

**DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT  
PROGRAM COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 08, 2011**

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Attendance:

Members

Director Sidney Rubenstein, DDS – Chair  
Director Glen Grayman, MD

Staff

Donna Craig, Chief Program Officer  
Tricia Wheeler, Program Manager  
Peter Young, Interim CEO  
Steve Brown, Executive Assistant

Committee Members

Robert Taylor, Superior Court Judge (retired)  
Kim McNulty, Project Manager, CVEP  
Mitch Nieman, Community Member  
Elizabeth Toledo, Program Manager, Building Healthy Communities  
Matthew Keane, PA-C, ICON  
Allen Howe, City of Cathedral City

Absent Committee members

Bev Greer, Administrator, Stroke Recovery Center

Guests

Christy Porter, Hidden Harvest  
Lisa Houston, FIND Food Bank  
Tim O'Bayley, O'Bayley Communications

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Rubenstein. Chairman Rubenstein welcomed Allen Howe to the Program Committee.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A Motion was made by Committee member Toledo and seconded by Committee member Taylor to approve the agenda. Motion was approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A Motion was made by Committee member Taylor and seconded by Committee member Toledo to approve the minutes of January 11, 2011 as submitted. Motion was approved.

## **GRANTS**

### **a. Grant administration reports**

Members received the latest update of current active grants.

### **c. Pending requests for consideration**

The Staff Report (attached) "Re: Revised Food Program Grants to replace \$5,000 quarterly mini grants – Hidden Harvest and FIND Food Bank" was discussed.

Excerpt from the report:

Present: Since 2008 the Desert Healthcare District has made quarterly food assistance grants of \$5,000 to approximately 19 organizations. The funds have been used for many types of procurements, such as grocery store purchases; purchases at FIND; and other venues, such as Morrison Food Management.

Proposed: Staff has been in discussions with Hidden Harvest, FIND Food Bank, and Bridges of Hope – the three major food banks/pantries/distributors of food that serve approximately 110 agencies – to bring forward conceptual ideas for the reallocation of the District's food assistance resources for distribution of nutritious food to agencies that serve District residents. Formal applications were requested from Hidden Harvest and FIND and are in the committee packet.

The benefits to model change, as outlined in the report, were reviewed. The additional questions/comments were addressed:

Ms. Houston explained that under the proposed model change, working in collaboration with Hidden Harvest, *all* District food pantries (not just those currently receiving funding) would receive product, proportioned to each based upon the number of clients served. The product and the delivery will be at no cost to agencies within the District.

Ms. Houston and Ms. Porter will work collaboratively to combine food distribution and delivery systems, as well as coordinating and procuring fresh fruits and produce items. This will decrease the number of deliveries/pick-ups for agencies as well as ensure that there is no duplication of fresh fruits and vegetables being offered to agencies (which leads to waste).

Committee members agreed that the model change would leverage District dollars, streamline the process for food procurement and unanimously support the concept of

centralized distribution. Director Grayman and Community member Taylor expressed concern regarding input from the current food assistance grantee agencies on the impact of the model change to their programs. They stated it is important to obtain this input prior to a model change.

Ms. Toledo stated this is the next step in the evolution of Food Pantry distribution; she noted that not many years ago pantries were vying with each other to procure donated food items. This system has evolved into the model change before the Committee. And while input from the agencies is important as this process is developed, it is to be noted that this region has become a model in food distribution; it is exciting that the District's model has done that and this change is the next step in the evolution of food distribution.

Mr. Neiman stated that it is important to keep in mind that this model change will allow all food pantries within the District to receive increased services, not just those that currently receive funding. (The total number to benefit is approximately 45, of which only 19 are grantee agencies.)

Ms. Porter addressed the Committee concerns regarding the model change to the current grantee agencies; she and Ms. Houston were cognizant of the impact on these agencies as they crafted their proposal. They attempted to mitigate dissatisfaction by "building valued added" benefits to these agencies in the form of the additional product each would receive and free delivery of the product.

Ms. McNulty reiterated that this is a process change; the current grantee agencies would not be "cut off" immediately. This is meant to be a step process, and if agencies need assistance for an additional quarter to enable the transition that should be done. However, it should be made clear that these changes are being made in order to leverage District dollars and create a streamlined process. She stated that it is great to get their input, but there is nothing wrong for the District to think strategically beyond what it has been doing and consider whether or not the Board thinks this is a good idea. This model makes a great deal of sense; comparing it to the education workforce model and the tremendous capacity that has been developed by coordinating regional scholarship programs and the education programs, this is a natural next step. It is important to be sensitive to the grantee agencies, but this should not hold up the process for Board consideration.

Mr. Young stated that it is important to remember that the strategic plan for the next fiscal year (beginning July 01<sup>st</sup>, 2011) may or may not include grant dollars for food assistance/hunger relief. Staff considers this model to be a "bigger bang for the buck", and as many of the 19 agencies have already been moved over to this model they are already familiar with the new concept. If there are items the agencies are not currently obtaining from FIND, FIND will work with that agency to procure that item.

Ms. Toledo stated the Committee has to remember the other initiatives that the District has funded, citing the Coachella Valley Health Collaborative's Hunger Summit, from

which a Strategic Plan was created based on feedback from community partners. This identified the need to create a more regionalized system that meets the diverse need of the 45 agencies versus the 19. She reiterated that the process of obtaining the feedback should not hamper or lengthen the process when there are agencies in need; rather this feedback could be obtained while forwarding the recommendation to the Board level.

Discussion ensued regarding how best to receive input in a timely manner from the grantee agencies (and if input should also be sought from non-grantee food pantries). It was determined that Staff will contact current grantee agencies to determine the impact of the model change and bring these comments/concerns forward to the Board of Directors for their consideration. Additionally, Staff will contact the current grantee agencies with programs that are not the “pantry” model to see if there is a way this model could work for them, and if it does not Staff will recommend to the Board how support for these programs may be addressed (for example - the “meals on wheels” programs).

ID# 636. The Committee reviewed a request for \$183,632 from Hidden Harvest to support Fresh and Healthy.

Discussion/questions:

Director Grayman requested Ms. Porter explain the direct gain to District Residents from her proposal. Ms. Porter explained there will be a 100% increase in produce delivered to FIND for District agencies; there will be an increase the number of District agencies served; there will be coordination between Hidden Harvest and FIND to ensure there are no duplication of efforts (which lead to waste); and this will sustain and improve the delivery, consistency and availability of produce.

A Motion was made by Committee member Taylor and seconded by Committee member Toledo to recommend approval of this request to the Board, subject to receiving input from the current grantee agencies receiving food assistance. Motion was approved.

ID# 637. The Committee reviewed a request for \$275,249 from FIND Food Bank to support 12 months Food Distribution within the District.

Discussion/questions:

Director Grayman requested Ms. Houston explain the 6% labor/administrative costs comparative to the overall budget request; Ms. Houston reviewed her budget, explaining \$200,000 of the request is for food procurement; the remaining is the allocated labor/administrative cost. Community member Taylor requested Ms. Houston explain which agencies within the District this grant request will serve; Ms. Houston responded all current District agencies served by FIND as well as any current District grantee agencies not yet served by FIND. (Staff has identified who these agencies are, and will know which intend to utilize FIND once they have contacted each.)

A Motion was made by Committee member Taylor and seconded by Committee member Toledo to recommend approval of this request to the Board, subject to receiving input from the current grantee agencies receiving food assistance. Motion was approved; Committee member Neiman abstained due to a conflict of interest.

ID# 270. The Committee reviewed a request from CVEP/Pathways to Success for a seven-month no-cost grant extension for Pathways to Success – DHCD Scholarship Program.

Discussion/questions:

Chairman Rubenstein inquired as to the purpose of the extension. Ms. Craig explained that the scholarship cycle lasts for two years, therefore an extension is being requested to match the time of the operating support, monitoring, tracking and providing student services to all District scholarship recipients for the duration of their scholarship awards.

A Motion was made by Director Grayman and seconded by Committee member Neiman to recommend approval of this request to the Board. Motion was approved; Committee member McNulty abstained due to a conflict of interest.

ID# 455. The Committee reviewed a request from CVAG for a three-month no-cost grant extension for the Desert Resource Nurse’s Station.

Discussion/questions:

Director Grayman inquired about the amount of nursing hours provided per week. Ms. Craig explained that services are provided 4 days a week at 10 hours per day (often with additional overtime).

A Motion was made by Community member Taylor and seconded by Committee member Neiman to recommend approval of this request to the Board. Motion was approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Chairman Rubenstein informed the Committee that at the January 25, 2011 meeting of the Board of Directors the following grants were approved as recommended by the Committee:
1. Grant # 630 LifeStream Blood Bank: *Expansion of Rare Blood Library* - \$250,000
  2. Grant # 631 CSUSB/CVHC: *CVHC Physical Fitness website development* - \$10,000
  3. Grant #632 Jewish Family Services of the Desert: *Kids First school-based counseling program* - \$44,905

## **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Ms. McNulty invited everyone to attend the “Riverside County State of Education Address”, to be held at 11:30 am on Thursday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at the Palm Springs Convention Center.

Ms. Toledo inquired about the status of filling the open position of District CEO. Director Grayman responded that the District has engaged a firm to conduct a nation wide search.

## **STAFF COMMENTS**

Ms. Wheeler informed the Committee that the District will be a participant in the CVHC Community Wellness Challenge; once the website is functional Ms. Wheeler will send an email to the Committee informing them on how to join the District team.

Ms. Wheeler informed the Committee that they are invited to attend the February Board of Directors meeting (being held Tuesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00pm); this meeting will include a study session regarding HEALNet.

Ms. Craig informed the Committee she has received a phone call and follow-up email from Palm Springs Search and Rescue inquiring about a possible funding request for helicopter transport and replacement of medical bags. Palm Springs Search and Rescue received District funding in the year 2000 for the purchase of a truck. Committee feedback indicated this request may have merit, but also that helicopter transport may be considered Public Safety and could lead to requests from Fire Departments, etc. It was recommended that District legal counsel be contacted to advise prior to proceeding.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:39a.m.