

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

**PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY COMMISSION (PEC)**

*Organizational Subcommittee Hearing*

**SUMMARY MINUTES FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2010**

Members Present:

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, PEC Chair  
Frank Nero, BCC Appointee, Community Representative  
Pedro Allende, BCC Appointee, Community Representative  
Rene Alvarez, BCC Appointee, Community Representative  
Greg Blackman, Govt. Supervisors Association of Florida  
Valerie Crawford, Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce  
Al Maloof, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Staff Support:

Cynthia Johnson-Stacks, County Attorney's Office  
Ivette Arango, The Beacon Council  
Gary Collins, Office of the Commission Auditor  
S. Donna Palmer, Office of the Commission Auditor

Meeting commenced 10:21 a.m.

**Opening Remarks**

Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, PEC Chair, gave the welcome and opening remarks. She explained that Mr. Nero was meeting with the county manager and will be arriving later. She commended Mr. Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor and his staff for making sure that the information needed is provided. She also thanked Ms. Glazer-Moon, Budget Manager and the administration for supplying the needed information to the PEC. Commissioner Sosa thanked the PEC members for volunteering to serve on the commission. She stated that to not impede communication, she will not be attending the hearings because she is confident that the members of the commission are equipped with the knowledge, integrity and interest to sit with administration and the directors, and come back with recommendations for the commissioners. Her objectives remain that we need to reduce government, reduce the bureaucracy in government, and ensure that we create an effective process and system to deliver service, because that is how we measure performance and efficiency.

Commissioner Sosa asked Ms. Valerie Crawford to chair the hearing until the arrival of Mr. Frank Nero.

Ms. Crawford gave a brief synopsis of the purpose of the hearing. She told the speakers to be authentic in their presentation because the goal of the commission is simply to make our

government a better place. She asked them to use this forum to highlight what their departments are doing well and what things they would like to change.

Note: Commissioner Sosa left the meeting after the introductions, and PEC Member Al Maloof left because he was feeling sick.

## **Health & Human Services**

### **Human Services**

Phyllis Tynes-Saunders, department director, gave an overview of the department:

*Core Services:* Promote self-sufficiency; provide service to Children, Elderly, Veterans, disability and refugees.

*Efficiencies:* Accreditation.

*Challenges:* Privatization of social services and non-profit competition.

### **Questions and Comments:**

PEC Member Alvarez: Why is it a challenge to get funds?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders responded that the privatization of social services and increased competition with non-profit agencies creates a challenge to acquire funds. To address this challenge, the department continues to maintain a competitive perspective and empower staff to do more with less. We also work with the Grants Coordination office to secure grants.

PEC Member Blackman: General fund is 14%; how is that distributed?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders responded that although funding has been reduced due to budgetary constraints, the department has managed to streamline administrative positions and maintain services because they sustain the bulk of funding through grants.

Mr. Hugo Salazar, Deputy Director for OSBM, responded that in terms of grants and contracts added staffing must be looked at because various positions go with contracts when the contracts end.

PEC Member Blackman: If the department is competing with CBOs, how can the County be more appealing to the grantors when these funds become available?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders replied that the consistency of service and expertise of the County is reinforced during contract negotiations.

PEC Member Crawford: Do you think the services to stakeholders suffer because CBOs and non-profit are doing the work, or are the same level of services being offered even though the County does not have the contract?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders responded that competition is good, and the community does not suffer because of competitors; however she believes the County offers better service delivery overall.

PEC Member Crawford: There is a lack of information transfer because there is no centralized database between all the agencies; is this being addressed?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders responded that the County has implemented a Social Services Information System to centralize information among the County social services departments; later, non-profit agencies will be plugged into this system. In addition, the Human Services has internal controls to address these situations.

PEC Member Crawford: With the reduction in grant funding, what are the long-term solutions to address future elderly care?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders responded that the department is trying to coordinate their current service delivery with the wellness grants to help the elderly to sustain a healthier lifestyle.

PEC Member Crawford: With the lack of funding, how do you evaluate and prioritize your services to the clients?

Ms. Tynes Saunders responded that the department is sensitive to the needy, but they cannot help everyone so they are educating the clients so they can be responsible and mindful of the services.

PEC Member Blackman: Is there anything else that you perceive could be a problem because of the lack of funding?

Ms. Tynes-Saunders stated that funding is there, but less so. As the social climate changes, we have to be more creative in distribution.

PEC Chair Nero arrived and resumed as chair from this point.

### **Public Housing**

Mr. Gregg Fortner, director, gave a brief overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Public Housing for elderly, section 8 vouchers.

*Challenges:* Lack of funding, HUD appropriations usually unknown.

*Efficiencies:* Hope VI development.

### Questions

PEC Member Nero: How much funding lag time and year differences do you have? Do you have any County funding?

Mr. Fortner responded that usually funding becomes available October 1<sup>st</sup>; however federal budget adjustments occur in February or when federal government passes the budget. Federal funding is an advantage to us; however, any unspent amount is returned to HUD, so we try to spend any funds provided. The department receives no County funding.

PEC Member Nero: Has the lag of 3 to 6 months significantly affected the funding that you originally anticipated? Does your overhead and costs come from federal government?

Mr. Fortner stated that the department plans the budget on the conservative side

PEC Member Crawford: How do you get people to self-sufficiency? Do you partner with other agencies to make clients self sufficient?

Mr. Fortner stated that Section 8 has the Family Self-Sufficiency Program that has clients sign a 5 to 7 year contract that help to make them self sufficient.

PEC Member Nero: How do you think technology would improve your efficiency?

Mr. Fortner responded that technology has improved efficiency with the green initiatives, direct deposit and the HUD electronic evaluation. The department no longer allows the use of paper transfers, but instead, documents are scanned with original signatures.

PEC Member Nero: Theoretically could Public Housing and Housing & Community Development (HCD) be combined with different divisions?

Mr. Fortner stated that Miami Dade is unique in that the agency is strictly federal and has its direct service. On the other hand, HCD has certain funding sources that are state. One of the conditions that HUD uses when it gives Housing Agency funding is for the memorandum of agreement to assure that certain benchmarks are met within the period.

PEC Member Nero: Miami-Dade Public Housing is almost an independent entity. Wouldn't it be more efficient and timely to have an independent housing authority?

Mr. Fortner responded that there are advantages and disadvantages to that idea, but one advantage is that being in the County, there are various funding sources that can be married to provide better services than if the agency was independent.

PEC Member Nero: If that's the case, wouldn't it be more efficient to structurally marry these funding sources to departments of similar objectives such as Housing Finance Authority?

Mr. Howard Piper, Assistant County Manager, responded that the Public Housing Agency is seen as a property management type agency while HCD handles development, which are seen as two separate sets of skills.

PEC Member Nero: If HCD is the development arm, can they take over the responsibilities of handling the \$13 million federal funds for capital improvement since they have the expertise on the development side?

Mr. Fortner responded that HCD handles development for the entire jurisdiction; whereas Public Housing development role is targeted to specific housing sites, and the funds must be put back into Public Housing.

Deliverables from Administration: PEC Member Nero: That administration provide the commission with any reports available with the pros and cons of merging housing agencies.

### **Community Action Agency (CAA)**

Ms. Julie Edwards, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Head Start; self-sufficiency; emergency assistance; weatherization and shutters programs; and water conservation.

*Challenges:* Lack of resources, head start competition, misleading media exposure.

### Questions and Comments

PEC Member Nero: Do you outsource the jobs for the weatherization and shutters program? Are there discussions of moving the hard construction jobs such as weatherization and the shutters programs to HCD, which by definition is the development arm?

Ms. Edwards responded that given the level of complexity, CAA usually split the jobs among their in-house crew, general contractors on staff and/or certified contractors through the Office of Capital Improvements. She stated that discussions have been made to actually move the construction jobs to CAA instead of HCD and that historically CAA manages social services to include weatherization, renovations, etc, which allows them to be a better entity to provide overall social needs to the community.

PEC Member Nero: What is the governance authority of the CAA 45-member board?

Ms. Edwards responded that the CAA board serves in an advisory capacity and does not have the authority to manage staff.

PEC Member Crawford: How do you measure long-term effectiveness in the Head Start program as it relates to the success of the child graduating from high school?

Ms. Edwards responded that there is nothing in place at this time; however, CAA is a part of a County system, the Social Services Integrated System, which over time will look at these outcomes.

PEC Member Nero: What type of technology would you desire to make your department more efficient?

Ms. Edwards responded that the implementation of the County's Social Services Integrated System (SSIC) will centralize data to create more efficiency to track and coordinate services among agencies.

PEC Member Nero: Are there any departments or sections that have been merged or should be merged with your department?

Ms. Edwards responded that in areas of support services, there is a possibility that greater efficiencies can be gained; however, it is important to not lose the main focus of the mission of each department. Mr. Piper also stated that there are limitations as it relates to the funding agencies and funds distribution. Mr. Salazar also commented on the complexity of consolidation of these departments.

### **Homeless Trust**

Mr. David Raymond, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Eliminate homelessness, head start, pre- and after school, psychiatric evaluations through Jackson.

*Challenges:* Limited staff, zero vacancy.

*Efficiencies:* completely privatized, online applications, handles all procurement in house, significant reduction in homelessness.

#### Questions and Comments

PEC Member Nero: Who do you report to the Trust or the County?

Mr. Raymond responded that technically he reports to both; however, on the domestic violence side, his reporting relationship is different in that he staffs the board but does not report to them.

PEC Member Nero: What's the difference between a Trust and an Authority?

Assistant County Attorney, Ms. Cynthia Johnson-Stacks responded that the Trust reports to the Board of County Commissioners while the Authority, like the HFA, is created by statute.

### **Housing Finance Authority**

Ms. Patricia Braynon, department director, gave an overview of the department:

*Core Services:* Provide financing for housing (no local state or federal funds but charge and pay for services).

*Efficiencies:* Self contained department.

#### Questions and Comments

PEC Member Crawford: Who are the banks that provide these loans for housing?

Ms. Braynon responded that the banks sell the loans to the 3 servicers - City Mortgage, Wells Mortgage and US Banks, who have contracts with HFA on the legal procedures for the loans.

PEC Member Nero: Who do you report to? Are you any different from Industrial Development Authority (IDA)?

Ms. Braynon responded that she reports to the HFA board of directors and learned from the attorney's office that there is a clause in the statute that makes HFA different from IDA.

PEC Member Nero: If your department does not get funded from anyone, and reports to the HFA board, why are you not independent to allow more flexibility? What would have to be changed to make your department an independent agency?

Ms. Braynon responded that yes, most authorities around the country are independent and that the County ordinance and state statutes would have to be looked at.

PEC Member Crawford: How are you dealing with foreclosures?

Ms. Braynon responded that HFA partner with banks and homeownership programs to address foreclosure issues through workshops and counseling.

Deliverables for Housing Finance Authority: PEC Member Nero: That the director work with the County Attorney's Office and Administration to identify what would need to be changed in the code or state law so that HFA could be established similar to the Industrial Development Authority.

### **Economic Development and International Trade**

Mr. Tony Ojeda, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services*: Foreign missions to promote Miami-Dade County, enhance economic development, international trade, and overall incoming and outgoing missions.

*Efficiencies*: Consolidated functions from the recent merge.

*Challenges*: Lack of resources; how to create meaningful jobs to bring people to middle class status.

#### **Questions and Comments**

PEC Member Crawford: Miami is known for tourism and the financial sectors, but we are known for creating sustainable jobs. So, what are the value added pointers that you are telling companies to encourage business in Miami?

Mr. Ojeda stated that there are cash incentives that are calculated towards tax rebates for companies that create jobs. Other prospective projects mentioned included the University of Miami Life Science project and the Miami International Airshow. He stated that these projects could have long term repercussions in economic development.

PEC Member Nero: With this new system, are there any issues that you perceive or are there any areas that you think should be added or is it too early to say?

Mr. Ojeda stated that it is probably too early to say; however, this new responsibility provides an opportunity for OEITC to be the pioneer in various projects.

### **Housing and Community Development**

Members of the transition team, Nan Markowitz, Rowena Crawford and Mario Morlote, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services*: Administer federal grants, develop decent housing, expand social and economic opportunities.

*Challenges*: How to reduce administrative overheads, funding availability.

*Efficiencies*: CAA as back office for administrative support.

## Questions and Comments

PEC Member Blackman: What percentage of budget comes from general fund? Do you have any matching funds?

Ms. Crawford responded that funding for the last fiscal year was \$425,000, but for the current fiscal year, the funding has been reduced to zero. No matching funds are required for these grants.

PEC Member Nero: Regarding the \$425,000 that was there, what functions did that amount fund?

Ms. Crawford responded that the \$425,000 was used for non-federal type activities because federal dollars cannot be used to support activities outside of CBDG or surtax eligible.

PEC Member Nero: The budget had a proposal to split the department. Can you comment on the split, and what was the rationale why the department was put back?

Ms. Crawford gave a brief synopsis of the proposed recommendations that were made by the manager and stated that she believes that the Board of County Commissioners felt it was important to keep the department together as a central location for community development.

PEC Member Nero: What programs and functions are regarded as community development?

Ms. Crawford mentioned that community development is broad and includes services such as housing initiatives, juvenile services, rehabilitation services, job creation and job retention.

PEC Member Nero: Since CAA does construction, counseling and weatherization services, and we were told by the ACM that HCD is actually the development department, would it make sense that the development function of CAA be integrated under HCD?

Ms. Crawford responded that HCD is an entity that funds CAA, and similar to other developers; CAA acts as a recipient to administer the funds.

PEC Member Crawford: If CAA reports back to HCD on how the funds are administered, then there seems to be overlap in the administration since both departments perform the administrative function, which is being wasted on both sides? Ms. Crawford mentioned that there is an oversight function in place that reports accomplishments to HUD.

PEC Member Nero: It appears that there is duplication of function between the two departments on the review side?

Ms. Crawford agreed with Mr. Nero that this is an area that the commission could review and that the manager had similar recommendations.

PEC Member Nero: There is some confusion or misunderstanding because earlier, Public Housing stated that their role was actual property management, but they also have a development side. Has it ever been looked at to bifurcate the development side of Public Housing and put it under HCD?

Ms. Crawford responded that she is not aware if that has been discussed.

PEC Member Nero: How do you coordinate with Public Housing?

Ms. Crawford mentioned that there are plans to have strategic meetings with the departments involved to address the overlaps in functions and also to discuss areas to create synergies.

PEC Member Nero noted that putting clusters of like functions together would help to eliminate the current overlaps, and this could be a recommendation from this commission. Ms. Crawford, Ms. Markowitz and Mr. Morlote agreed with Mr. Nero's statement and mentioned that the manager's strategic meetings are already addressing these issues.

PEC Member Nero: Is there a countywide Information Technology (IT) priority list, for example specific technology update to promote efficiency or a Technology Advisory Council?

Mr. Hugo Salazar, budget deputy director, responded that the projects are available but the funding is lacking. Mr. Piper added that although there is a lack of funding, there is a process in place to identify the technological needs of the County and where there could be synergies, for example, how to automate the performance evaluation process and the implementation of the enterprise resource planning among departments. He noted that HCD is also lacking the set of tools to track and monitor the timeline of projects and funds.

### **Film & Entertainment**

Mr. Jeff Peel, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Grow film industry, promote Miami-Dade to global film entertainment.

*Efficiencies:* Automated “Online” Permitting System; OSBM as back office for administrative support.

#### Questions and Comments:

PEC Member Nero: Are there any plans to merge the Film component with the new OEITC?

Mr. Piper responded that some discussions were made, but after evaluations, the merge did not quite fit.

PEC Member Nero: How much of your time is dedicated to permitting versus promotional? Do you assist clients to get permits from City of Miami?

Mr. Peel responded that almost two-thirds of their function entails permitting and assisting clients with the process. He added that the department’s online service serves as a “one stop shop” that provides assistance to other municipalities for permits, and also reduces the complication of the process for clients to do business with the County.

### **Miami-Dade Economic Advisory Trust**

Mr. John Dixon, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Address social economic disparity in black communities and encourage participation in economic development.

*Efficiencies:* Teen Court (reduces other costs).

*Challenges:* Lack of funding.

#### Questions and Comments:

PEC Member Crawford: What more can the County do to promote black businesses?

Mr. Dixon responded that additional funding would create more jobs in the Targeted Urban Areas (TUAs) to reduce high employment.

### **Small Business Development**

Ms. Penelope Townsley, department director, gave an overview of the department.

*Core Services:* Promote growth & development of small businesses; manage new theft program.

#### Questions and Comments:

PEC Member Crawford: On the self-assessment questionnaire, you rated your department a 3, why?

Ms. Townsley responded that there is room for improvement, and more efficiency can be achieved if the department had the resources to improve process time. She added that the new technological initiative, Vendor Web Portal, will promote online certifications and eventually improve efficiency.

PEC Member Nero: How is the definition used for small businesses?

Ms. Townsley responded that the average gross revenue is used to define small businesses except for manufacturing and wholesale, where size is the determinant.

### **Closing Remarks**

Mr. Nero suggested that before the next hearing on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, he would like to meet with the subcommittee members to discuss the progress of the hearings.

Ms. Glazer-Moon distributed the Miami-Dade Trend Report (*Winter 2008*) to the commission.

Meeting adjourned 2:33 p.m.