

**Broward County Community Action Agency  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Virtual Meeting**

**March 16, 2022  
6:00 p.m.**

**Board Members Present**

Marlon Bolton  
Phoebee Francois  
Anthony Jackson, **Vice Chair**  
Mia Merritt, **Chair**  
Veronica Phillips  
Ana Ziade, **Secretary**

**Board Members Absent**

Helen Hinton (Excused)  
Donna Guthrie

**Other Attendees**

Leonardo Carmona, Accountant, CAA  
Efrem Crenshaw, Human Services Administrator, CAA  
Sharon Eady, Resident of Fort Lauderdale  
Chedely Etienne, Administrative Specialist, CAA  
Shatara Piedrasanta, Human Services Manager, CAA

**THERE WAS AN OFFICAL QUORUM PRESENT FOR THIS MEETING.**

**Welcome**

Chair, Mia Merritt called the meeting to order at 6:03p.m. Roll call made for the record.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Mia Merritt asked if everyone reviewed the summary of minutes from the January 19, 2022, Advisory meeting and if there were any question or corrections required.

Secretary Ana Ziade made a motion to approve the minutes from January 19, 2022, and Veronica Phillips offered a second. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

**FACA Annual Training Conference**

Staff announced that the statewide Florida Association for Community Action (FACA) conference will be held during the week of May 11-13, 2022. As previously mentioned, Broward County Community Action Agency will be the host this year. The registration link is open and staff has started to register for the event.

Staff is asking board members to participate, if possible. During the conference members, have the oppportunity to network with different boards, and participate in the different workshops and

evening events. The agency can pay registration and parking fees. Efrem Crenshaw announced that he is the Chair for the Conference Committee. Veronica Phillips and Secretary Ana Ziade is interested in attending.

### **Board Membership**

Several members terms have expired including Mia Merritt, whose term expires this month. She has expressed the desire to continue to serve on the board and the executive committee agreed to present her to the full board for re-seating.

Secretary Ana Ziade made the motion to keep Chair Mia Merritt on the board and Vice Chair Anthony offered a second. The motion to re-seat passed unanimously.

Sharon Eady's term has expired and her Homeowner Association (HOA) has verbalized that they would like to keep Ms. Eady on the board in the same position. The election that was supposed to take place on March 3, 2022 was postponed, the members will now vote on the item at their upcoming meeting on April 7, 2022. Therefore, she is participating today in an unofficial capacity.

There are two (2) vacant seats in the public sector, formerly Ebony Pardo's seat (designee for Bobby DuBose) and Ella Phillips seat (designee for Perry E. Thurston). The agency is waiting to hear from the County's Administrator regarding replacements for the public sector vacancies. There is also a vacant seat in the low-income sector, formerly held by Larhonda Ware-McPhaul whose last meeting was in January. Staff reached out and attempted to get someone from Dorsey Riverbend Civic Organization to fill the vacant seat.

Marlon Bolton asked, since he was nominated by former Commissioner Dale Holness, when will his term expire. Staff confirmed July 2022 and at that time he would either seek reappointment or be replaced by the County Commission. Veronica Phillips also confirmed her expiration date is September 2022.

### **DEO Monitoring Updates**

Staff announced that the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), the agency's funding source, is scheduled to monitor the entire Community Action Agency- CSBG and LIHEAP programs during April 4 – 8, 2022. Monitoring usually occur every 2 to 3 years, and they will review the whole operation including fiscal, administration, programmatic, and they may contact board members to ask about their participation.

### **Agency Updates**

Staff reported the agency is conducting business as usual, most contact is done remotely to continue practicing social distancing. The agency continues to provide case management services and individuals have the opportunity to access training. CSBG orientations are virtual; documents are being submitted via email.

One challenge worth noting is for renters as housing expenses are increasing and landlords continue to go up on rent. Individuals are having a hard time finding affordable housing.

The program finds it difficult identifying housing for customers due to the increase in cost and the agency continues to identify partners with who whom we can work together to fulfil the ultimate goal which is assist customers with increasing or maintaining stability.

Shatara Piedrasanta shared about recently attending a CareerSource Broward partnership meeting, where it was mentioned that employers find it challenging when hiring since individuals are not accepting the positions due to low wages or wages not being enough to sustain housing in Broward County.

LIHEAP funding has increased which allows customers to possibly qualify for more assistance. Staff is encouraging customers to re-apply since they may qualify for additional assistance until they reach the maximum amount that LIHEAP is able to provide under the program.

Broward County has updated their COVID-19 protocols. Business will resume some of the re-COVID activities, meaning employees are able to travel and customers can enter county facilities without a mask. Advisory Board and Executive Committee meetings may be in-person soon and we hope for the same attendance and commitment.

Chair Mia Merritt informed the board that her class schedule may conflict with the meetings, she is available in-person for either meeting and request is it possible to have the Executive Committee online. Staff informed the board that if meetings are in-person with a quorum present, then the chair can call in.

Secretary Ana Ziade also added that she has a meeting one-hour prior to the Advisory Board meeting and requested possibly shifting the meeting dates and times. Board members were encouraged to review the meeting dates and times for another discussion. It was asked if the online meetings effect the monitoring, and staff stated that it does not.

Board member asked the policy on wearing mask at the meetings, and staff stated that there are conference rooms large enough to accommodate everyone and practice social distancing. The agency encourages mask wearing but cannot require it.

### **Financial Highlights**

Board members reviewed the Financial and Program Reports, and staff advised that the information reflected relates to LIHEAP and CSBG. Handouts related to financial and budget updates and program reports were provided.

### **CSBG**

- January 2022 Financial Activity Reimbursement Report (in SERA) for CSBG CARES ACT FY2020 was submitted for approval to DEO on Feb-25-2022.
- Utilization for CSBG CARES ACT FY20 by January 2022 was \$360,709.52, right on target.
- Utilization for CBG FY21 until January 2022 is \$1,166,994 (83% of budget), which is also on the right track.

**LIHEAP**

- January 2022 Financial Activity Reimbursement Reports (SERA) LIHEAP FY21 was submitted for approval to DEO on Feb-25-2022.
- Utilization for LIHEAP FY21 until January 2022 is \$2,736,674 (93% of budget) also right on target.
- LIHEAP FY22 budget was approved by DEO for \$7,230,100. Expenses for January 2022 total \$74,007.
- DEO will conduct on site monitoring for CSBG and LIHEAP during first week of April 2022. Our CAA unit already received respective monitoring manuals.

**Outreach**

Ms. Audrey Ljung is not on the call today and have been busy with outreach and contacting different organizations to purchase an advertising page during the FACA conference. Board members were asked if they know anyone in the community or for themselves who is interested in purchasing a page to contact staff (or FACA) for additional details or FACA. This is a great opportunity to get information to the community. All other outreach updates will be provided to the board at the next meeting.

Chair Mia Merritt asked if invitations were sent to local elected officials, and staff stated that since Community Action Agency is a Broward County agency, staff cannot send information directly to elected officials.

Marlon Bolton invited staff and the board to attend the upcoming event on April 27, 2022, at 5:00pm in the City of Tamarac. Mayor Ana Ziade also reminded everyone to attend the upcoming event in North Lauderdale.

**Adjournment**

Chair Mia Merritt adjourned the meeting at 6:55p.m. The recording of this meeting is found on a CD labeled CAA Advisory Board Meeting, dated, 03/16/2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Minutes Approved:**  
**Motion by:**  
**Seconded by:**