

Urban Weatherization Initiative

Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2014

Meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by UWI Board Chair, Percy Harris

Attendees:

Voting Board Members: Percy Harris (via phone); Melissa Williams (via phone); Deborah Harrington

DCEO Staff: Carmen Colvin; Sarah Atkins

Guests: Mark Handy, Kenjiva (via phone); Steve Simmons, Chicago Jobs Council; Marlon McClinton, Utilivate Technologies; Hua Chau, Albany Park Community Center; John Pady, Albany Park Community Center

- I. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the January 17, 2014, have been tabled until the next UWI Board meeting.
- II. **January—March Action Plan Update:** The UWI Board has been given updates regarding the 1st and 2nd quarter reports and the majority of the grantees quarterly reports have been reviewed and approved. Third quarter reports will be coming in in March 2014, and the staff will begin the process of reviewing these reports. Mr. Harris inquired about staff follow up with grantees regarding those who reported placing trainees in employment.

Ms. Colvin commented on the staffing concerns of the program indicating that Ms. Foster would more than likely be out of the office until March 2014. Mr. Love, a grant manager, is slated to be out until May 2014. Ms. Davis, another grant manager, will be out of the office for medical reasons in upcoming months. The department has hired an additional staff member in Springfield—Anne Conwill—and has been assigned all grants downstate. Anne is also responsible for updating the UWI webpage. Ms. Colvin's primary issue has been staffing and the continuity of the staff presence in the office.

Ms. Williams indicated that after today's UWI Board meeting, she will be resigning as a board member. Ms. Williams will submit a letter regarding the reason(s) as to why she is resigning from this position. Ms. Harrington inquired about any action the UWI Board and others could do to push the staffing issue. Ms. Colvin indicated that Ms. Foster's absence is a major problem and based on the absence that Ms. Foster has taken, Ms. Colvin is unable to fill the position with a temp to fill the void of Ms. Foster's position. Ms. Colvin is looking to find an individual to fill in on a temporary basis as an additional grant manager.

Ms. Colvin is hesitant about putting an RFA out in March 2014, due to staffing issues/concerns. The Illinois Black Caucus is looking at where the money is being spent and wants to see more work being done from this program. Mr. Harris raised concerns that organizations think this is an entitlement program and it's not. In addition to that, the program has had a hard time getting applicants in the communities that the UWI program expanded to.

Ms. Colvin discussed the Home Energy Auditor, Weatherization Specialist, and Residential Weatherization Program statistics presented to the UWI Board via spreadsheet through 1st and 2nd quarter. The RWP grantees have received the final document for the Health and Safety information. Ms. Colvin is happy to report that some RWP grantees are beginning to do the work on the homes. Ms. Colvin has indicated that getting homes completed is the number one objective of this program.

Ms. Colvin discussed the marketing plan and the department is proposing a major mailing plan and a mail list has been put together for all organizations/groups in the target areas that would be considered. There will be 2-3 mass mailings approximately 2-3 weeks before the RFP is released. The marketing plan is being put together by DCEO's Team RED and other Deputy Directors within DCEO. The first mailing would be a letter, followed by a flyer, and finally a post card indicating that the RFP is on the street. This marketing effort is to get organizations to apply for the program that can actually do the training component of the grants.

- III. CNT Update:** In January 2014, CNT conducted the Prevailing Wage training as well as the Best Practices training. UWI staff and CNT have met to discuss the RWP grantees and outline what the grantees' needs are and identify any challenges that individual grantees need to work on in order to be successful. CNT is also conducting site visits with the grantees and provides the program and the grantee a site visit summary which addresses issues/concerns and provides positive feedback to grantees who are doing well.

Ms. Colvin's concern is that CNT Energy's contract ends within the next few months. Ms. Colvin is meeting with CNT to discuss their contract with UWI. Ms. Colvin indicated that CNT's contract was with the Office of Energy Assistance, and that office is the one that is funding CNT.

Mr. Harris inquired about money and if the Office of Energy Assistance does not renew a contract with CNT, and the UWI program had the funding, UWI could contract with CNT. Ms. Colvin indicated that CNT has been a valuable asset to the program and to the RWP grantees.

Ms. Colvin indicated that she has submitted a request for \$39 Million for the next fiscal year and that did not include any funding for CNT. Ms. Colvin has been directed that she needs

to get the next round of funding out the door for the next round of RFA applications to show that our program is spending money.

Ms. Colvin indicated that the program does not have enough money to give the FY13 Weatherization Specialist grantees the \$250,000.00 that was cut from the budget when the grants were awarded. Ms. Colvin indicated that the program has about enough money to fund only 7 of those grantees. The RWP grantees have not received additional funding since the initial cash disbursement; however this will be changing once the RWP grantees begin the work on the homes. Ms. Harrington inquired about the allocations of funding. Ms. Colvin indicated that what would typically happen, the RFA would go out for about a month, the applications would come back in to be reviewed/evaluated, and then approvals around July 2014. This is the process even though the program does not have this money on hand. Ms. Colvin is looking to have this money received and disbursed by June/July 2014.

IV. General Discussion: Ms. Harrington would like a copy of the Annual Report. Ms. Colvin indicated that she had sent this out to the UWI Board members. Ms. Williams discussed the 50% hiring requirement and feels that this needs to be monitored closely and that a better effort needs to be done at getting the trainees hired. The grantees need to take responsibility to hire the trainees. Ms. Williams also discussed that one of the grantees was scheduling meetings and marketing the meeting and then not showing up. If grantees schedule these meetings and then don't show up, it makes the UWI program look bad. Ms. Colvin indicated that there was a grantee that coordinated a meeting with a third party and the third party cancelled the meeting without notifying the grantee. Ms. Colvin has spoken with the Representatives in this grantee's area about the issue. Ms. Colvin has also indicated to all Representatives that if an event is going to be organized for the UWI program, that the UWI staff be notified and can be made available for the events. Ms. Williams indicated that this program has taken up a lot of time and the Board members have been committed to the program and it's a slap in the face to the Board and the staff not to get enough support. This program needs to be given the proper attention that it needs. Ms. Harrington wanted to recognize and commend Ms. Williams as a Board member and a great resource for the community.

V. Executive Session:

VI. Next Meeting: Friday, April 18, 2014, to begin bi-monthly meetings

VII. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.