



Community Services Commission

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

Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 23, 2023 – 6:00PM

Online: [Link to Teams](#) | **Phone:** (480) 702-3496 ID: 154 640 077#

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:	Robert Sotomayor, Jessica Berg, Tyler Rosensteel, Bonnie Temme, Lauriane Hanson, Adonis Deniz
COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:	Chris Groninger
STAFF PRESENT:	Director: Jacqueline Edwards Assistant Director – Cathy Chiang Administrative Services Supervisor – Laurie Ontiveros Community Action Program Coordinator – Regina Lopez Landlord Coordinator: Nawal Bakheit-Apura Intern: Jeffrey Trepp
GUESTS:	Catherine Gouge, Community Alliance Consulting

- Call to Order**
Chair, Lauriane Hanson, called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.
- Roll Call**
Community Action Program Coordinator, Regina Lopez, conducted roll call. Six (6) of the seven (7) Commission members were present. A quorum was established.
- Pledge of Allegiance**
The pledge was led by Commissioner, Adonis Deniz.
- Community Action Promise**
Regina Lopez recited the Community Action Promise.
- Director’s Message**
Human Services Department (HSD) Director, Jacqueline Edwards, wished the Commission a happy start to the new year and jumped into the business of the new year. She began with



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the election of the new Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, Clint Hickman (District 4), who is replacing outgoing Chairman, Bill Gates (District 3). Director Edwards shared highlights from the speeches of both Supervisor Gates and Chairman Hickman.

In his speech, Supervisor Gates highlighted funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), of which a significant amount was allocated to the Community Services Division (CSD). ARPA funds, in conjunction with other fund sources, were used to help the CSD team and agency partners provide families with rental and utility assistance services. Director Edwards reinforced that CSD does not do this work alone, but in partnership with the various cities, towns, non-profits, other HSD neighborhoods, and the communities and families that we serve. Supervisor Gates also highlighted the investments made toward helping the unsheltered population, especially the investment of Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funds that assisted in homeless outreach in both Avondale and Surprise.

In his speech, Chairman Hickman highlighted several priorities, which include:

- Board of Supervisor commitment to reviewing the election process and changes in election law, as well as ensuring equal access to vote and transparency on the voting process.
- The need for work on water infrastructure and the commendable leadership from the State.
- Proposition 400 – commitment to comprehensive transportation plans and working with business leaders to affirm the importance of their support.
- Fighting the fentanyl crisis and the importance of Maricopa County departments/offices working together to make a lasting difference in the fight.
- Investing in Community Action to address:
 - Food insecurity through Community Initiatives and food bank support at CAP offices; and,
 - Continued need to support Workforce Development to meet the needs of businesses and ensuring those who seek assistance get the support that they need for workforce training/education.
- Continued investment in affordable housing. So far, \$130 million of ARPA funding has been invested in affordable housing development.
- With the increase in the unsheltered population, the collaboration between County, cities, towns, and non-profit partners is important to addressing the issue. County is also addressing the issue in various capacities, including assisting those facing eviction/housing instability.



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Director Edwards also mentioned that HSD is supporting affordable housing priorities by utilizing CSBG funds to help those moving into their new homes pay for utility deposits and obtain appliances.

- **Welcome/Introductions**

Chair, Lauriane Hanson, introduced the newest Commissioner, Consumer Sector Representative, Robert Sotomayor, to the Commission. She gave Commissioner Sotomayor time to tell the Commission a little bit about himself. She also asked the Commissioners in attendance to introduce themselves and briefly talk about what they do outside of the Commission for the populations they serve. Commissioners, Adonis Deniz, Bonnie Temme, Jessica Berg, and Tyler Rosensteel, respectively, introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their work in the community. Finally, Ms. Hanson took a moment to introduce herself and to talk about the work she does in supporting the population she serves.

- **Community Action Agency Report**

Assistant Director (AD), Cathy Chiang, gave the Community Action Agency Report. AD Chiang informed the Commission of the big push to utilize the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA 1) funds by the end of 2022. Ms. Chiang also spoke on the change in process for Low Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), which now goes through a centralized intake through the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). She also advised the Commission that CSD is working with DES on how LIHEAP data can be reported to CSD, and she plans to have solid data to report to the Commission in the next meeting.

In anticipation of the "Covid cliff" that is looming, AD Chiang also explained the new, robust Coaching/Case Management model, which HSD has been working on for more than a year, in order to "soften the blow" for the community and agency partners in the upcoming months as funding decreases. The new Coaching/Case Management model, which will be ready on February 1, 2023, and which officially launches on February 6, 2023, will help connect clients seeking assistance to the other HSD services that they may need in addition to rental and utility assistance. The Coaching/Case Management model has been designed to help families who may be experiencing crisis, stabilize and meet goals. Agency partners will be trained prior to February 1 in preparation for the official launch on Monday, February 6.

AD Chiang also spoke about the need for a centralized contact center to address the variety of questions coming into the CSD call center. The contact center will help to address questions that clients may have that fall outside of CSD but within one of the six (6) HSD neighborhoods. To help formulate plans for the contact center, CSD has hired an intern, Jeffry Trepp, who is participating in the Maricopa County Leadership and Education



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Advancing Public Service (McLEAPS) program through Arizona State University in partnership with Maricopa County. Mr. Trepp will gather data by meeting with all HSD Assistant Directors, our external partners, and our Information Technology team to help bring the contact center plans together.

Finally, AD Chiang briefed the Commission on the efforts of the CSD Financial Empowerment team. The team travels to the various agency partner sites to work with clients on issues of financial literacy. Although financial literacy was cited as an unmet need in the Community Needs Assessment (CNA), the Financial Empowerment classes have yet to gain traction. CSD and the Financial Empowerment team are currently strategizing to relaunch the program and more effectively spread the word throughout the community.

- **Strategic Plan Draft**

Ms. Catherine Gouge, with Community Alliance Consulting, gave the Commission a background of the process that went into creating the Strategic Plan draft that had been provided to the Commissioners prior to tonight's meeting. The process consisted of redeploying surveys to each of the communities in the various service areas throughout Maricopa County to help bolster the CNA that had been done in 2021; conducting Strategic Planning Sessions with each CAP agency partner; and meeting with CSD staff in November to conduct a County Strategic Planning session. The County session and Strategic Plan were informed by feedback from the CAP agencies, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) assessment sent to CSD staff, and the CNA. The Commission was given the opportunity to ask questions and give feedback on the draft. Each Commissioner will follow-up by sending written feedback to CAP Coordinator, Regina Lopez, by Tuesday, January 31. The feedback will be compiled and sent to Ms. Gouge to incorporate into the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will then be finalized and put forward for final approval.

- ~~**Subcommittee Report on Bylaws Update**~~

This item has been postponed until the next Commission meeting on March 20, 2023.

- **Action Items**

- **Approval of November 14, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes was made by Commissioner, Bonnie Temme, seconded by Commissioner, Adonis Deniz. The motion passed unanimously

- ~~**Approval of Updated Bylaws**~~

This item has been postponed until the next Commission meeting on March 20, 2023.



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- **Call to Public**

Chair Lauriane Hanson put out a call to the public for comments.

Jennifer Griffin, who oversees the Community Action Program at the Surprise Resource Center, introduced herself and commented on the responsiveness of Assistant Director Cathy Chiang and team. She has been working with Maricopa County through the City of Surprise since shortly before the Covid-19 pandemic and has found working in partnership with the County to be a positive experience.

Chair Hanson asked CSD staff who had not spoken during the meeting to briefly introduce themselves and give a little bit of information about what they do with the County. Landlord Coordinator, Nawal Apura, and Administrative Supervisor, Laurie Ontiveros, each spoke briefly.

Commissioner, Bonnie Temme, announced that she will be participating in LIHEAP Action Day in Washington D.C. in February. During her visit, she will advocate and educate the Arizona delegation on the importance of continuing to fund LIHEAP. She also informed the Commission of the All Parties letter that organizations can sign in support of "maximum" LIHEAP funding.

- **Adjourn**

There being no other business, the Chair, Lauriane Hanson, adjourned the meeting at 7:49 P.M.