

**Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)  
Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) Disability Services Subcommittee Meeting**

**May 2, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

**Approved May 25, 2017**

**Meeting Location:** Teleconferenced.

**Public Access Location:** Department of Health and Human Services, Family Program Office Conference Room, 4126 Technology Way, Carson City NV 89706

**Members Present**

Steve Kane, Subcommittee Chair  
Leslie Bittleston  
Susan Lucia-Terry  
Dr. Allie Wright

**Members Absent**

Cindy Roragen

**DHH Staff Present**

Cindy Smith, Chief, Office of Community Partnerships and Grants, (OCPG, DHHS)  
Crystal Johnson, Julieta Mendoza, Marci Mueller, Pat Petrie, Gloria Sulhoff, OCPG

**I. Call to Order, Welcome, Introductions and Roll Call**

Subcommittee Chair Steve Kane called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM. He thanked the subcommittee members and staff for their work, and the applicants for their participation in the process. Roll call was taken and all subcommittee members with the exception of Cindy Roragen were present, confirming a quorum.

**II. Public Comment**

None

**III. Discussion: SFY18-19 RFA Grant Applications**

Introduction

Cindy Smith, OCPG Chief, stated that the OCPG was excited to see new applicants and collaborations submitted from this RFA, and thanked everyone for their work and participation. She reviewed the parameters for the meeting. Interaction between the subcommittee and the applicants is not allowed; public comment periods are for comments only, not for discussing individual applications. Subcommittee discussion can include scoring and reviewer evaluations of the applications, specifically or generally. The Disability Services program area includes three sub-categories: Independent Living, Respite Care, and Positive Behavior Support. She introduced Julieta Mendoza, OCPG program manager for the Disability Services grants.

Explanation of Grant Solicitation Process and Review

Julieta Mendoza stated that this RFA was seeking proposals that incorporated collaboration, particularly with health care providers. Additionally, applicants were asked to describe how their program addresses low-income and disparate populations and the integration of person-centered practices.

Ms. Smith referred the subcommittee to the handout. The first page listed applicants in the Independent Living subcategory, ranked by score, and included two funding scenarios for consideration. Option 1 awards the full amount of requested funds to the top scoring applicants until funds are exhausted. Option 2 would allow more programs to be funded, but with a 10% reduction in the amount of their request. Steve Kane has developed a third funding scenario that he will talk about. The second and third pages of the handout listed applicants in the Positive Behavior Support and Respite Care subcategories.

Ms. Smith stated that the PCAN Subcommittee, which met earlier that day, had a lot of discussion regarding equitable allocation of funding throughout the State. The topic of geographical distribution comes up every grant cycle and will probably continue as a point of discussion. The Department is open to other options and is always looking for feedback from the GMAC to improve the process.

#### Conflict of Interest Disclosures

- Dr. Allie Wright stated that she is a part time instructor for Nevada State College, and is on the board of directors for Community Counseling Center; neither is a final applicant on this list. Mr. Kane indicated there was no conflict of interest.

#### Discussion and Review of Proposals

Ms. Smith read comments submitted by subcommittee member Cindy Roragen, who was unable to attend the meeting:

“I think you'll see a common message in my applicant comments about the lack of objective outcome measures. While the template asked about the satisfaction component, only a handful of applicants took advantage of the opportunity to provide more detail in why their project is meaningful and how that would be measured.

I am concerned that New Vista seems to be taking a backwards step in time with their proposal, and feel that their goals for individuals with cognitive challenges can and should be met in the community with support.

Some proposals scored high because of their organizational strength and strategic plan. It is concerning that a possibly unnecessary or weak project may be funded because of who submitted.”

Because all the Disability Services Subcommittee members were new to the process, Ms. Smith suggested they proceed by reviewing each of the three subcategories, discuss each area and the funding options, and decide if they want to consider a third option.

Mr. Kane explained his funding formula option. In the Independent Living subcategory, Option 1 would provide full funding for the top five applicants, who would get 100% of their request. The remaining funds would go to the sixth highest scoring applicant. Option 2 would fund applicants scoring 70 and above at a 10% reduction of their request. With his Option 3, all the programs would be funded, at a reduced amount ranging from 8% to 47% of the request depending on their score. An applicant with a score of 80 points would receive 80% of their request. If the request was for \$100,000, they would receive \$80,000. Applying this funding formula to all of the applications in Independent Living, the total funds awarded comes to \$1,241,986. Between the three subcategories, there is \$1,510,000 available to distribute. Additionally, there's a residual of about 6% of the 1.241 million, so 6% could be added to every formula amount.

Dr. Wright asked for clarification; would they be deciding between the three funding options for each program area? Mr. Kane responded that the funding option would be the same for each program in all three subcategories, although they could do something different for each of the three subcategories. Dr. Wright, Susan Lucia-Terry, and Leslie Bittleston all indicated their support of Option 3 which would allow them to fund all the proposals.

Ms. Lucia-Terry commented that she did not have a problem with any of the proposals; however, she concurred with the statement submitted by Ms. Roragen. Her concern is in the evaluative component; the outcomes goals and narratives is where applicants struggled the most. If funded, she would like to have staff work with them to make outcomes more definitive.

Mr. Kane, citing an analogy from his attorney background, stated sometimes the case is good, sometimes the lawyer is good. Regarding the proposals that scored under 80, is it the program or the grant writer contributing to the lower score? There's a different skill set, and it may not be related to the quality of the program. Additionally, each question had sub-questions, sometimes five sub-questions, and it appears sometimes the applicant didn't address the fourth or fifth one. Ms. Lucia-Terry agreed, adding that as a former grant writer, she would like to help them polish their skills. She thought they were all fantastic programs.

Ms. Bittleston agreed that all the ideas are great and that some of the outcomes were very weak. Some did a good job, others were very weak, and some didn't address outcomes at all. Perhaps it was due to weak grant writing. The ones that scored the highest had strong organizational support and strong boards. Her biggest concern besides outcomes is that some services may be billable by Medicaid, so she kept that in mind. A lesson learned for next time, not to duplicate current programs billable by Medicaid.

#### Adjustment of Scores - None

#### **IV. Action Item: Grant Award Recommendations**

Ms. Smith recommended that each program subcategory be voted on separately.

Mr. Kane proposed the following recommendations:

- Under the Respite programs, each of the four applicants would get partial funding, representing the percentage of funding versus their request, ranging from roughly \$65,000 for the lowest score to \$104,000 for the highest.
  - The Independent Living program area has 12 applicants. Applying the percentage formula results in requests ranging from roughly \$36,000 to \$86,000. On each of these, there's an extra 6% that can be applied, so the \$50,000 for Dignity Health would become \$56,000.
  - Lastly, the Positive Behavior Support program area had only one applicant. Applying the formula and score, 78% of \$320,000 comes to roughly \$251,000.
- Leslie Bittleston motioned to approve the recommendations as presented. The motion was seconded by Susan Lucia-Terry. Mr. Kane called for any further discussion.

Ms. Lucia-Terry had a question on the budget submitted by UNR Positive Behavior Support. There was an expense in personnel for \$52,500 that was not fully identified in the line item narrative. Staff reviewed the original excel document and discovered that the narrative description of the expense was “hidden” in the cell due to a formatting issue. After reading the full description, Ms. Lucia-Terry was satisfied with the expense.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Kane called for a vote, and the motion carried unopposed.

#### **V. Announcements**

Ms. Smith stated that the scores and budget amounts will be compiled and Mr. Kane will present the recommendations to the full GMAC on May 25.

#### **VI. Public Comment**

- Korine Viehweg, Northern Nevada RAVE Family Foundation, thanked everyone for their time. She stated that this is the first time in five years that a third funding option was put on the table, and thanked the subcommittee for offering a third option. RAVE is one of those organizations that struggles with grant writing. She commented that, if she understands correctly, there was \$640,000 set aside for Respite programs, but it appears Respite is losing out on \$300,000 that is being diverted to Independent Living. She stated that she likes to spread the wealth, but it looks like Respite is losing out on funds for the four applicants. The other area has more applicants and will get more of the overall funding. These comments prompted questions and clarification from subcommittee members. Ms. Smith reminded everyone that public comment periods do not allow for discussion or debate; they are for comments only. She asked to be contacted directly with any questions that arise.
- Yvonne Lewis, The Salvation Army, thanked the subcommittee for proposing an Option 3 and for looking at the whole of the program. She thanked them for their work, acknowledging the considerable amount of time they invested in the process.
- Mary Bryant, Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities, thanked the subcommittee, stating it was a daunting process. She hoped she would be provided the opportunity to revise the budget because the reduction in funding will make the project look different. She was appreciative of their intent to “spread the wealth”, but wanted them to understand that the programs will likely look different.
- Don Jackson, UNR Reno, asked for further explanation on reduced funding for all programs. When the funding levels don’t match the available funds, how will those other funds be used? Secondly, each of the three subcategories in Disability Services had a set amount of funding, and that should be considered. Referring to Ms. Bryant’s comment, he asked what if the applicants can’t rewrite the budget to make the program work with the reduced amount of funding. He did not understand why projects were not being funded to the extent possible in order for them to meet goals.
- Jerry Capler, (? of Nevada), stated that they submitted the budget to serve as many people as possible. They are a statewide agency and will need to amend the budget and outcomes based on the reduction of the grant award.

- Nick Providenti, RSVP, complimented everyone on the difficult job. He echoed previous comments regarding the necessity to adjust the budget. He also requested a listing showing the exact amount of the funding, as he was unclear as to the amounts everyone will be getting.
- Ashley Greenwald, UNR Reno, commented on Option 3 funding. Her concern was that the funding allocated between the three subcategories was based on the needs assessment. Option 3 results in a reduction in PBS services by 20%. What does that do to the community, based on the needs assessment and the amounts allocated by the GMAC?

#### **VII. Adjournment**

Having concluded all business, Mr. Kane called for a motion to adjourn.

- Leslie Bittleston moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:44 PM. Mr. Kane called for further discussion, and there being none, the members voted unanimously to adjourn.