

Human Services Commission

Meeting April 27, 2010

Commissioners Present: Ayse Atasoylu, Kati LaBraico, Lori Likis, Marian Darlington-Hope, Rev. Lorraine Thornhill, Claudia Hill, Nan Stone

DHSP Staff Present: Ellen Semonoff, Stephanie Ackert, Jolyon Cowan, Jose Soares (recorder)

Ellen received a number of telephone calls from agencies appreciative of the Human Services Commission March event "Celebration of Volunteer Spirit;" they expressed appreciation for the Google presentation of tools useful to agencies and the honoring of volunteers.

Jolyon Cowan and Jose Soares presented on CDBG agencies' performance reviews from the site visit rounds for Fiscal Year 2010.

Ellen Semonoff informed the Commissioners that for Fiscal Year 2011 HUD awarded an extra \$20,000 to be used for granting. This may be a one time increase just for the coming Fiscal Year.

Stephanie introduced a fact sheet for FY 2010 CDBG allocations by category and a FY 2010 Budget Goal spreadsheet of all the programs in the city funded by the Department to help Commissioners with the decision regarding the allocation of the extra \$20,000.

The Commissioners decided to allocate \$10,000 to food programs to respond to the largest increases in the numbers of clients coming to food pantries throughout the city, specifically, Food For Free Produce Rescue and Distribution Program, which distributes produce and other foods to all the pantries and various other feeding programs throughout the city. One of the issues that came up through the site visit reports was the increase in mental health related issues and domestic violence due to economic stress. And in response to these findings, Commissioners decided to allocate \$10,000 to Domestic Violence, specifically to the current grantee agencies Greater Boston Legal Services (Cambridge Abuse Prevention Project) or Community Legal Services and Counseling Center (Battered Women's and Child Support Advocacy Project).

It was agreed to send a mini Request For Proposal to the above agencies and have them submit a one page description of how they would utilize this one time only addition of money to address the current crisis. There was some caution voiced that this would be a one time increase of funding.

Jolyon will contact David Leslie at Food For Free to enquire about their capacity to increase the volume of their distribution for one year without affecting the current program. Depending on the response Commissioners agreed to increase the domestic violence component to \$15,000 and allocate \$5,000 to food distribution.