

**Approved Minutes of the Thursday July 16, 2020 meeting
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC)**

The Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) held a public meeting on Thursday, July 16, 2020, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Per Governor Sisolak's Emergency Directive 006, there was no physical location required for this teleconferenced meeting. Public comments by teleconference are welcome.

Teleconference number: Conference call 888-204-5984, access code 2799329#

Materials: <http://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/Grants/PGS/>

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Announcements

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Diane Thorkildson. Connie Lucido took roll call and a quorum of the Grants Management Advisory Committee was confirmed.

Members Present

Ali Caliendo
Amy Kelley
Leslie Bittleston
Amber Bosket
Diane Thorkildson
Fernando Serrano
Tom McCoy (emailed he was present)
Stacy York

Members Absent

Shirley Trummell
Shayla Holmes
Susan Lucia-Terry
Fred Schultz

Department of Health and Human Services, Grants Management Unit staff present

Connie Lucido, Chief
Tisa Coons
Cyndee Joncas
Jennifer Hughes

Others Present

Christopher Croft, NCAA

There were no additional announcements.

II. Public comment #1

Chair Ms. Thorkildson invited public comment.

Christopher Croft announced he was attending the meeting. There were no other comments.

III. ACTION ITEM: Approval of minutes of April 16, 2020 meeting

Chair Ms. Thorkildson asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes from the April 16, 2020 meeting.

A motion to approve was made by Leslie Bittleston, and Amy Kelley seconded the motion.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson asked if there was any discussion.

The motion passed unanimously without discussion. The minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting were approved.

After Agenda item number IV., Amber Bosket stated she was present in person at the April 16, 2020 meeting.

A second motion was made by Leslie Bittleston to approve the minutes with changes, and Amy Kelley seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously without discussion. The minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting were approved with changes.

IV. COVID-19 Funds Update and Budget Reductions (discussion and information) Connie Lucido

COVID-19 Funds Update - Ms. Lucido presented information regarding funding and grants administered by the Grants Management Committee. The Federal Government has created several different funding streams in response to the pandemic. The GMU manages the Community Action Agencies (CAAs) who receive the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funding. This funding was targeted for CARES supplemental funding. In April it was expected to receive approximately 5 million dollars which was to be distributed using the same funding formula as the annual budget. Nevada, among other states, did not receive the full allocation due to the cap contained in the CSBG Act. Our Federal partners are seeking clarification from Congress that the Act does not apply to CARES funding. In lieu of the clarification the OCS funded a portion of the 5 million dollars which amounted to approximately 1.3 million dollars. That funding was brought in during the June Internal Finance Committee (IFC) meeting and subgrant awards are being issued now. In order to receive that funding the scope of work must include direct service types of expenditures. At this time no additional CARES funds are being received.

Budget Reductions – Ms. Lucido said the special legislative session is not over, but every agency was asked to review their budgets and determine where funds could be reduced. At this time the GMU will move forward as if there will be no cuts or reductions until advised otherwise. DHHS Deputy Director of Programs Beth Handler is currently applying for more funds. Ms. Lucido asked if Ms. Handler had any comments.

Beth Handler said the Department of Health and Human Services has received a significant amount of CARES funding and applications have been submitted for more funding. DHHS, in partnership with the Governor's Finance Office, is tracking that funding. Assembly Bill 3 is being heard today which may impact DHHS.

Amy Kelly asked if the overall Federal funding was reduced?

Ms. Lucido said yes, the funding was reduced due to the CSBG Federal Act Cap which limits the amount of funding to less than 140% of the previous year's funding. The OCS is working with congressional leaders to get clarification of whether or not the CARES Act funding is governed by the Cap. Clarification is expected by September or October.

Ms. Thorkildson invited questions or comments. There were no questions or comments.

V. Title XX update (discussion and information) Connie Lucido & Julieta Mendoza

Ms. Lucido said that Julieta Mendoza oversees this program and reports to our Federal partners. The attachment shows the approximate annual funding amount based on what has been received in years past. There have been no reductions so far. The purpose of these funds is achieving economic self-sufficiency. Over the past year the GMU has made great strides in talking with subrecipients about the coordination of each of the subrecipients who receive funding. Title XX is a block grant and much of the policies and use is determined by the particular state which receives the funds. There are twenty-eight service categories. Julieta reports to the Feds which categories are being used and approximately how much is being funded in those categories. If a service is not specifically identified in a category it still may be provided under category twenty-nine - other services. Drawing your attention to case management services it says the amount of child and family services statewide is 1.5 million dollars and states the services are not being provided under this funding. That is not to say those services are not being provided in Nevada just that the services are not being funded by Title XX funds. Category twenty - prevention and intervention services is the category where in previous years sub-recipients for the RFP/NOFO have been placed. With the work we have done over the past year and a half we feel we will be able to better prioritize and organize the services into categories other than category twenty-nine – other services.

Julieta Mendoza commented it is the plan to use the recent statewide needs assessment when allocating the Title XX funds during the next NOFO. Historically Title XX funds have been used to supplement FHN funds. Subrecipients who did not receive FHN funds were moved under Title XX funding and usually lumped into category twenty-nine – other services. In the future the NOFO for Title XX should run a little smoother.

Ms. Lucido explained that when Medicaid expanded its eligible services many State agencies began to look at their funding and what the funding is being used for and to offset it by billing Medicaid. Conversations were held with State agencies receiving pass through funding to look at ways they can do the same thing in order to free up funding for the Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO).

Chair Ms. Thorkildson asked if that NOFO would be separate from the one we were discussing?

Ms. Lucido said yes, the committee would see a NOFO for independent living services, one for positive behavioral support, and then a separate one for Title XX activities.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson asked if it is hoped that process will happen in November?

Ms. Lucido said yes by November there will be a better understanding of what funding will be available for release. There are some services at the state level that could potentially be billed to Medicaid but there are other services for those who are not eligible for Medicaid. Those services would remain funded by pass-through funding through State agencies.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson invited comments or questions. There were none.

VII. Initial Priority Ranking for Fund for Health Nevada (FHN) funds (discussion and information)

Connie Lucido

VIII. Initial Priority Ranking for Title XX funds (discussion and information) Connie Lucido

Note: VII and VIII were discussed as one topic:

Ms. Lucido asked the committee to look at the attachment labeled “Initial Priority Considerations”. It is hoped that information from the Special Legislative Session will help with deciding priorities for the available funding. The Initial Priority Considerations document contains tables taken from the Statewide Needs Assessment and gives information about health issues in Nevada. Links are included to statewide Boards, Commissions, and Committees who may provide information which can be used when deciding priorities. The Tobacco Settlement Fund table shows how those funds are distributed. Flat funding was requested during the budget building process for these categories. As an example, Budget Account 3195 Director’s Office Grants Management Unit shows the bulk of the funding to be considered. It would be useful to look at the Aging and Disability Services links and think about what sorts of services are absent and how the funding can be used to fill those holes. Perhaps staff from ADSD can attend a meeting and give information about what services their programs cover and make suggestions for ways the funding can align with their services. Ms. Lucido suggested the committee take about a month to review this document, give thought to recommendations and then come back next month to a special meeting to discuss the initial funding priorities. It would be at that special meeting that ADSD would attend and provide information.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson agreed that bringing ADSD to the table would be beneficial. Chair Ms. Thorkildson said she serves as the chair for on the Commission for Services for People with Disabilities (CSPD) and even with information gained from both positions additional clarification is much appreciated. Chair Ms. Thorkildson clarified that the process will be to review the attached documents in the next month and then meet prior to the quarterly meeting.

Ms. Lucido said yes, a meeting dedicated to the priority conversation would be useful and help with the NOFO release preparation. Ms. Lucido asked the committee members to please send information on other groups desired to attend meeting.

Ms. Kelly asked if there is a needs or asset map that can be reviewed? How will financial needs be determined and what is the process to ensure even distribution of funds? Would the GMAC make similar recommendations as the recommendations made by the CSPD? And if yes, then would the GMAC yield to staff for decisions?

Chair Ms. Thorkildson said the CSPD is legislatively mandated to send a letter on an every-other-year basis stating how the CSPD would like the FHN dollars to be spent. The CSPD is aware the funds are not evenly distributed right now but felt since there was so much need and so many categories the conservative choice was to evenly split the funds. The CSPD only makes those recommendations because it is required to.

Ms. Lucido said the GMAC is also required to provide funding priority recommendations. The CSPD letter was provided to show what other groups in the State are requesting of the Director. After the funding recommendations are provided then the Director and Governor will determine the funding priorities.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson commented that the CSPD would have benefited if they would have been given more background information to help when making recommendations.

Ms. Lucido pointed out the funds listed on the Tobacco Settlement Fund document under Budget 3195 that the GMU manages. The Respite, Positive Behavior Support and Independent Living Grants funds have traditionally been included in the RFP process. Those are the funding priorities which have the greatest needs for recommendations. In addition to that is consideration on the Title XX funding as well. Also included in the meeting materials is a spreadsheet titled Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) aka Title XX Services Categories with more details for each service category.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson clarified the process is now for the committee to review the needs assessments documents and then meet in about a month for a more detailed discussion and decision-making process regarding the Respite, Positive Behavior Support, Independent Living and Title XX funds.

Ms. Lucido said yes and asked Chair Ms. Thorkildson if she would like to send Ms. Lucido an email requesting a special meeting to be held in August.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson said she would send that email and invited comments or questions. There were none.

VI. Draft Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) (discussion and information) Connie Lucido

Ms. Lucido reviewed the draft Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The intent is that each funding stream and program will have its own NOFO which will be scored and ranked separately. One piece that
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was missing was a tie to existing strategic plans and needs assessments. The goal is to have clear plans, goals, and strategies for each program. Cultural competency language and excluded activities will be included. The applicant will be asked to state what other sources of funding are received. GMU personnel will review the technical portion of the application.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson expressed gratitude for the draft NOFO.

Leslie Bittleston said she appreciates the technical review. One aspect Ms. Bittleston looks for when reviewing an application is Medicaid funding. Ms. Bittleston would like to see a place for the applicant to identify if they intend to serve those who are not eligible for Medicaid or indicate the services are not available through Medicaid. Last year there was much discussion regarding direct and indirect costs due to not enough resources to fund all expenses.

Ms. Lucido said many applications have included a percentage of funding for specific activities such as 75% of the budget for direct services, 10% for administration or indirect costs and 15% for evaluation activities. One thing the funding committee can consider is putting in percentage requirements.

Ms. Bittleston asked if the percentages would be identified in the budget so as to help the applicants complete the template?

Amy Kelley asked if the sections delineating average, basic, and weak will auto fill the summary?

Ms. Lucido said yes, the application score column would auto fill.

Ms. Kelley's said the NOFO appears to be an exceptional tool, expressed her concerns about ties and asked for more information about the secondary reviews. She also asked if the funding committee will be critiqued if the ties are overridden due to disproportionate funding.

Ms. Lucido said the proposed process will be to put out the NOFO application, receive the applications, the GMU staff will perform a technical review, the evaluators will receive the proposals and review for application components and then return to Ms. Lucido. The GMU staff then will perform secondary reviews, compile the scores and place the proposals into geography. Then all the evaluators will meet to discuss the projects. Ties and questions can be addressed during that discussion. Then the results of those processes would go to the full GMAC for approval for recommendation to the Director. Ms. Lucido asked the GMAC if that process met with their approval.

MS. Thorkildson commented that this process would have been very helpful last year when making tough budgetary decisions.

Fred Schultz said if the project is funded under another grant it should not just be denied automatically. Many times, other funding supports sustainability after grant money runs out.

Ms. Lucido will include directions to address that scenario.

Ms. Kelley asked if collaborative proposals are weighted or favored?

Ms. Lucido said on the page that has the general scoring rubric average there are places to score for project collaboration. Over the past year it has been emphasized to recipients that they should be working closely with their community partners with the goal of not duplicating activities.

Ms. Kelly was curious if applicants would be penalized if no community partners are available?

Ms. Lucido said grantees can respond with an explanation that there are no available community partners and they would not be penalized.

Ali Caliendo asked if the application could include a place for information describing how closely the grantee was able to follow the proposed activities, whether modifications were needed, and if marks were met.

Ms. Lucido said that information can be added during the secondary review and can include staff input regarding the grantee's operation history.

Ms. Caliendo said staff information as a data point would be helpful and asked if the evaluators will have the opportunity to ask questions of the applicants as has happened in the past?

Ms. Lucido agrees it is important that the applicants are able to answer any questions that may arise as a result of the evaluation, however it does not seem fair to ask the entire committee to consider the application after we have asked the evaluators to review. Perhaps most beneficial would be to have the applicants present when the evaluators reconvene so that the questions can be asked at that time.

Ms. Caliendo agreed.

Ms. Kelly said that although it can be helpful when applicants provide information she wonders if it creates a bias? Given the number of applicants last year it could be a lengthy meeting if everyone showed up and wanted to speak.

Ms. Lucido asked what if the applicants were advised of meeting and asked to be available for a phone call in the event there were questions?

Ms. Bosket said phoning would be appropriate.

Ms. Kelly asked what the best practice rationales are for asking or not asking questions and wondered if it would create a bias for applicants who show up and provide additional content and clarification vs. applicants who don't. The applicants have been asked to fill out applications which are compelling, concise, and content specific so is it fair to ask for more than the applications?

Ms. Caliendo commented that two rounds ago comments and questions were allowed but then last year it wasn't clear, and it felt like they weren't offered an equal opportunity. She said either way is fine as long as it's clearly communicated to applicants.

Ms. Lucido proposed an addition to the evaluation tool, a section where evaluators may enter comments or ask questions and during the secondary review the GMU will get the answers.

Ms. Bosket agreed and said that it is important to have a clarification element but not to change or augment their application.

Ms. Kelly agreed.

Fernando Serrano thanked everyone for their efforts and asked if the GMU staff would perform the technical review and look at the attachments?

Ms. Lucido replied yes.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson invited comments or questions. There were none.

Ms. Lucido said the changes will be made to the document and it when it is sent to the evaluators in October it should contain program information. The anticipated date to the public is November as services they will applying for will begin July 1, 2021 or for Title XX funds October 1, 2021.

IX. Public Comment #2

Chair Ms. Thorkildson invited public comments or questions. There were none.

X. Additional Announcements and Adjournment (discussion and information) Diane Thorkildson

Ms. Lucido reminded the members of the next GMAC meeting, which is scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. and that there would be a special meeting scheduled to discuss funding priorities.

Chair Ms. Thorkildson adjourned the meeting at 11:16 a.m.