

**Department of Health and Human Services  
Director's Office, Grants Management Unit**

**Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC)  
GMAC Subcommittee Meeting – Disability Services  
April 23, 2015**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Locations (Videoconferenced)**

Department of Public and Behavioral Health  
4150 Technology Way, Room 303, Carson City NV

Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD), Early Intervention Services  
1020 Ruby Vista Drive, Suite 102, Elko NV

ADSD Early Intervention Services  
3811 W Charleston, Suite 112, Las Vegas NV

**Subcommittee Members Present**

Michele Howser  
Marcia O'Malley  
Cindy Roragen

**Subcommittee Members Absent**

John Thurman

**Others Present**

Laurie Olson, Chief, Grants Management Unit (GMU)  
Laura Adair, Toby Hyman, Rique Robb, Connie Ronning, Cindy Smith, and Gloria Sulhoff, DHHS-GMU  
Carol Anacker and Susan C Haas, Nevada Rural RSVP  
Linell Bollacker, Head Start of Northeastern Nevada, Family Respite  
Lisa Bonie, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living  
Mary Bryant, Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities (NCED)  
Dawn Davis, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada  
Ashley Greenwald, UNR – Positive Behavior Support  
Lynn Hunsinger, Nevada Senior Services  
E. Lavonne Lewis, The Salvation Army  
Mechelle Merrill and Kelli Quintero, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation  
Brooke Page, Clark County Social Services  
Jessica Patton, Best Buddies  
Shelle Sponseller, Accessible Space, Inc.  
Janelle Stathes and Korine Viehweg, Northern Nevada RAVE Family Foundation  
Mark Tadder, CitiCare  
Angela Phillips, Olive Crest  
Stephanie Vrsnik, Nevada PEP

**I. Call to Order, Welcome and Announcements**

Laurie Olson, Chief of the Grants Management Unit in the Department of Health and Human Services, Director's Office, introduced herself and called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM. Roll call was taken and

a quorum was confirmed. During roll call, the subcommittee members disclosed their affiliations to determine potential conflicts of interest with the applicant organizations. Marcia O'Malley stated that her son receives services from the RAVE Teen Program, but the application does not involve this program, so she felt there was no conflict of interest. However, because she has knowledge of the organization other than what was supplied in the application, which may provide additional benefit, she offered to abstain from voting should the members request it. Michele Howser stated that as an instructor at the University of Phoenix, she visits a few of the applicant organizations to find internships for her students. Cindy Roragen, American Cancer Society, has no connections to any of the applicants. The subcommittee members did not think any of the disclosures represented a conflict of interest.

## **II. Public Comment**

None

## **III. Election of Disability Services Subcommittee Chair**

Ms. Olson called for nominations for a Chair to lead the subcommittee. In addition to this responsibility, the Chair will present the subcommittee's recommendations to the full Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) at its meeting on May 14, 2015.

- Cindy Roragen nominated Marcia O'Malley for the office of Subcommittee Chair. Michele Howser seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

## **IV. Review of Prevention of Disability Services Proposals**

### A. Introduction of Recommendation Process

Ms. Olson reviewed the goals of the Request for Applications (RFA) to seek proposals from strong organizations that are mission-driven and goal oriented, with programs that address the mission and goals of the Department and service delivery models that address the whole individual. She pointed out differences in the RFA procedure from previous cycles, including a preliminary review of the applications by the GMU staff, and the elimination of any interaction between applicants and evaluators during the review process. The subcommittee can ask questions of GMU staff, discuss score variances between members, and submit score adjustments. Any adjustments to scores will be used to recalculate the rankings of the proposals. Questions regarding scope of work may be directed to GMU staff to address during negotiations. She reminded the members that this was first and foremost a competitive process, with scores based on merit, not geography. They cannot skip over higher scoring applications to fund lower scoring applications for any reason, including geography; and any budget reductions must be based on a formula that takes scores into account, with no arbitrary or random budget cuts.

### B. Discussion of Proposals

Subcommittee Chair Marcia O'Malley led a review of the grant applications as listed on the spreadsheet, which ranked the applications by average GMAC score, grouped by program areas. The following comments and concerns were noted.

### Independent Living Applications

- All three subcommittee members were in agreement with the rankings of the average GMAC scores. Ms. O'Malley was pleased with the quality of the proposals that she reviewed, stating they were much improved over the last time. Ms. Roragen commented on the number of new applicants, providing the potential to grow services in Nevada.

- Bureau of Vocational Rehab is indicating about a \$4 to \$1 match. Ms. O'Malley asked staff to address the idea of government funding for government agencies. Ms. Olson stated that this process has always been open to state and university entities as well as nonprofit organizations. Sometimes government programs are very needed but are underfunded.
- Ms. O'Malley commented on the importance of collaborations. Many applicants have strong ones; some have none. Some mentioned collaboration in their proposals but did not include the information in the Collaborative Partnerships section so she could not award points. She asked that applicants think about that next time. Ms. Howser indicated that this was her biggest disappointment as well, especially since it was not a new concept in the application. She noted that partnerships may also help with cost-effectiveness because this may reduce overhead.

#### Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Applications

Only one application was received in this category, requesting an amount greater than what is available. Ms. Olson explained that the applicant likely expected there would be some Title XX funds added to this funding pool, but that did not happen this year. Funding for Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN) programs from the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) has been decreasing, and the Department typically supplements those with Title XX money to ensure as much support as possible. For SFY16-17, most of the Title XX money will be directed to those programs.

- Concerns included the applicant's low score, smaller parameters around outcomes, getting down to brass tacks of the services and expanding in the rurals. Subcommittee members asked staff to ensure monitoring and that they stay on top of their goals. Ms. Olson stated that the Department received two other applications, but neither passed the technical review.

#### Respite Applications

The subcommittee members were in agreement with the rankings by average score. Overall concerns included the lack of collaboration and person-centered approaches, and outcomes.

- Ms. O'Malley asked for input from staff. Cindy Smith of the GMU stated that staff had hoped to see more collaboration, but overall most were strong candidates. The higher scoring applicants addressed the whole client, which is one of the main goals of the RFA.
- Ms. Olson pointed out an error on the spreadsheet: Easter Seals proposes to serve 130 families in the north and 20 in the south, but it should read 130 in the south and 20 in the north.
- Ms. O'Malley expressed disappointment in the applicants who did not grasp the collective impact piece. Some spoke very concisely, but there was a stark contrast between those that got it and those that didn't.

#### C. Adjustment of Scores

Having completed their reviews, Ms. Olson asked if there were any scoring adjustments. There being none, the meeting continued without interruption to agenda item V.

#### **V. GMAC Discussion of Funding Options**

Ms. Olson reviewed the funding options spreadsheet that was made available at the meeting. The three categories within Disability Services were listed separately because they do not compete for the same funds. Available Title XX funds have already been apportioned where needed. Because of the short time frame the subcommittee has to develop recommendations, GMU staff ran some numbers in advance using various funding scenarios. Several approaches were considered; the three on the funding options spreadsheet were the best, but none are perfect.

- Option 1 funds the highest scoring applications at the amount requested until the money runs out. What is left can stay on the table or be awarded to the next highest scoring applicant.
- Option 2 attempts to bring in the next tier of proposals. To accomplish this, every program has to reduce its budget, sometimes severely. More programs are funded, but the reductions will require proportional cuts in the number of people served. A very low grant award may not be reasonable because administrative costs to manage the grant may outweigh the benefit.
- Option 3 attempts to establish standard award amounts based on scores. The amounts are not based on a formula; just what works in each category. A major flaw to this approach is that a lower scoring applicant requesting less than the standard amount may get fully funded while higher scoring applications requesting more than the standard amount would take a cut.

Ms. Olson stated that the document was provided as a tool to give the subcommittee an idea of what it would look like if they decided to take one of these approaches; they are not limited to these options. She reminded them that funding recommendations are to be based on merit, not geography; the competitive process requires that the highest scoring proposals are funded. Also, no cherry picking, even to provide more equitable geographic distribution, and no arbitrary or random funding cuts. The applicants were advised to ask for what they need, so keep that in mind if considering reductions in funding.

Ms. Roragen pointed out that the math in Option 1 for the Independent Living proposals was incorrect. Also, because NSHE PBS-Nevada scored 69.2, she suggested using that score as the threshold for all proposals. The subcommittee took a short break so that Ms. Olson could correct the math in Option 1 on the spreadsheet, and reconvened at 10:25 AM.

Ms. Olson apologized for the formula error on the spreadsheet, which she corrected during the break. She also ran numbers using the 69.2 threshold proposed by Ms. Roragen. In that scenario, the top score of 90 would get 60% of the amount requested, those scoring in the 80s would get 50% of their requests, scores in the 70s would get 40%, and scores in the 60s, 30%, resulting in severe cuts to all. She also ran a fourth option, to fund all those scoring 80 and above. In this case, those scoring 90 and up would receive 90% of the amount requested and those with scores of 80 and up, 80%. There were no changes in the Respite and PBS categories; just Independent Living. Ms. Roragen retracted her suggestion that 69.2 be used as the scoring threshold since correction of the formula error significantly changed the outcome of the funding options in the Independent Living category.

#### Independent Living

The subcommittees discussed the merits of Option 1, noting that it included full geographic representation, and agreed that cutting the funding to include lower scoring applicants wasn't fair to those with high scores. Ms. O'Malley noted that opting for full funding would result in a small balance at the end, which could be offered to CitiCare, the next highest scoring applicant, to provide transportation vouchers. The subcommittee members were all in support of this suggestion.

- Ms. Howser moved to recommend Option 1, full funding, for the highest scoring Independent Living proposals, as identified by Ms. Olson after reconvening: NSHE Path to Independence, Bureau of Vocational Rehab, Clark County Social Services, and Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, with the \$17,618 in remaining funds offered to next highest scoring applicant, CitiCare. The motion was seconded by Ms. Roragen, and there being no further comments or discussion, carried unopposed.

### Positive Behavior Support

Because there was only one applicant in this category, the subcommittee members were in agreement to recommend funding the proposal with the \$340,000 that was available. They noted that their score of 69.5 did not warrant higher funding even if additional funds were available.

- Ms. Roragen moved to recommend funding NSHE PBS-Nevada at \$340,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Howser, and there being no further discussion, the motion carried unopposed.

### Respite

The subcommittee members were in agreement to fund the proposals as shown in Option 1. This would result in a \$25,437 balance; Ms. Olson suggested that they offer it to the next highest scoring applicant and, if declined, to the next highest scoring applicant.

- Ms. Howser recommended to fully fund the Respite applicants as depicted in Option 1: Foundation for Positively Kids, Easter Seals Nevada, Nevada Rural Counties RSVP, Nevada Senior Services, and Olive Crest, and to offer the balance of \$25,437 to the next highest scoring applicant, Northern NV RAVE Foundation, first, and if not accepted, to next highest score, Head Start of Northeastern Nevada. Ms. Roragen seconded the motion and with no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

### **VI. Public Comment**

- Mary Bryant, representing the UNR and CitiCare grants, thanked the subcommittee members for working through the difficult process. She suggested that future RFAs include a cap on the amount of funding that can be requested because some agencies are getting a lot of money and some are getting none.
- Linell Bollacker, of Head Start/Family Respite in Elko, expressed disappointment in the outcome. After years of receiving this funding, there will no longer be a program for children birth to 12 years in Elko. Because she wrote grant, she takes responsibility, but she disagrees with the decision.
- Elsie LaVonne Lewis of The Salvation Army thanked the subcommittee for their time and review. After receiving funds for the past 10 years, they will not be funded. She understands that it's a difficult process, and asked for an explanation of their scores so they can improve in the future. Ms. Olson stated that the strengths and weaknesses could be provided once the process is completed after the GMAC meeting May 14. They will not be sent out automatically but will be provided when requested.

### **VII. Adjournment**

Ms. O'Malley thanked the applicants for attending the meeting and, for those who didn't get funded, she was sorry there were insufficient funds. She encouraged them to learn from the process.

- Ms. Roragen motioned to adjourn, and Ms. Howser seconded the motion. They thanked Ms. O'Malley for leading the subcommittee. The meeting adjourned at 9:54 AM.