

**Citizens Advisory Committee for Community Development
Workshop**

**Tuesday November 16, 2021
6:00 P.M.**

**** Via Zoom ****

CALL TO ORDER

The workshop began at 6:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

CACCD Members Present

Corey Williams

Lesly Jerome

Jamarr Akins - *new member*

Boisy Waiters

HCD Staff Present

Vian Cockerham- Guinyard

Colleen Schon

Citizens Present

Graham Griggs

DISCUSSION

INFORMATIONAL FORUM FOR UPDATE AND DISCUSSION

HUD provided Participating Jurisdictions (PJs), including the City of Gainesville, several waivers and flexibilities to meet urgent needs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. These flexibilities also allowed extended submissions of the required Annual Action Plans (AAPs). As a result, the Substantial Amendment to the PY19 AAP, the PY20 AAP and PY21 AAP were all submitted to HUD on August 16, 2021. Plans also included the approved outside agencies funding (both CDBG and HOME) for all non-profit agencies. Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard thanked the committee for their patience and hard work during this time.

Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard emphasized that 70% of HUD's allocation for Public Service dollars through CDBG must serve at-risk youth, the elderly, and low to moderately income persons or families. The City of Gainesville, via HCD also provides funding for city housing activities - Rehabilitation, House Replacement, Roof Replacement and Down Payment Assistance (DPA). DPA is provided to first-time, income-eligible homebuyers.

A review was provided of the specific funding set-asides for each program; with explanation that increased Public Services and Housing funding (as seen during FY 2020-2021) will cease as national operations normalize.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Griggs inquired as to HCD having available information on the number of people that are assisted (beneficiaries) with federal funds. Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard explained that although current allocations have not yet been utilized, Eldercare of Alachua County (as an example) projected that in Fiscal Year 2020-2021, projects that with its \$34,000 CDBG allocation, it will be able to serve 4,900 meals to over thirty-five (35) low and/or moderate income senior citizens living in the city limits of Gainesville. This translates to Eldercare serving five (5) meals every week to thirty-five (35) senior citizens.

For Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Eldercare requested \$40,467 but was only allocated \$19,000. This reduction in funding will typically result in Eldercare serving fewer meals than they projected in its funding request application. It is important to note that Eldercare's total budget (approximately \$1,000,000), is exceptionally robust compared to other agencies historically receiving CDBG funds.

Further, the actual number of individuals served with CDBG dollars will be reported quarterly with performance measures based on HUD guidelines. The classification of the number of individuals served and reported is even more granular; for example, specific income thresholds, whether disabled, and Female Head-of-Household.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Corey Williams asked about HUD's fifteen percent (15%) set-aside requirement. Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard responded that the set-aside is per statute and advised that she has discussed this with HCD's HUD representative. It would seem more appropriate to provide the percentage flexibility to PJs who are more aware of the needs of their community; however, this is currently not an option offered by HUD.

Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard reminded members that while funding for projects and activities is very valuable to agencies, these funds are not 'make or break' but complements to their programs. Agencies should, and typically do have other sources of funding available, so any decline or elimination of CDBG and/or HOME funding does not negate the program but typically results in an agency having to serve fewer individuals/families.

Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard shared that one agency's application for funding did not get submitted into the *Neighborly* system prior to the deadline due to unforeseen web connectivity issues. The agency asked HCD to consider accepting the application due to the extenuating circumstances. HCD leadership discussed the request as being reasonable, but as a vetting process is required for each application, in the sense of fairness, the request was not granted. In the future, HCD will

consider allowing the emailing of the completed application in addition to the *Neighborly* input as verification of application submission. HCD tries to be flexible within reasonable limits to encourage agency funding opportunities.

Compared to CDBG requests, fewer agencies apply for HOME funding. This is mostly due to the required expertise involved to meet City Code Enforcement and HUD HOME rehabilitation and new construction guidelines.

The committee was reminded that agency presentations are a benefit but not a requirement. The strength of funding must be based on the submitted application, not because the agency made a presentation.

HCD Account Clerk II, Ms. Colleen Schon, explained the components of agencies Scope of Services and Budgets. These documents are included in every CDBG and HOME contract. The agency prepares and submits a *draft* of the scope of services and budget, including the projected number of LMI individuals or households to be served. This information is reviewed by HCD Staff and any required adjustments are discussed with the agency, based on approved and final funding allocations.

The scope of services also provides quantified goals and expected outcomes. Guidelines require that agencies report the number of unduplicated individuals/families served with federal dollars. The City of Gainesville's fiscal year is October-September. This timeframe always starts a new year, so that agency assisted individuals/households are counted as new, unduplicated beneficiaries, even if they were assisted prior years. HCD also ensures that agencies are provided the most recent HUD income limits for the City of Gainesville. This information ensures that each agency is providing service based on the correct family size and income thresholds. Although HUD does not exclude assistance to moderate-income individuals and households, the City seeks to provide services to extremely low, very-low and low-income residents.

As a result of the access, shelter-in-place and other COVID-19 related issues, a decision was made to extend the usual twelve month contracts of each agency. HCD is pleased to extend contracts for FY 20-21 from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022. For FY 21-22 the contract period will be October 1, 2021 to November 30, 2022.

Member Lesly Jerome added that the committee looked at applicant scalability, which was discussed during the allocation process. The purpose of this was to see if the agency didn't get money from CDBG/HOME if they could they still provide uninterrupted services. Typically, a decrease or elimination of this funding would result in the agency providing the same services but to fewer individuals/families. For example, as it pertains to HOME dollars, COVID-19 pandemic shortages resulted in cost escalations of building supplies. Agencies receiving HOME dollars would typically have to scale down their project if no replacement funding was available.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard advised the need for a Public Hearing in December, 2021. The purpose of the Public Hearing (normally held during a regularly scheduled CACCD meeting), will be to solicit and gather citizen comments on the PY20 Consolidated Annual Performance & Evaluation Report (CAPER) to be submitted to HUD no later than December 29, 2021.

The regular CACCD meeting date would be December 21, 2021. However, the concern is the closeness of this date to the Christmas holiday. Based on feedback from the members in attendance a tentative date of December 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. was agreed on, which will allow sufficient time to incorporate any feedback from citizens into the CAPER and still allow timely submittal to HUD by the required deadline.

Ms. Cockerham-Guinyard briefly discussed tentative timelines for the next funding period – Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023).

ADJOURNMENT

With no further questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.