

Community Relations Commission Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2004

Present: Matt Shaheen, Chair
H. Shaheen Salam
Stella Vea
Jane Stephenson
Christy Doering
Victoria Hoyos-Arango
Carol Moss

Absent: John Harris

Staff: Bob Buffington, Stacy Brown, Terrie Monroe, Jerry Bradley, Jr.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Shaheen at 6:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes of the December 10, 2003, meeting were approved as written. Sixteen citizens were in attendance. Mr. Shaheen stated that the Commission would hear the presentations in the order which they had been assembled in the commission packet by staff. Each presenter will have ten minutes to make their presentation, and to be fair to all, staff will use a timer to notify presenters when their time has expired.

Public Hearing – Community Development Block Grant and HOME Grant

Howard Dahlka, Executive Director of Samaritan Inn, made the first presentation and requested \$70,000 for the salaries of two support specialists, payment of utilities, childcare and other financial assistance for 120 persons. The Inn was granted \$42,000 last year and provided 2,481 nights of shelter, 7,400 meals to 406 residents of Plano, and of that number, 206 received referrals and other services. Additionally, the total number of persons assisted from Plano in 2003 was 343, and 93 unduplicated residents of Plano participated in the cold weather program through their use of CCART, receiving 1,300 nights of shelter and nearly 4,000 meals and showers while doing laundry and receiving clothing as well. Mr. Dahlka was asked to explain why there was a balance of \$14,231 remaining in last year's grant, and he was unaware that there was a balance as he was under the impression that there wasn't any remaining. Additional questions were posed regarding the frequency with which a person can receive utility assistance, what the income eligibility guidelines were that were used, and whether there is an expectation of continuing increase in need for services.

The next presenter was Mary Fredericks, Chief Operating Officer of LifePath Systems, who requested \$43,500 to expand their emergency housing and utility assistance program in which rental deposits, rent, and utilities for Plano mental health and mental retardation clients are paid. In addition, LifePath Systems is making a request to upgrade and renovate a play therapy room at the Alma Center. Ms. Fredericks stated that in 2003 they served 25 unduplicated persons living in Plano with emergency rental and utility payments and have developed an internal referral process which "stretches" the financial resources which LifePath has. When asked about the balance of \$5,315 remaining out of the amount granted last year, Ms. Fredericks stated that the balance is due to the development of a quarterly allocation that assures them that their most critical needs will be met each quarter. She said that once that allocation is exhausted, they have to find some other referral source for that client until the next quarter. Additional

questions raised were related to the frequency of times assistance can be obtained by clients, why there was a line item in the overall agency budget of "Profit", if LifePath Systems provides employment assistance, what North Star is, whether there are children coming to them formerly covered by C.H.I.P.S., and to what would Ms. Fredericks attribute the increase in mental health needs.

Renee Carroll-Grate, Executive Director of Hope's Door, requested \$37,642 for the salary, taxes, and benefits for an administrative assistant. Ms. Carroll-Grate informed the Commission that they are still in the process of purchasing property and will soon use last year's allocation.

A presentation was made by Suzan Stambaugh, Director of AIDS Services of North Texas, 14th Street Clinic. Ms. Stambaugh indicated that there has been a 30% increase in the number of families that have been affected by AIDS in this five-county area. Of the 110 clients receiving medical services, 24 persons were Plano residents, and of 89 clients accessing the Plano Nutrition Center, 50 of these were Plano residents. They have increased their fund raising with a Casino night and by writing for grants. The request is for \$45,700 which includes food, hygiene products, and non-reimbursed medical expenses for 60 indigent clients residing in Plano. A question was raised about the number of clients from Plano.

The Children's Advocacy Center was up next with a presentation made by Jackie Fleming and Dan Powers. Ms. Fleming stated that they are proud of their collaborative efforts with CPS, the DA's Office, Hope's Door, Plano Family Services, and Foster Care. The agency is requesting \$75,500 to replace one-third of the current air conditioning units, and add ventilation, plus an additional air conditioning unit, in addition to painting the interior offices, upgrading the security cameras, and soundproofing forensic interview rooms.

The Organization for Latin Americans presentation was made by Martha Leija, Executive Director. Ms. Leija requested \$36,125 to pay salaries for the program/vocational counselor, counselor assistant, clerical assistants, and receptionist, and benefits for the counselor. In addition, they will use the funds for telephone expenses, office supplies, and mailing expenses. After further questions, it appears that all the paid staff positions being requested are actually filled by Ms. Leija. All other staff are volunteers.

Diane Mathey, adult education director for Even Start, reported that the Technology grant from last year was successful, and that they would like to expand their program to teach everyday life skills. The clients are limited to being in the program for two years. The program serves between 92 and 100 persons. They would like to increase that number to 200 this next year. The request is for \$27,000 which will be used for a computer, printer, one part-time instructor's salary, and classroom supplies and materials. Questions were raised about the lack of use of last year's expenditures. Ms. Mathey stated that she would get the answers for the Commission.

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Collin County was represented by Christina Blanchard, Chief Executive Officer, and Charles Dillon, Teen Director. Mr. Dillon explained that 35-40 teens per day are served. They are requesting \$35,000 to support three core teen programs at the Plano Teen Center. Ms. Blanchard informed the Commission that the organization will be affected by United Way cutbacks, but that they have increased their fund raising efforts. The question was raised as to why last year's funds have not been

expended. Ms. Blanchard stated that the timing of the grant has hindered its use, but that that they expect to expend the funds by December 2004.

Marilyn Stidham, Executive Director of the Collin County Committee on Aging Meals on Wheels Program, made the request for \$24,750. These funds will be used to pay for the cost of providing 246 meals to 21 clients annually at a cost of \$4.50 a meal. The question was posed as to why last year's funds have not been spent. Ms. Stidham informed the Commission that the funds have been expended, but not requested from the City. They are currently working on a computer system that will provide the reporting required by the grant.

The next presenter was Paul Hoffman, Executive Director of Dental Health Programs, Inc., who requested \$15,000 to assist in paying the salary, wages, payroll taxes, benefits, and insurance costs for a dentist, hygienist, and two dental assistants, to provide 150 dental visits to 60 Plano youth and senior citizens. Mr. Hoffman assured the Commission that should they grant DHP any funds they won't be asking them about any balance remaining this time next year, what with the rising demand for dental health services of this uninsured population, since the State of Texas has cancelled dental benefits under C.H.I.P. Mr. Hoffman stated to the Commission that, while the City did provide a grant for their start-up operation and the subsequent three years, because DHP received \$3,000,000 from Collin County for last two years, they did not make a grant request last year. Last year, DHP provided dental services to 343 unduplicated persons that are residents of Plano. Comments and questions centered around to what degree other dentists in the city were willing to donate their services, and how much better it would be if more dentists saw the need to do so.

The final presenter was Betsy Amos, Director of Development for Communities in Schools Dallas, Inc., who requested \$50,000 for funding the salaries of two case managers. These case managers are assigned to Armstrong Middle and Williams High Schools. Ms. Amos noted that, although this is the first time that her organization has made a request for CDBG funds, what necessitated such this time was that PISD cut the funding for this program at these schools, and the principals requested that she seek a funding source so that they could continue to be served by her organization. Ms. Amos stated that last year 468 unduplicated persons attending these schools received case management services of academic and social counseling, drug and alcohol prevention activities, tutoring and several other services. Questions posed by Commission member concerned the number of staff assigned to each school, how many board members lived in Plano, whether the organization was seeking additional Plano board members, and the method used to determine the income eligibility of those being served.

After stating that the next public hearing will be held Monday, February 9, 2004, at 6:00 P.M. in the Building Inspections Training Room, Matt Shaheen entertained a motion to adjourn the public hearing at 8:42 PM. Motion was made by Stella Vea and seconded by H. Shaheen Salam, and the meeting was adjourned.

Matt Shaheen, Chair