

Urban Weatherization Initiative Board Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
January 20, 2012

Meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by UWI Board Chair, Percy Harris

Meeting Location: Kankakee Community College

Attendees: **Voting Board Members:** Deborah Harrington, Percy Harris, Melissa Williams
Ex-officio Members: Representative Dave Winters
DCEO Staff: Deputy Director Carmen Colvin

Approval of Minutes: No minutes prepared for January meeting due to staffing.

UWI Staff Status: Effective December 29th, Ms. Marie Dumas' temporary assignment status has been withdrawn, therefore currently I have no staff assigned to work with me on the UWI Program. In the interim I have worked with human resources to have 4 positions posted for the Office of Urban Assistance, 3 which will be dedicated to the UWI Program. These positions will be posted within a short period of time and I will provide an update of the UWI Staff Status at the next meeting. Effective January 24th, Ms. Mary Cottini will join the UWI team as an emergency appointment effective for sixty calendar days.

General Discussion: Mr. Harris requested status of all weatherization contractors. He was advised that all grantees have received their contracts and the request for checks have been issued. Mr. Harris discussed the issue of a delay in announcing the grants and expressed concerned related to the community at large being made aware of these grants by hosting a community event. Mr. Harris discussed the negative impact of delaying the announcement related to program and future jobs and the negative comments received from the Governor's office and the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus while the Board has taken all action possible. He expressed concern that the UWI Board is not receiving proper support, the Director of UWI not receiving adequate support from the department to get the job done successfully. He reiterated the fact that when the department initially received the funding the department utilized the funds for a different program without advising the Board, therefore the initial set of awards need to be readjusted. He requested that the department stand up to the plate allowing this program to move forward. In expectation of receiving additional funding several issues will have to be addressed, which will include additional training and naming of more communities. However, to complete this task we must know that we're going to be properly staffed and receive adequate funding. Ms. Williams agrees. Ms. Williams expressed concern regarding the community awareness of events and the fact that the website had not been updated. Ms.

Colvin expressed to Ms. Williams that the website would be updated upon receiving all executed grant agreements from grantees. Ms. Harrington suggested that all grantees be contacted within the next week if they have not returned their grant agreement. The Weather Specialist Training grant period is January 1, 2012 - December 31, 2012.

The press release was disseminated in early January. Ms. Harrington spoke about developing a strategy to increase public awareness of the program by identifying a distribution list of local agencies in the designated communities. A request was made to identify which newspapers actually ran the press release. Ms. Love indicated that a least 12 newspapers ran the press release. Ms. Stott indicated that Mr. House will work with DCEO -OUA to work as a partner in communicating the activity of OUA and developing a distribution list for local organizations.

Mr. Harris indicated concern regarding the continuity of staff for the program. The change of staff has resulted in the program having several false starts, and each change requires an indoctrination period, which presents added challenge due to a lack of communication. Mr. Harris requested the primary communication for the programs be emails, that way all appropriate personnel may be notified regarding pertinent issues.

Future Meeting

Locations:

February - Chicago

March - Rockford - Regional Representative

April - Kankakee

May - East St. Louis

Ms. Harrington expressed concerned related to lack of attendees in Kankakee. Ms. Williams stated that the meeting information should be located on the website, one month prior to the meeting date, if the location is going to be outside of Chicago. Mr. Harris stated he believes that people don't believe they can attend the meetings.

Next Meeting:

February 17, 2012