

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2007**

Commissioners Present

Bob Masengill, Chairman
Richard Shlakman
Susan Lavigne
Jene Brogan
Pamela Harvey
Sharon Marsh-Wyly

Commissioners Absent

Betty Monday-Mahan, Vice Chair
T. J. Johnson

Staff Present

Christina Day, Neighborhood Services Manager
Jerry Bradley, Jr., Community Development Coordinator
Stacy Brown, Sr. Community Development Coordinator
Terrie Monroe, Sr. Community Development Coordinator

The Community Relations Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Masengill at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 6, 2007, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 - PUBLIC HEARING
REGARDING THE USE OF THE 2007-2008 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK
GRANT, HOME GRANT, AMERICAN DREAM DOWNPAYMENT INITIATIVE AND
THE ROBERT W. BUFFINGTON COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT**

**AGENDA ITEM 3A - PUBLIC HEARING
FAMILY OUTREACH CENTER**

Family Outreach, which had been rescheduled from the January 16, 2007, hearing, was first on the agenda. Being a new applicant, Janet Madrazo began her presentation with a history of the agency's 30 year existence. In particular, she addressed their need for funding due to cuts made by the State of Texas. Ms. Madrazo, with assistance from Executive Director Marian Datesman, discussed the three programs that the agency operates: In-Home Mentoring, Community Outreach, and Parenting Classes.

Ms. Madrazo requested a total of \$75,000.00 for these programs. The Commission complimented the agency on their 88% success rate, and Ms. Madrazo expressed that they were happy with that percent of success. Commissioners were also interested in the parenting classes. Ms. Datesman stated the class was a 7 week program that covered topics from toddler tantrums to school issues. Ms. Madrazo expressed that with the classes and the relationships formed with their volunteers, the organization helps to break the cycle of abuse.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3B - PUBLIC HEARING JOURNEY HOME

Chairman of the Board, Kitty Spencer and Executive Director, Valerie Dillard, were present to represent Journey Home, Inc. Ms. Spencer requested \$30,000 for the hospice residence, which will pay for the emergency housing costs and operational costs for approximately forty individuals with less than six months to live. Ms. Spencer explained history of the home and expressed their motto of "Community Commitment for a Community Need". Commissioner Harvey asked why there was an 81% increase in client fees projected for 2007 over 2006. Ms. Spencer and Ms. Dillard respectfully asked permission to follow up with the Commission at a later time.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3C - PUBLIC HEARING COLLIN COUNTY COMMITTEE ON AGING

Marilyn Stidham, Executive Director of Collin County Committee on Aging, requested \$55,125.00. The requested funds would be used for the cost of continuing and expanding evening meals for approximately 140 to 160 Plano citizens. In addition, the weekend meals program would be funded for Plano elderly who may be homebound, low income, and without emotional or financial support. Ms. Stidham explained how important the evening and weekend meals are to the "nutritionally at risk" clients. Ms. Stidham stated that without these meals, many elderly citizens would not be able to live independently. Ms. Stidham was asked why she did not show client fees in her budget. She was able to explain that they do not charge the client. However, a client or family member is allowed to make a donation. Any such funds would reflect in their budget as donations, not client fees.

AGEND ITEM NO. 3D - PUBLIC HEARING MAURICE BARNETT GERIATRIC WELLNESS CENTER

The Maurice Barnett Geriatric Wellness Center was represented by Executive Director Carolyn Rice. Ms. Rice explained that her agency was one of only two agencies in Collin County that serve exclusively elderly persons. She quoted statistics concerning the aging population in Plano and the services that will be needed for that population. Ms. Rice requested \$45,000.00 to serve approximately 3000 seniors in need of affordable health services, health education, health-related referrals, and preventive health services.

Ms. Rice stated part of the funds would be used for a computer server. Ms. Rice was asked about efforts to find a donor for the server. Ms. Rice explained that they have tried with no success.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3E - PUBLIC HEARING FORREST OUTREACH FOUNDATION

Tanya Greene, Executive Director of the Forest Outreach Foundation, requested funds in the amount of \$13,625.00 for their Click-for-Success program. This program promotes digital literacy by offering a comprehensive technology education and mentoring program to low-income PISD students and families. Ms. Greene stated that students enter the program in third grade and graduate in the 5th grade. Therefore most of the cost of the program is in the first year, when they are provided a computer. Ms. Greene stated that she will be making a large attempt to get the computers donated in the future. The question was asked how many students would be in the new third grade group, and she reported ten. This calculates to \$1,362.50 cost per child. Some Commissioners were concerned that internet access was provided, and if certain web sites could be blocked from the children. Performance measures were a concern of the Commission, since it appeared that computer skills were all that was measurable. Ms. Greene stated that their goal is to follow their students from 3rd grade up to the time they enter college. Since none of the children have reached that age yet, they don't have information to analyze long term performance measures. They can report that there is only a 5% attrition rate and that the students are doing well in school. They suggested that the Geriatric Wellness Center contact Forest Outreach about computer donors.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3F - PUBLIC HEARING PLANO COMMUNITY HOME

Plano Community Home was represented by Lee Ann Hubanks, Executive Director. Ms. Hubanks requested \$203,488 to be used for restoration of a Heritage District home which would be used as their corporate office and for a video security system for their east campus. Ms. Hubanks was asked if the agency would own the home they wish to renovate. Ms. Hubanks stated they would not, as this property belongs to Plano Housing Authority. She stated that it would be a net lease situation. The Commission asked if the agency had completed any type of analysis comparing the cost of renovations to renting another building. Ms. Hubanks stated that the agency had not done this, but felt this building was the perfect location, and a good offer as it benefited them and the Housing Corporation. Ms. Hubanks also reported that Bank of America had already donated enough office furniture to completely furnish the building. Ms. Hubanks was asked how many bids she had gotten on the security system. Ms. Hubanks stated that she has requested three, but had only received one back. When asked what all the video cameras would cover, Ms. Hubanks explained all three stories of the building, all doors to the building, the exterior of the building, and parking lots. The system would trip an alarm as well as record video. Ms. Hubanks stated that none of the cost of the system included salary for monitoring the system. She feels that the system will help reduce the cost of their current monitoring.

It was pointed out that questions 30-35 were missing from their application. Ms. Hubanks was asked to provide that to the staff as soon as possible. Ms. Hubanks furnished the information.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3G - PUBLIC HEARING PLANO ISD EDUCATION FOUNDATION - EVEN START

Jane Lilliston represented Plano ISD Even Start Family Literacy Program. Ms. Lilliston requested \$44,000 to be used to serve the under-educated, illiterate, and low income Plano families. The agency works with the entire family to develop life skills that will create self sufficiency. Ms. Lilliston reported on performance measures which included 80% attendance and an 85% retention rate. Ms. Lilliston was asked what percentage of attendance would be the agency's goal, and Ms. Lilliston responded with 90%. The grant funds would cover part of a salary for a part time Outreach Education Coordinator. The Commission asked what that employee would do. Ms. Lilliston stated that the Outreach Education Coordinator would teach, coordinate activities, and do attendance records. The Agency's budget showed \$2,000 for conferences. Ms. Lilliston was asked if that was for the part time coordinator. Ms. Lilliston stated that it was for other employees as well. Ms Lilliston was asked how they use computers. She explained that they have to be part of the PISD computer network so the students can sign on to access their class work. Ms. Lilliston stated the parents can get in to the system to view their children's grades and other PISD information. It was pointed out that the budget did not reflect the 2006-07 grant received last July. Ms. Lilliston requested to follow up with the Commission with the 2006-07 grant information. She stated that she would also furnish information about Collin County having the highest percentage of non-speaking English residents.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3H - PUBLIC HEARING PLANO HOUSING AUTHORITY

Brenda McDonald, Self Sufficiency and Real Estate Manager, and Helen Macey, Executive Director of the Plano Housing Authority, stated that the Self Sufficiency Program encourages families to move from welfare to work and to become financially independent. The families strive to increase important skill sets to become competent in the work place within a five year time frame. Even though self sufficiency and financial independence are part of HUD's mission, they do not fund this program. The Housing Authority has moved into a new building, and the new address is 1740 Avenue G, Plano, Texas. Ms. McDonald was asked why only 75% of their clients are from Plano. Ms. McDonald stated that each Housing Authority is charged with providing service to persons within a 50 mile radius, which exceeds the city limits of Plano. However, 100% of the participants in the self-sufficiency program are from Plano. It was pointed out that #36 on the application did not make sense as completed, since the agency did not receive funding in 2005-2006. These items had been corrected on attached sheets.

They were asked how many Katrina evacuees were served. Ms. Macey stated they had 167 families being served that received the new Federal Regulation allowing them the choice of going home or staying here under the portability aspect of Section 8. Ms. McDonald responded to the question by explaining how this program could be considered an emergency program.

Commissioner Harvey recused herself from all discussion and voting regarding Plano International Preschool and Practical Parent Education and left the room.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3I - PUBLIC HEARING PLANO INTERNATIONAL PRESCHOOL

Kristen Price, Executive Director of Plano International Preschool, gave the background of the school's 43 year history, and the many nationalities and languages represented in the school. Ms. Price requested \$30,000 to be used in the following objectives: to provide well-balanced nutrition to children from low-to-moderate-income households; to provide a safe and educational summer camp environment; and to conduct rehab on the plumbing system in the kitchen and bathroom areas. Ms. Price was asked what percentage of her students were CDBG eligible, and she answered 60% or 55 students at any given time. Ms. Price explained that the funds for summer camp are used to reduce tuition for those students. Ms. Price was reminded by the Commission that she had to maintain a ratio of at least 51% low-to-moderate income to meet CDBG guidelines. Ms. Price was asked about the playground that had been funded, and she stated that she is still working on the project and currently has two bids. The Commissioners were concerned about the on going plumbing issues; especially the grease trap in the kitchen. The Commission asked if she had other sources for this repair. Ms. Price explained that the issue with the trap had been there before PIP purchased the building, and the grant was her only source.

Commissioner Brogan dismissed herself from the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3J - PUBLIC HEARING PLANO ISD EDUCATION FOUNDATION - PRACTICAL PARENT EDUCATION

Ms. Lucy Long represented Practical Parent Education. Ms. Long spoke about the emerging needs of Spanish speaking families and the increase of 558 Spanish speaking PISD students from the previous year. The mission of the agency is to assist Plano's Hispanic population to become self sufficient and learn to use the services, products, and resources that are available to them. The goal is to help parents become more qualified to guide and nurture their children toward success on all levels. Ms. Long requested \$24,000 to provide parenting classes, literacy classes, and emergency relief for low income families with critical needs. Ms. Long was asked why her agency needed to provide rent and utilities when so many other agencies offer this service. Ms. Long stated explained that they only provide this if they had no other source of referral.

Ms. Long was asked the percent of clients that could not read or write in their own language. She responded that she did not have a percentage, but she knew that they currently have 190 people enrolled in literacy classes. Ms. Long stated that they are currently working at a deficit, and two teachers are working without pay. Ms. Long was asked why there was only one Hispanic on the Board of Directors. Ms. Long stated they have difficulty finding someone to commit to the one year training and the time required to serve.

Commissioner Harvey resumed her seat.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4
DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING DELIBERATION MEETINGS**

Review format and requirements for deliberation meetings on February 13, 2007, and February 15, 2007.

There will be two nights of deliberation, and the evaluation forms must be completed in time for the results to be included on the matrix. The deadline to get the evaluations to Christina Day is Monday, February 11, 2007. Christina Day, Neighborhood Services Manager, explained that she would email the Commissioners the agenda for the upcoming meetings. Commissioner Harvey asked how much of a role the evaluation form plays in the funding decision. Commissioners responded that it was a point of departure, not a decision maker. Stacy Brown, Sr. Community Development Coordinator, asked if we are assuming that we are receiving the same amount of money as last year. That is all we can do as the announcement from HUD may not come until April 2007. There was discussion as to whether or not the evaluation was used on the matrix last year. Commissioner Shlakman stated that providing emergency services is an important issue in his decision making.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5
ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

There were no items for future agendas.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Lavigne. Commissioner Harvey seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Robert Masengill, Chairman