



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

**APPROVED  
Meeting Minutes  
City of Fort Lauderdale  
Community Services Board  
700 NW 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33311  
February 9, 2026 – 4:00 P.M.**

<b>MEMBERS</b>		<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Christi Rice, Chair	P	19	4
Sharon Hughes, Vice Chair	P	18	5
Tanya Cohn (dep. 4:45)	P	6	0
Wismy Cius (arr. 4:20)	P	17	1
Tony Docal	A	1	2
Shelly Goren	P	10	0
Latrinsha Greaves	A	19	4
Gary Hensley	P	14	3

**Staff Present**

Rachel Williams, Housing and Community Development Manager  
K. Maxwell, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

**Communications to City Commission**

None.

**I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- **Quorum Requirement – As of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, there are 8 appointed members to the Board, which means 5 constitutes a quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II. WELCOME / BOARD AND STAFF INTRODUCTIONS**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

**Motion** made by Mr. Hensley, seconded by Ms. Goren, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

**IV. HOPWA UPDATE**

Ms. Williams reported that the City is on schedule with its Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS (HOPWA) program, with some agencies having already received payments and others awaiting contract signatures from the City Manager's and City Attorney's Offices. All agencies have received, signed, and returned their contracts.

Ms. Williams continued that on February 3, 2026, the U.S. Congress approved a budget that funded HOPWA with an additional \$24 million nationally. This means the City can look toward the next fiscal year with greater hope for the funding of this program.

## **V. CDBG UPDATE**

Ms. Williams stated that some of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contracts have been signed by sub-recipients and are awaiting City signatures.

Ms. Williams recalled that the City held its annual public planning meeting following the January 12, 2026 Board meeting. Thus far, the City has received 11 pre-applications for CDBG funding. Full applications are currently being received. This is a significantly larger number than what has been seen in recent years and includes several new applicants, as well as previous CDBG recipients who did not submit applications in 2025. The deadline for applications is Friday, February 27, 2026.

## **VI. REVIEW OF THE CDBG SCORING & RANKING PROCESS**

Ms. Williams reviewed the scoring tool to be used by the Board to score CDBG applications. The tool will be transmitted to Board members in an electronic format. Applications require an Executive Summary which must identify a need in the Fort Lauderdale community that reflects the City Commission's priorities and is addressed by the application. The proposed program must also meet a need for households with low to moderate incomes, which is a national CDBG objective.

Additional components of the application include:

- Program description
- Justification for the proposed project
- Description of project with measurable and achievable goals
- How the project will benefit the community
- Identification of objective strategies and measures for assessing the effectiveness of the project
- Schedule for reporting the project's results
- Agency experience and past performance
- Management capacity

Points are assigned to each of these components for scoring purposes.

Ms. Williams strongly emphasized the importance of the schedule for completing and reporting results, as the CDBG program includes time limits that must be met. Applicants

must provide a plan of how they will spend their CDBG funds within the City's established time limits.

Agency experience, past performance, and management capacity are also integral components of the CDBG process. Ms. Williams explained that it can be difficult for agencies to comply with the stringent documentation requirements for CDBG funds. It has been difficult to fund smaller agencies in the past for this reason. The Board is asked to assess each applicant agency's ability to administer CDBG funds based on their previous experience in administering federal grant dollars.

Ms. Williams continued that one section of the scoring rubric will be scored in advance by City Staff and provided to the Board members. Staff may award up to two points to applicants that have been successful in securing non-governmental funds. She also reviewed the Board's policy of requiring agencies to "sit out" the CDBG process for one year if they were successfully awarded funds for the previous three consecutive years.

Two meeting dates, typically on two consecutive days, are scheduled in April for the presentation and consideration of CDBG applications. The Board does not always need to use both dates. Applicants are invited to make brief presentations to the Board on their proposals and how these projects will benefit the community. These presentations are followed by a question-and-answer period during which the Board members will ask questions of the agencies' representatives. Applicants are also required to submit a budget reflecting the sources and uses of other funds they receive.

Chair Rice noted that while applications are reviewed and scored in advance of the presentations, members may adjust their scores if necessary once they have seen the presentations and asked questions of the agencies' representatives.

Chair Rice noted that the Board members' rankings of written applications must be returned to Staff by March 27, 2026. The two April meetings for CDBG presentations and discussion are currently scheduled for April 13 and 14, 2026. Ms. Williams advised that she typically seeks to provide the Board members with a full month to review and score the applications; due to a staffing shortage, she estimated that in 2026 they will have at least three weeks for review and preliminary scoring.

Mr. Cius asked if there are matching requirements for CDBG funds. Ms. Williams replied that there is no matching requirement for this program, although agencies are encouraged to leverage other resources so they are not fully dependent upon the CDBG program. She also noted that the volume of anticipated applications this year may make it difficult to divide CDBG funds among several applicants, and emphasized the importance of ranking agencies objectively and fairly based on the criteria listed in the scoring rubric.

Chair Rice requested clarification of whether applicants are encouraged to leverage funding for the entire agency or funding specific to the program requesting CDBG dollars. Ms. Williams clarified that this refers to the programs. Chair Rice recommended that this

specification be included in the scoring rubric so members are aware of it as they are reviewing the applications.

Ms. Williams added that she will include a list of the City Commission's identified priorities on the scoring tool as well.

## **VII. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Mr. Cius expressed concern with a recent announcement by the Florida Department of Health which indicated that entity will change some aspects of their programs, including coverage of certain medications needed by HIV-positive clients; another change affects programs which assist eligible clients in paying insurance premiums, meaning those clients can no longer receive that assistance. This is a serious blow to clients with HIV/AIDS in particular, as these changes are expected to make it more difficult for them to achieve viral suppression.

Mr. Cius continued that the changes from the Department of Health will place an additional burden on the local continuum of care, including the Ryan White Program and potentially HOPWA as well. Clients' health will be negatively affected if they are no longer able to access medications they have taken for many years; in addition, if they are forced to switch to different medications, their immune systems may develop resistance to these drugs. All of these changes can result in increased health care costs at multiple levels.

Mr. Cius explained that many clients previously received premium assistance for health insurance plans available under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Much of this assistance will no longer be available as of March 1, 2026, which means many clients will no longer be able to afford health insurance.

Ms. Williams advised that HOPWA is considered by regulation to be "a payer of last resort;" however, if it can be demonstrated that there are no other sources that can assist clients with premiums, the City can gather feedback from the public and determine whether or not future HOPWA requests for proposals (RFPs) can include assistance with insurance premiums.

Chair Rice asked if the potential impact of these changes has been estimated. Mr. Cius replied that there are 2,280 local HOPWA clients who will be impacted by the changes to medications, premium assistance, or other means of assistance. He strongly emphasized the importance of identifying a way to safely transition those clients to other services.

Mr. Hensley stated that some clients affected by these changes can be transferred to more affordable plans under the ACA which have lower premiums. Mr. Cius cautioned, however, that some of the more affordable plans do not cover all the medications needed by HOPWA clients. They will also need to ensure that clients can continue to see their current medical providers.

Chair Rice asked if there is an estimate of the costs associated with assisting the 2,280 clients currently facing the loss of insurance and/or medications. Mr. Cius replied that an earlier estimate of 4,000 clients in need of assistance had projected these costs at \$31 million annually. A specific figure is not currently available, as many different factors affect this number.

It was determined that this issue would be an Agenda Item for further discussion during the March 9, 2026 Board meeting.

Mr. Hensley advised that he would be unable to attend the Board meetings proposed for April 13 and 14, 2026, at which CDBG presentations and deliberations would occur. It was noted that he would not be able to participate in the scoring of applications if he cannot attend this meeting or meetings.

The Board members discussed the possibility of changing their April meeting dates. Ms. Williams cautioned that this may require identifying a different meeting location, and may also affect the timeline in which the Annual Action Plan with the Board's recommendations is presented to the City Commission for approval.

Mr. Hensley indicated he would be able to attend meetings on April 20 and 21 rather than April 13 and 14. Ms. Williams stated that she would look into the availability of a meeting space on those days and bring that information back to the Board members at their March 9 meeting. Vice Chair Hughes pointed out that the changed dates could present conflicts for the Board members who were not present at today's meeting. Chair Rice suggested that moving the meetings to a later rather than an earlier date could lessen the possibility of this conflict.

**Motion** made by Chair Rice, seconded by Mr. Cius, to change the April meeting dates to April 20 and 21. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sharon Alveranga-Jones, representing Broward Health Regional Planning Council (BRHPC), advised that HOPWA provider agencies may be able to provide additional data on the needs of their clients regarding insurance premiums.

## **IX. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

Chair Rice reviewed the following Items for inclusion on the March 9, 2026 Agenda:

- Continued discussion on insurance premiums and other needs
- HOPWA update
- CDBG application update

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Community Services Board

February 9, 2026

Page 6

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Any written public comments made 48 hours prior to the meeting regarding items discussed during the proceedings have been attached hereto.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]