring the Board's recommendations back for reevaluation. Additional information will be presented at the next meeting on the potential new CDBG applicant.

The Board members provided Staff with their signed scoring sheets.

## **VII. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Francisco Gomez, representing Care Resource, thanked the Board for their work. He explained that while Care Resource had set a goal of treating 300 clients in the previous year, they actually served 587 clients; thus far in the current year, they have served 447 clients, also against a goal of 300.

## **IX. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

Chair Rice noted that the following items will be placed on the next Agenda:

- Information on the Food Forest program
- Any updates regarding the amount of funding available for programs
- CDBG updates for the first six months of the current fiscal year

Mr. Cius requested a discussion of how HOPWA agencies track clients' progress toward self-sufficiency, where applicable.

Ms. Greaves requested a physical copy of the executive summaries attached to each agency's applications so they can be compared to the performance indicators recorded by those agencies. Ms. Dsouza noted that the performance report will show the agencies' awarded amounts, goals, and where they stand at the time. Ms. Williams added that the performance indicators are transferred to a performance indicator tracking sheet, which each agency must submit on a quarterly basis. Chair Rice noted that it will be several months before the first performance indicator report by the agencies, as the contracts begin the next fiscal year, in October 2024.

**X. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION**

None.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]