



Community Services Commission

The Advisory Tri-Partite Board of the Maricopa County Community Action Agency

Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 21, 2023 – 6:00PM

Online: [Link to Teams](#) | Phone: (480) 702-3496 ID: 623 301 728#

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:	Bonnie Temme, Lauriane Hanson, Chris Groninger, Robert Sotomayor
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:	Adonis Deniz, Ty Rosensteel
STAFF PRESENT:	Director: Jacqueline Edwards Assistant Director: Cathy Chiang Administrative Services Supervisor: Laurie Ontiveros Community Action Program Coordinator: Regina Lopez Program Supervisor: Heidi Hopkins-Basen
GUESTS:	Jackie Solares – St. Vincent de Paul

- **Call to Order**
Chair Lauriane Hanson called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.
- **Roll Call**
Community Action Program Coordinator, Regina Lopez, conducted roll call. Four (4) of the six (6) Commission members were present. A quorum was established.
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
The pledge was led by Chair, Lauriane Hanson.
- **Community Action Promise**
Regina Lopez recited the Community Action Promise.
- **Director's Message**
Director Jacqueline Edwards began by speaking to the Commission about the Diaper Bank pilot program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through Arizona's Community Action Association, Wildfire. The program is being housed under the Human Services Early Education Division, and diapers are currently being distributed out of the East Valley Campus every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, with plans to set up a second distribution center in the West Valley.



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Employees from various divisions within the Human Services Department have also contributed by volunteering their time to help support diaper bank operations. As the Maricopa County Community Action Agency service area excludes the cities of Phoenix, Glendale and Mesa, the agency was able to receive a waiver to serve all eligible families living in Maricopa County, allowing us to help more Maricopa County families.

Feedback from participants has been positive. Families expressed gratitude that they are able to make their income stretch to help meet other needs, such as for groceries or in making sure other household bills can be paid on time.

Commissioner Bonnie Temme, who represented SRP at the recent Family Resource Fair, also spoke of the positive impact she witnessed when interacting with individuals who received support from the diaper bank.

Ms. Edwards also informed the Commission that HSD will be hosting another Family Resource Fair at the West Valley Career Center on Friday, September 29th, and anticipates that there will be a large turnout, as the first event saw about 200 families participating.

Next, Ms. Edwards spoke to the Commission regarding an opportunity to provide funding for Innovation for Justice (i4J), a training program approved by the Administrative Office of the Courts in the State of Arizona. This program allows for the training of people who are not legal professionals in order to help build the grassroots infrastructure necessary to help support individuals and families who are potentially facing eviction. Right now, Maricopa County is experiencing its highest eviction filings ever seen in the county.

Finally, Ms. Edwards informed the Commission that Maricopa County Human Services has received 15 NACo Awards (National Association of Counties) which highlight best and leading practices. Although the specifics of each award were not on hand, Assistant Director Cathy Chiang directed the Commission to the Maricopa County website for a list and detailed summary of each award and the case studies behind them.

- **Community Action Agency Report**

Financial Report

Assistant Director Cathy Chiang spoke to the Commission on the FY23 financial report. In FY23, CSD served over 6,000 unduplicated clients through the Rental, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance programs. In Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA), \$25 million was used to help individuals and families in need, while \$17 million in ERA 2.0 was used to continue the program after ERA funding was exhausted. Ms. Chiang noted that the use of funds received through AZ DES has decreased since the AZ Department of Housing launched their mortgage program.



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Ms. Chiang also spoke to the Commission regarding the CSD-H team, which is the home repair team that has been focused on emergency home repair, with emergency HVAC repairs being the primary focus during the hot summer months. She advised the Commission that they will start seeing CSD-H included in future financial reports. CSD-H is currently funded by dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Ms. Chiang also informed the Commission that she anticipates around \$20 million to be expended on rental assistance in FY24, with another \$3 million to be used on utility assistance during the same period.

Staffing Updates

Ms. Chiang spoke to the Commission about new staff that has been added since the last Commission meeting. CSD has hired a new Management Analyst and a new Contact Center Coordinator. The division has also hired several new Client Services Specialists and two Program Specialists. Ms. Chiang also spoke of the new Compliance Coordinator who is helping to streamline processes and procedures so that there is consistency across the board with CSD and our CAP partners.

- **Conference Updates**

National Community Action Partnership (NCAP)

Ms. Chiang informed the Commission that CSD has 5 staff members attending the NCAP conference in Atlanta, GA this week, with this being the first time these staff members have attended this conference. While there, staff members will be networking with other community action professionals from across the country which will allow them to bring back a wealth of knowledge that will help improve our processes within CSD. Ms. Chiang anticipates that these staff members will speak about their experiences to the Commission at the next meeting.

National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC)

Management Assistant Emily Vasquez spoke to the Commission on her experience at the NEUAC Conference in San Diego this past June. The conference was especially informative for Ms. Vasquez because she has worked with utility assistance as a part of her role with CSD. One eye opening session that had an impact on Ms. Vasquez was a documentary screening and panel on water equity and affordability. She realized that something we take for granted, clean water, is something that is not guaranteed in all communities.

Community Action Program Legal Services (CAPLAW)

Community Action Program Coordinator Regina Lopez spoke to the Commission about her experience at the CAPLAW Conference in June in Austin, TX. The conference sessions she attended were geared toward board governance, primarily in the private/non-profit sector; however, she did pick up several tips regarding recruitment and training which will be incorporated into Commission meetings and activities.



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Ms. Lopez felt the need to speak briefly about the pre-conference tour of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum. This experience was impactful because it expanded on the roots of community action and historical events surrounding the passing of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (EOA). Participants were invited to attend a talk with Historian and former Director of the LBJ Library's Oral History Program, Mike Gillette, who gave insight into the footwork and negotiations that went into making the EOA a reality. This session had an impact on participants who had expressed frustration and burnout in their work over the last three years, but who felt renewed energy and pride after attending this tour and talk.

- **FY24 Contract Updates**

- **Community Initiative (Notice of Funding Availability)**

Administrative Services Supervisor, Laurie Ontiveros, spoke to the Commission about CSD's shift from a short-term crisis delivery model to a long-term, comprehensive delivery model. This shift will allow for more positive, long-term impact for clients. One way to help with this shift is through Community Service Initiatives.

In July, CSD released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to local municipalities throughout Maricopa County, with the exception of Phoenix, Glendale, and Mesa, who are already designated as community action agencies. The intention of the NOFA is to allow local communities within the county to expand existing services in the areas of temporary shelter and food and nutrition security. A 25% non-federal cash match is also required. Ms. Ontiveros anticipates that there will be multiple awards. She also noted that several proposals have been submitted and will be going through the evaluation process over the next two weeks. Awards will be implemented through intergovernmental agreements, to be approved by the Board of Supervisors in addition to the individual town and city councils. Ms. Ontiveros also noted that Commissioner Bonnie Temme will be assisting in the evaluation of proposals.

- **CAP Contract Scope of Work**

Ms. Ontiveros also spoke to the Commission regarding updates to CAP contracts that will also support the shift from short-term crisis services. CSD has added a navigation component to the CAP contracts which require navigation of clients to the LIHEAP portal, which is operated by DES, as well as navigation to the Human Services Empowerment Pathways Program (EPP). CAP partners will also be navigating clients to their internal programs and services. This change in the contracts is intended to help clients achieve outcomes that will have a long-term, positive impact.

- **Town of Guadalupe Navigation Contract**

Ms. Ontiveros also updated the Commission on the new navigation contract which will help to support programs in the Town of Guadalupe. The town is also required to navigate to the LIHEAP portal, HSD EPP, and their own internal services, with the goal of long-term outcomes for clients seeking assistance.



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- **Commission Updates**

FY24 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Lopez briefly read the five dates of the Community Services Commission meetings for FY24. She noted that the CSD Bylaws required that the Commission meet at least four times during the program year.

Community Needs Assessment

Ms. Lopez also updated the Commission on the requirement for a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) to be conducted at least every three years. She is currently in the process of writing the Request for Proposals (RFP), the first step in finding a vendor to conduct the CNA. Ms. Lopez also informed the Commission that she will be searching for one to two volunteers from the board to help evaluate submissions.

CAP Plan

Ms. Lopez updated the Commission on the FY24 Community Action Plan, informed by the last Community Needs Assessment, which listed housing support, food support, employment support, and childcare as the top critical unmet needs in Maricopa County. Through the Empowerment Pathways Program and navigation components of the new CAP contracts, clients will be navigated to resources that will assist them in obtaining needed services in the areas of the critical unmet needs referenced in the CNA.

Commission Training Change

Ms. Lopez briefly spoke to the Commission about a change in how the board will receive training going forward. As CSBG Organizational Standards require that board members receive training every two years, Ms. Lopez proposed that training items be included in each regular Commission meeting to ensure ongoing training and compliance with requirements. In the past, board training had been held on a Saturday with the full curriculum delivered over the course of the day. Before moving into training on Board Member Responsibilities, Ms. Lopez did give the Commission the option to keep the current practice of meeting for training once every two years. There were no objections expressed over the change.

Board Member Responsibilities

Ms. Lopez moved into the training item scheduled for tonight's meeting, which was a review of board member responsibilities. She started the segment by reading the Human Services Mission and followed by asking for volunteers to talk about how they connect with the HSD Mission, for which several board members volunteered their responses.

For the remainder of the training, Ms. Lopez covered topics such as the HSD Mission, including incorporating the mission into regular meetings, the involvement of the board in planning activities, increased board engagement, recruitment, board involvement in strategic and programmatic performance, and board oversight in program accountability.



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There was also a brief discussion regarding low-income recruitment to fill the three vacant Consumer Sector seats under Districts 2, 4, & 5.

- **Action Items**

- **Approval of March 20, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

- Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner Chris Groninger and seconded by Commissioner Bonnie Temme. The motion was passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Jackie Solares for CS Commission - Consumer Sector Representative**

- Motion to approve the nomination of Ms. Jackie Solares to the Community Services Commission as a Consumer Sector representative was made by Commissioner Bonnie Temme and seconded by Commissioner Chris Groninger. The motion was passed unanimously.

- **Approval of Head Start Policy Council Chair Continuation on CS Commission – Consumer Sector Representative**

- Motion to approve the continuation of the Head Start Policy Council Chair as a Consumer Sector representative was made by Commissioner Bonnie Temme and seconded by Commissioner Chris Groninger. The motion was passed unanimously.

- **Call to Public**

- Chair Lauriane Hanson extended an invitation for public comment. At this time, there was not any comment from the public.

- **Adjournment**

- There being no other business, Commissioner Chris Groninger moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bonnie Temme. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.