EFSP Local Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 9, 2014
United Way of the Inland Valleys
6215 River Crest Dr., Ste. B
Riverside, CA 92507

Attendees
Belinda Marquez
Allen Villalobos
Lisa Houston
Florita Jones
Ron Hewison
Donna Shaw (alternate)
Rick Pettet
Grant Gautsche
Lynne Brockmeier
Captain Keith Bottjen
Veronica Dominguez (alternate)
Gail Ousley
Susan Larkin (alternate)

Catholic Charities
Corona/Norco United Way
FIND Food Bank
Homeless Advocate
Homeless Advocate
Riverside County Executive Office
Riverside County Housing Authority
Riverside County Veteran's Services
Riverside County Mental Health
The Salvation Army Riverside Corps
The Salvation Army Riverside Corps
United Way of the Inland Valleys
Valley Restart Shelter

Absentees
Rabbi Shmuel Fuss
Derrick Cannon
Mercedes Rivas
Helen Ross
Eva Guenther-James
Lauren Scheller (alternate)
Alex Tortes

Chabad Jewish Community Center
City of Riverside
Community Connect
Lutheran Social Services
Regional Access Project Foundation
Riverside Community Health Foundation
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla

Guest
Pedro Ayala
Nancy Hatzidakis
Catalina Guitron
Emma Perez
I. Maciar

American Red Cross
American Red Cross
DPSS Contracts Unit
DPSS Contracts Unit
DPSS Contracts Unit

Homeless Programs Staff
Anabel Ramos
Jill Kowalski
Briana Lacy

Administrative Services Analyst II
Homeless Programs Manager
Office Assistant II

I. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. by Chair Allen Villalobos.

II. INTRODUCTIONS
Everyone was welcomed and self-introductions were given.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 12, 2014 MEETING MINUTES*
Allen entertained a motion to approve the minutes from Wednesday, March 12, 2014. Lisa Houston moved to carry the motion and Gail Ousley seconded. The motion carried with no abstentions.

IV. OLD EFSP BUSINESS
A. Updated
1. Board Roster/ FEMA trainings, IS-420 and IS-421.
   Allen formally introduced Pedro Ayala and Nancy Hatzidakis, representatives from American Red Cross, to the board. Allen entertained a motion to welcome Pedro and Nancy as official members of the Local Board. Belinda Marquez moved to carry the motion and Lisa Houston moved to second. Pedro announced that Nancy would be the primary representative and he would be the secondary. Anabel Ramos stated that if any member needs updates made to the Board Roster to contact her via e-mail. She has still not received all the certificates from some of the board members from both the FEMA trainings. Anabel stated that she will update Nancy and Pedro on the two trainings, IS-420 and IS-421.

   Action: All Local Board Members and LROs must submit their FEMA IS-420 and IS-421 certificates to as soon as possible.

   Action: Anabel agreed to update Nancy and Pedro on our FEMA Training.

2. Clearance Process Update
   Anabel provided her research to the board on the previous issue of duplication of clearance forms. Lisa inquired about the total allotment on rental assistance alone. Anabel agreed to research the total and get back to the board on the next meeting. Rick Pettet expressed how the clearance form process is very labor intense and inquired if there was something the board could do to simplify this process. Jill Kowalski stated that job will be performed by the working committee following this meeting. Rick stated that San Bernardino County does not have a clearance form process in place making it easier on the LRO’s to provide service. Belinda confirmed that that is true. Discussion was had on San Bernardino County’s process for EFSP rental/mortgage assistance verses Riverside County’s process. Anabel stated that DPSS has a clearing house database that we run all clearance forms through before approval to prevent fraud and also to help LRO’s keep record of their spending’s. Lisa inquired if the working committee would consider discussing reducing the clearance process for rental/mortgage and motel/hotel and putting more responsibility on the agency. Jill proposed it would be good to consider getting agencies involved in HMIS. Lynne Brockmeier stated that is probably not practical for this phase or the next, maybe for Phase 33.

   a. Phase 30: 707 Clearance, 13 Denial–Duplication, 17 Other, and 6 fraud (IS 1732)
   b. Phase 31: 114 Clearance, 35 Return for correction, and 2 Denial-Duplication

   Action: The Working Group will meet today after this meeting to review the process and make recommendations to the Local Board.

3. Conflict of Interest Update
   Anabel referred the board to the Conflict of Interest portion of the packet and requested feedback from the board before the working committee takes on this task. Lisa explained why she appreciated Sample B, the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

   Action: The Working Group will meet today after this meeting to review the process and make recommendations to the Local Board.
4. Monitoring Update
Anabel requested feedback so the working group can start working on a recommendation. Lynne inquired if we should add the supplemental funding and provide proof from the agency that their budget can provide services over 55%. There was a discussion on the LRO reaction during the Bidder’s conference. Anabel stated we need to have them provide proof of their non-EFSP in Phase 33. The monitoring was discussed in detail and Anabel stated she will start monitoring after the Phase 32 award is announced. Jill stated that she is currently looking into using our contract team to help with the process.

**Action:** Anabel will add the other funding verification to the monitoring tool under program requirements.

5. Grader’s Packet Update
Anabel explained that the LRO’s want the grading to be consistent and unbiased. Allen stated that this has been an ongoing conversation. He feels that there is always going to be different understandings and different perspectives on each agency; therefore the grading is going to vary. There will always be tough graders and more lenient graders. Allen explained, we do not want any agency to be denied but we cannot take away from the democratic process. Lisa inquired if the scores are averaged? Anabel confirmed that the scores are averaged. Lisa inquired about the process in place where there is a dramatic difference in the three scores given to an agency by the graders. Anabel explained that in the case that there is a dramatic variation in the three score we give the application to a new grader for review. Ron inquired if having graders is a national board requirement. Rick suggested we take out the individual scoring and just keep an average score. Lynne expressed her experience in the previous phase on scoring. Lisa inquired about the process on picking graders. Jill explained that it’s never really the same graders but we do usually recruit from the same pool. Anabel passed a sign-up sheet for graders to the board if they or anyone they might know is interested in being a grader. Jill stated we are more than happy to welcome anyone else who is interested. Pedro inquired about the purpose of the graders. Allen clarified that the graders rank the different agencies and the better your score the more money your agency can potentially receive. Allen feels that we should not eliminate graders because they are a tough grader, there should be a different process set in place. Lisa agreed that it is healthy to have tough graders because they might be noticing something that an agency is overlooking. Lisa inquired if senior center people qualify to be a grader. Jill and Anabel stated we are more than happy to pull people from the community. Lisa inquired on how many people need to be attending to present a training. Jill stated there would need to be around 15-20 attendees. Jill suggested stressing to all the graders attending the trainings to utilize the comment boxes to help the board get a better understanding of why they gave that grade. Gail added that she has a group of people who are interested in becoming a grader. Jill stated she can forward the e-mail to Gail and that she can send it out to those who are interested.

**Action:** Jill will forward the grader’s training e-mail to Gail.

6. Local Board Members Resources ([http://dpss.co.riverside.ca.us/homeless-programs/emergency-food-and-shelter](http://dpss.co.riverside.ca.us/homeless-programs/emergency-food-and-shelter))
Anabel presented the EFSP Manual that was given at the last board meeting and requested suggestion on what should be added to the DPSS website under the Local Board header. Allen would like to see all the information from the manual on the website. Anabel stated she will look into having all the information available.

a. Board Member Information
b. New Member Packet
1. Policy
2. History
3. Quick Reference

**Action:** Anabel will look into putting all information from the manual on the website.

B. **Working Group – Meets 4/9/14 at 10:30 AM**

C. **EFSP Local Board Policy Update**
   1. **Secondary Payment Release Procedure**
      Anabel asked the board for comments or suggestions on the Secondary Payment Release Procedure. Ron inquired if we are sending in four documents for second payment? Anabel stated only if the LRO did not clear a previous audit, the LRO is a new recipient of EFSP funding, or the LRO is cited for some accounting problem during a monitoring visit by DPSS staff. Ron did not agree with the policy. Anabel suggested for next year’s application, the LRO should provide proof of their non-EFSP funds. Anabel stated that the next policy the board will be discussing is policy A-3. She request that everyone review this policy and provide her with feedback before April 30, 2014.

      **Action:** The board members will review policy A-3 and provide feedback to Anabel before April 30, 2014.

D. **Phase 30 Final Report**
   Anabel stated there is still no new news; we are still waiting for our final reports to get finalized. She explained that she checks for updates on a daily basis and communicates with Ralph Winchester, of the national board, at least once a week. Captain Keith Bottjen expressed that this is why his agency does not spend their EFSP funds ahead of time because he feels there is no guarantee that the funds will be available. Ron recommended that we be proactive on explaining to Ralph that we only have 8-10 weeks left in the phase to not only receive our funds but to expend them as well. Anabel informed the members that Ralph’s response would be that this is a supplemental grant and LRO’s should be spending their funds and reimbursing themselves when the funds become available. Jill stated that if you have to wait to expend your EFSP funds then you do not have the additional program funds to be qualified for EFSP. Captain Keith Bottjen disagreed, he stated he does have funds to support his agency, but he is not going to spend more funds then he can afford to do. Allen inquired that if an LRO receives the award letter, is it a guarantee that they will receive those funds. Anabel confirmed that the LRO will receive the funds if there is no compliance issue. National is waiting to release funds until they finish Phase 30 to determine that agencies don’t have any compliance issues. Allen stated the LRO’s are now having a mistrust of the government because of how they have handled things. Lisa inquired if LRO’s operate by helping more people with EFSP grant in addition to their own funding. Anabel stated that is the expectation of each LRO. Lisa went into detail on the use of the word “supplemental”, stating that LRO’s are expanding their agency not being supplemented.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**
   A. **Phase 31 Transitional Housing Program**
      Anabel informed the board that we had a transitional housing individual apply for EFSP funds. This individual went to several organizations and applied, and did not have any luck so she came into contact with Anabel and made her aware of her situation. Anabel was not familiar with a transitional housing lease, so she explained to the individual that she would have to review the lease before
moving forward. Anabel discovered that they recognize rent as program fees. Ron stated his procedure on how he handles the transitional housing clients. He does not use his EFSP funds to assist these clients because he never received a response from national stating if LRO’s can or cannot assist transitional housing clients. Lynne stated that program fees are not rent. Anabel also noticed in the lease that the apartment agreement is with an organization and not the client, so technically she cannot be assisted because there is no agreement in place with that client. Anabel stated this subject will be brought to the working committee’s attention.

B. Phase 32 Should Bidders Conference be mandatory
Anabel stated we had the bidder’s trainings on March 19th and March 20th, 2014 and everything went great. There were a couple of organizations that were not represented at either of the trainings, so Anabel inquired if the bidder’s trainings should be mandatory for Phase 33. Susan stated it should be mandatory because there is so much detail in the way the application is set up LRO’s need to be informed. Lynne suggested a little more notice on the dates when the bidder’s trainings will be held. Anabel also suggested a different schedule, not having the two trainings during the same week. The board suggested offering three trainings at three different locations and staggering the trainings on different weeks.

VI. CALENDAR
A. Next Meeting
May 14, 2014 at 9:00 AM, same location.

B. Technical Assistance
Anabel supplied the board with the technical assistance calendar for the 2014 year. She stated that every LRO has the opportunity to attend these technical assistance trainings scheduled every second Wednesday, at 2:00 PM, and we rotate the locations. One will be held in Riverside and the other in the desert. Anabel stated she will e-mail the board a colored copy of the technical assistance calendar clarifying the East and West locations.

Action: Anabel will e-mail the board a colored copy of the technical assistance calendar clarifying the East and West locations.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER
• Lynne announced there will be Matter Fair Housing Conference to be held in Riverside at the Convention Center on Thursday, April 24, 2014. You can go through the certification for Fair Housing Training at this event. It is $60 for a single person and $40 for eight or more people and you receive a free lunch. It is an all-day event and registration is on the Fair Housing Council of Riverside website.
• Anabel announced that if anyone is interested in signing up to be a grader please do so and once she finalizes the training dates she will inform those who are interested. Allen stated he will encourage those who don’t apply to EFSP funding to become a grader.
• Captain Keith announced that they have a golf tournament coming up on May 19, 2014 at the Victoria Club. The thrift store branch of The Salvation Army will be providing a container to the location to collect donations from 9AM to 2PM.
• Grant announced there will be a Veterans Expo held in Riverside, on May 10, 2014 from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM. This event is free and open to the public. For more information you can contact The Salvation Army at (951) 653-9131.
• Belinda announced that Catholic Charities continues to sign up people for Medi-cal.
VIII. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m. by Allen Villalobos.

Respectfully submitted by Briana Lacy