

Community Relations Commission Meeting
February 21, 2006

Present: Carol Moss, Chair
Victoria Hoyos-Arango
Bob Masengill
Jene' Brogan
Susan Lavigne
Dick Shlakman
T.J. Johnson
David Woolard

Staff: Bob Buffington, Terrie Monroe, Stacy Brown

The meeting was opened by Chair Carol Moss at 6:30 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Moss gave instructions to the group detailing the order of presentations, the three- minute time limit, and the fact that the requests for these funds were approximately \$3,035,000 and the actual amount that the Commission has to spend is approximately \$2,430,000. The number of citizens attending the hearing was 15.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes of December 6, 2005

A motion was made by Dick Shlakman to approve the minutes as written. Bob Masengill seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Public Hearing Regarding the Use of Community Development Block Grant, HOME Grant, American Dream Downpayment Initiative, and Community Services Grant Funds

Lee Ann Hubanks, Executive Director of Plano Community Homes, addressed the Commission concerning her request for the funding of three projects. Ms. Hubanks explained that her first priority was to upgrade the old emergency call system, the second priority was for the funding of a service coordinator, and the third priority was for the purchase and installation of solar window screens on tenant windows to reduce tenant electric costs. The total amount of the request was for \$281,390.

Executive Director of Plano Housing Corporation, Dan Allgeier, stated that the purpose of the organization is to buy homes, rehab them, and sell them to low and moderate income individuals and families. They currently have three homes under contract which are set to close by the end of March, 2006. Mr. Allgeier stated that the organization continues to increase their outreach to the community through presentations to clubs, groups, and listings on the MLS. The request is for \$140,000 for operating expenses, and to buy four existing homes, to rehabilitate the homes, and re-sell them.

Journey of Hope Executive Director Susan Williams explained the purpose of the organization is to provide support groups for grieving children, teens, and their families. She noted that the program had 280 participants last year. One of the reasons for the increase in participants was the introduction of a young adult support group. Since last year the agency has also trained

three Spanish facilitators. The agency will be initiating an anticipatory grief program in the coming year. They are requesting \$15,000 for operational support.

Suzan Stambaugh represented AIDS Services of North Texas. She explained that in Collin County in 2005, forty new AIDS cases were diagnosed, and 77 new HIV cases were diagnosed. Ms. Stambaugh stated that they are asking for \$60,000 to be used for the nutrition center in Plano and for unreimbursed medical expenses. The Commission requested that all agencies work with each other to reduce overlapping services.

The Executive Director of the Maurice Barnett Geriatric Wellness Center, Carolyn Rice, informed the Commission that her organization provides preventive health services to senior citizens to enable them to meet healthcare needs and remain independent in their home settings. Accomplishments this year included translating all documents into Spanish, and the implementation of a post-hospitalization care program. They requested \$43,275 for their program.

Executive Director Cathy Barker explained that Family Services of Plano has changed its name to Crossroads Family Services. The number of clients assisted in 2005 by the organization was 3400 with 77% from Plano. They are asking for \$50,680 for relocation expenses, a full-time receptionist, and to purchase equipment. Ms. Barker explained the need to relocate due to an expanding client base.

Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas was represented by Chris Parks, managing attorney in McKinney, and Sam Prince, development director for the organization. They stated that the organization is the sole provider of legal services to the low income population of Collin County. Five attorneys staff a five county region with a concentration in landlord-tenant law and public benefits. They requested \$20,000 for salaries and operational expenses.

Kristin Price, Executive Director of Plano International Preschool, stated that currently the school is providing an education to 93 children from 22 countries. Ms. Price requested funds to provide nutrition to children primarily from low-income households, provide equipment for the physical development of children, and to provide children a safe place to be during the high-risk summer months while enriching their educational opportunities. She explained that they have expanded their 2 year old program with funds from last year. They are requesting \$25,000 for the nutrition program, playground improvements, and summer tuition assistance.

Plano Community Charity was represented by Dr. Myrtle Hightower, board president. Dr. Hightower explained that the organization helps many people with many things. She mentioned that the organization assists the elderly and disabled families to make home repairs that challenge their welfare, as well as provision of food, homeless services, preventive health, clothing, and rent and utility assistance. They requested \$48,306 to fund a home repair program. However, Dr. Hightower indicated they would rather use any funds received for rent and utility assistance. The Commission requested an amendment to the grant request be sent to City staff if the organization wants to use the funds for any assistance other than the provision of home repairs.

At 9:57 PM, Jene' Brogan made a motion to adjourn, Bob Masengill seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Carol Moss, Chair