

## **Urban Weatherization Initiative**

### **Board Meeting**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**March 21, 2013**

**Meeting was called to order at 11:37 a.m. by UWI Board Chair, Percy Harris**

#### **Attendees:**

**Voting Board Members:** Percy Harris, Melissa Williams, Deborah Harrington, Beth Delgado (via phone)

**DCEO Staff:** Carmen Colvin, Sarah Atkins

**Guests:** Hua Chau, APCC; Brendon Foster, APCC; Angela Baily, CJC; Graham Giovagnoli, eZing; Luther Mason, SOUL (via phone); Byron Hobbs, SOUL (via phone)

- I. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes approved for the February 2013, Board Meeting
  
- II. **Residential Weatherization Program Update:** As of last week, \$15 Million dollars have been released for the UWI program which are adequate amount of funds for the RWP program. UWI will be awarding all the vendors for the RWP program with the exception of HACIA. HACIA submitted a letter of withdrawal to the RWP program indicating that the allocated amount for the Administrative costs are too low. Mr. Harris's concern are the people in the area that would suffer because of HACIA backing out of the RWP program, and suggested that the UWI program put out the application for organizations to apply to serve the area that HACI A would have covered. Ms. Colvin will check with the legal department to see if this is a possibility, but ultimately the UWI program does not want this to create a problem. Ms. Colvin indicated that the UWI program is moving forward in getting the Grant Agreements prepared, processed, and out to the RWP awardees. The request for appropriation was made back in September and Ms. Colvin met with Senator Trotter and Representative Duncan to help expedite the release of the funds. Mr. Harris stated that the Board cannot spend money when there is no money to spend and inquired whether or not the UWI Board will have to rely on Senator Trotter and Representative Duncan to help expedite this process when requesting funding for the future.

Ms. Colvin indicated that there will be two more staff members joining the team on April 8, 2013, and there is a possibility that there will be a position posting in Springfield for another staff member to service that area for grant coverage. There have been discussions to hire an outside contractor to work with the grantees regarding spreadsheet data and inputting of information.

- III. Residential Weatherization Program Procedures:** The manuals have been distributed to the Board for review. Mr. Harris pointed out that there was still the 'renter's language' in the procedures and that needed to come out of the procedures, and there needs to be a section regarding standards of replacement equipment with the proper energy efficient equipment to be installed in the homes. Ms. Colvin indicated that once the UWI program receives notification that the funds are to be released, UWI will be scheduling an RWP meeting for all of the new grantees. The UWI program wants to invite everyone to attend in person or via teleconference to go over the requirements of the program and ask questions once the funds are released.
- IV. RFA Application Status:** Many legislators and grantees are calling in regarding the next round of grants. The potential time line for the next round will be somewhere between late summer and fall. The UWI program cannot put out another round of RWP applications until the Home Energy Auditor and Weatherization Specialist training programs get underway in the expanded areas.
- V. General Discussion:** Ms. Williams inquired about the 1-800 numbers that were previously discussed. Ms. Colvin indicated that UWI has an additional line on Ms. Foster's phone for individuals to call in. The challenge has been setting the phone lines up in order for individuals to press different numbers to get information regarding the nature of their call; however, the UWI program is still inquiring about whether or not there is the capability to set up the phone lines this way.

Ms. Colvin indicated that the UWI program will be acquiring new staff members and they are scheduled to begin April 8, 2013. Ms. Foster is preparing binders for the new staff members in order to acclimate them for their position. The two new staff members' job titles are the same as Ms. Atkins and Ms. Davis' titles as Grant Managers, and their job duties will include work on the UWI program as well as doing minor Administrative Assistant duties as the UWI program does not have an Administrative Assistant at this time. The UWI program had requested an Administrative Assistant; however, this position has not approved at this time. There will be a shared staff person that will be doing some of the Administrative Assistant duties, but this person will not be utilized 100% of the time. Ms. Colvin indicated that because the UWI program is short staffed, at future Board Meetings, the only staff that will be present are the ones that are presenting information and those who have been assigned the task of taking the minutes. This has been put into effect in order to better utilize staff time in working on the UWI program.

Mr. Harris requested that the new Director and his Assistant be at the next meeting so that the Board can meet them. The Board has a lot of responsibility regarding this program and has done a lot of hard work to steer the program in the direction

of being one of the best weatherization programs offered. The Board would like to get the 5<sup>th</sup> seat of the Board filled in order to help the current Board members with the duties and responsibilities. The Board would like to find a Board member who can represent the Board outside of the Chicago area.

Ms. Williams suggested that when we are looking at awarding grants, we are not just looking at written applications, but we begin to do visits to some of the sites. Some organizations may not be able to write the best application, but have great sites for training. We need to modify how we are doing things and not just base awards on the grant applications that are received. Ms. Harrington suggested that if we do site visits, we need to have clear criteria of what we are looking for when we visit a potential awardee. Ms. Colvin commented on a potential problem of going out to a site to visit and the UWI program awarding that applicant but didn't visit another site and that site was not awarded. Whatever the criteria is, it needs to be equitable and fair to all applicants. Collaboration is the key for the applicants and the Board has stressed this point since the beginning of the program.

Mr. Harris noted that we need to be more proactive in making people aware of the program. When the program expanded from five to twenty-six counties, we only received fourteen applications and we had to put the applications back out for the counties to apply. When we had the original five counties, we had twenty applications. We need to do something about the amount of applications that have come in and be more proactive.

- VI. Executive Session:**
- VII. Next Meeting:** April 19, 2013, at 11:00 a.m. Chicago, Illinois
- VIII. Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.