

**DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL SERVICES
ADVISORY BOARD CONFERENCE CALL
JUNE 5, 2017**

Doris: Its 9:31 let's get started. If you would please announce your name we can start.

Beth: Beth with Arkansas Domestic Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Bob: Bob McMahan Prosecution Coordinator

Mary Beth: Mary Beth Luibel State CASA Association

Joyce: Joyce Raynor Women's Council

Ginger: Ginger Kines Prosecution Coordinator Office

Mira: Mira Frosolono Criminal Justice Institute

Matt: Matt Smith with ACASA

Roberta Roberta Sick, Partners

Doris: I know we have Max Snowden on the line. Matt do we know if Monie will be joining soon or have you heard from her?

Max: I do not know. I haven't heard from her.

Doris: On this end, I'm Doris Smith the Administrator of DFA Office of Intergovernmental Services. We also have...

Autumn: Autumn Hemphill, Assistant Administrator of IGS

Debbie: Debbie Bousquet, Program Manager

Joshua: Joshua Reeves, Admin Specialist

Doris: We try to record meetings for transcription and review. So, for awareness we are recording the full discussion here so we can state the results of the meeting. I believe everyone has received an email that included some items. Let's start with the agenda. Number one I wanted to bring you up to speed on 2017 Applications for funding. We received 124 applications for funding and our new system is up and running. On our part, we have tried to make it convenient for the advisory board to view the applications within the system so you can review the application electronically. For those of you that have time to participate in the application process this should make it a whole lot easier than a bunch of paper copies. There is an evaluation form that will be completed for each application. The form will tally up a score for each evaluation. That should make it easier for you to score each application. That score will then come back to us and we will review it and incorporate it into our scoring and make determinations for funding based on that. The application instructions on how to sign in as the advisory body did go out and I wanted to know if there are any thoughts, questions, or concerns about the process?

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Mira: Did you want questions about the form or something that's in there.

Doris: Yes, if you have some.

Mira: This is Mira with CJI. I had a couple of questions on the review form. For example: under the Needs Assessment section, I ask about are there similar services available in the proposed service area? Then in parenthesis it says Map. Is there going to be a map that is available for us? I wasn't sure what that meant.

Debbie: It means the map of the state.

Doris: Did that map get loaded into there, Autumn or can they access that?

Autumn: Yes, thanks Mira, I'm glad you brought that up. I'm still looking into that to see if we have a map. I don't know that we do that we can link that to. If we don't I will have that language removed.

Doris: The goal there was to have a map so you could see where services are available. We will double check and see if that is yet available. It's not beyond our control but one of the contemporaneous items that we were hoping to have ready for this part. I'm not sure that we have that map ready or if we just don't have access to it yet.

Mira: I have another question that I know Autumn and I talked about. It's on the population to be serviced. Its number three on the form, does the application have identification of unique, which is in quotes, requirements? My thought was that those would be included in the solicitations so could you give me a little more information on that.

Doris: Debbie

Debbie: That is unique requirements that are identified by applicant.

Doris: What we are looking for are things that strengthen that application. If the applicant knows that these are some unique needs for their proposed service area that they plan to serve, that is a strengthener for their application. We were hoping that gives the applicant credit because they were able to identify where those unique needs are.

Mira: My last question is, when I bring up the application in a pdf format, there is a question that says to check if you are a new applicant and do not currently have a grant form DFA-IGS. I can't see if there is a check mark or not.

Autumn: I don't know I will have to look at that.

Doris: The only thing that comes to mind Mira, there was some confusion when we had the work shop with the applicant between the SF-424 they have to identify themselves one way as a new applicant and then if they have already received an award and is current or just a returning recipient. Give Autumn a chance to review that. We will get back to everyone with that information along with the map part.

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- Mira: After reading it no one has said that under previous funding I have done X, Y, Z. I haven't looked at all of them but that was my last question on that part.
- Doris: Thanks Mira for the questions, we have gone through the application part and now we are getting questions with the reviewer part. We went through the same process with the applicant cycle and had some things that we had to go back and tweak. I'm so glad that everyone has some questions and comments.
- Roberta: This is sort of informational somewhere on the application is said to check new applicant on something and if we did it there on the SF-424 then I imagine that we checked it there as well. That information might not be totally correct based off what you are looking for.
- Doris: That's exactly what we need to look at Roberta, if we need to explain that a little more as to how we have to receive it in in order for it to be complete in our record. We will take a second look and to go back and look at it from the reviewers prospective.
- Roberta: The other question that I have is, is it your desire that each one of us review all 124 of these applications except for those that we have to recuse ourselves from. Mira and I were talking the other day, four pages of review of each one, I just want to know what you were hoping out of this?
- Doris: The only thing we are hoping for is that you have access to review each and every one except for those you have a conflict with. Even those with a conflict have to be available to you [in order for you] to state that [you] recuse. We don't expect that you will be able to review all 124, but just as many as you can. In the past it's been helpful to know what you are scoring and that we do use that information. If you are able to review some a few or just a couple it's helpful. We have to review each and every one so we appreciate any assistance that we can get. We most certainly want to make certain that you have access and that it is as easy as possible, but realistically we are not stating that you review each and every one.
- Beth: I have a follow up question to that; when we are picking the applications that we are going to review which way the conflict of interest go? Should we review the ones that we have expertise in or not because that's a conflict. Which direction are you steering me?
- Joyce: Before you answer that Doris, I guess a follow up question is for transparency sake they will want to know why they didn't receive funding or this one over that one in the same area. Would it be incumbent of us not to review those in the same area or that we would be receiving the same funding.
- Doris: You have hit the nail on the head. That is how you want to think of conflict of interest. Here's the thing on our end - transparency is the key. It's up to you to determine what a conflict is for you. When an applicant gets the application reviewed each one has the

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right to an unbiased review. If anything in an application would cause you to lean against it or for it because of relationships with that organization or with similar organizations that you are attached [to] - the conflict is in the reviewer. Make sure you have no reason to say yes or no other than [on] the merits of the application.

Beth: That answered my question.

Doris: Ok very good.

Monie: This is Monie. I have a question. So I'm hearing what saying but don't you think that if we have had trouble with a program and done some things that they aren't supposed to do that we should at least make a note of that.

Doris: Are you speaking from a coalition perspective?

Monie: Yes, from a coalition perspective. We credential them and site visit them. Don't you think that is something you should know?

Doris: I think that should be communicated separate from the application Monie. It might get us in a little bit of trouble if you're using that to rate their application. Remember that the applications are rated on that standard form. That is why we created a standard form. We can be challenged if someone is treated differently or handled a little different based on some arbitrary criteria. That internal knowledge could cause you to rate them differently than if they weren't part of your coalition. You don't want to engage that in the application review process.

Monie: So if we see an application would you prefer that we send an email and then not rate that application?

Doris: If you feel that you cannot rate that application objectively then, do not rate it.

Monie: Ok.

Doris: What I think is helpful, Beth you and I know of a situation that we will not go into during this conversation, when you know of issue communicate those at the time. I am uncomfortable waiting on an application review session to delve into problems. If you know of problems let us know when they occur. That would be helpful.

Beth: Ok thank you.

Ginger: I have a quick question I see that the application is available in pdf. Is the actual application review form also available in pdf?

Doris: Let me check.

Autumn: We will have to look into that?

Roberta: It is.

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Doris: Because we are entering into this is new phase we want to get you accurate information. I know that you can rate the form and you can get to a point where you have completely rated it and submit it. Most certainly we will send you instructions on how to print the pdf. We will add that to the list.

Joyce: Doris this is Joyce again.

Doris: Ok

Joyce: I have served on a few other review committees especially for state grants. I know the Office of State Procurement have guidelines as far as the review process. On some of the other grants we were not allowed to come in with any preconceived notions about the applicants. Even if we knew stuff we had to rate the merit of that particular application only. They said it would be a conflict of interest if we did that and they could turn around and sued because we knew something. You might want to check the Office of Procurements guidelines.

Doris: I think that fits with the previous discussion with Monie. Where we stated we rate the application on its merits. Now, the information we receive about problems goes in to consideration where that organization is under their award right know. If we have had any problems, like I said I will include Beth because she knows we do the same thing. That's what I discussed with Beth. Even when we heard or know of a problem DFA has its own review process that it must follow. We don't use that against or for any particular recipient. We go through the process and make separate determination and deal directly with that agency to resolve the issue. It doesn't impact anything that we do on his end except for what our investigations determines for that particular organization. So we are in agreement.

Mary Beth: I raised this issue when your office got the influx of funding from the feds and opened it up. For all of these reasons that people have brought up and I know we are in the middle of it now, but I really encourage you all to go to a third party to review these application.

Doris: We do.

Mary Beth: We are all human and your staff are human, and you are talking about over a hundred application is a relatively short turnaround time. I think it's difficult for any of us to be objective like Beth mentioned and we hear about other providers and your staff works with them and they have feelings, we are human. If the funds are available and I'm a little concerned about the way we are talking about review some, don't review some, things seem hap-hazard as to what's going to be reviewed in addition to what your staff is going to review. Going forward I think that's an option to look at if that's an option if funding is available for a third party to do this.

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Doris: Well Mary Beth you will be at least somewhat pleased to know that we do use a separate review panel. We do that anyway because it is a huge burden, and burden as in the number of staff that we have and it's a huge amount of work for our staff to just be solely responsible for reviewing without some external input. So we do use and separate unattached panel where we use participants for different state agencies that have grant experience who are similarly situated and can review applications. In any case you are not going to get someone to actually review with the understanding that we already have of these sub-grant organizations but what we do find is that the results do mirror a lot of the time what our determinations are and that's just based on the merits of the application. That is a good suggestion maybe in the future we can, I hate to use the word commercially but you understand what I'm trying to say and where I'm going. Maybe a professional service contract but we will have to look at the grant structure to even see if that's even allowable. Sometimes it's not whether we would like to do things or not but we most certainly use a separate panel for a review. We have done that for the last couple of years. Please understand this is just not just on you guys back. This is just a part of a requirement by statute is to make it available to you. I don't want you to have to go and figure out how to read 124 applications and review them all. What we are saying is we are making it available and available in a way that is convenient to you and in a way that can review as many as you can and recuse from those that you need to recuse from and try to give your best objective review of each application based on the merits of that application. Does that make sense Mary Beth?

Mary Beth: Absolutely and I do appreciate the format that has been provided I think that is about the most user friendly for reviews that you could ask. I understand and I appreciate it.

Doris: Very Good, thank you. Any other question on the review portion?

Mira: Yes this is Mira again. Are these do on the 28th or July 15th?

Doris: July 15th is that date that these are due.

Autumn: Where are you getting the 28th, does it say somewhere?

Mira: In the solicitation it says the May 16th thru June 28th proposal review and selections.

Autumn: We decided to give you more time for this review. We will update and publish a new schedule for the applicants.

Mira: Okay I just wanted to be sure. The email said July 15th but the schedule said...

Autumn: We didn't want to crunch you guys with 124 applications.

Doris: Any other questions, and thank you for the feedback it's helpful on our end too. With that we will move into item 3. We will move on to On-Call Hours as match. What I sent to you is the policy that DFA devised as well as a summary sheet. The purpose of the

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summary sheet was to help see how we came up with the policy. With that I will just let you guys ask any questions and discuss anything you have related to this policy. Monie is there anything that you had to discuss on the on-call hours?

Monie: I just think we need to revisit it at some point. My problem is that I think we should try to be progressive and we should use the standard set forth by federal regs. I understand trying to be a little conservative. I don't think it affects all the centers the way it affect Rape Crisis Centers. I think Rape Crisis Centers are the most affected through this policy. It is really hard for them to get the volunteer hours because they don't have a shelter where people are staying there all night. I think we need to be a little more progressive as far as what the regs will do and not use language that restricts hours. I don't think that's necessary but I don't think right now is the right time to address it because there is nothing that can be done about it.

Beth: I would agree with Monie. We have a lot going on right now. Whenever we do, I don't know that it is as much of an issue for Domestic Violence Shelters as it is for Rape Crisis. I have done a little bit in both though, I'm just going to throw my support behind that. They really need more of those hours. If in the future we can make more of those hours I would really support that. That would be a big help to those programs.

Monie: Thanks Beth.

Roberta: This is Roberta. I have looked at these On-Call hour thing from a couple of perspectives and I really feel like we in Arkansas are really down in the bottom tier of funding and stuff like anyway and anything that we can do that helps programs that's legal it's a good thing to do. If there is a way in the future of revisiting and looking at that to give them the full coverage of that. It also gives some incentive for volunteers to participate in addition to the work that they are doing then they are also knowing that they are helping to keep the agencies open.

Doris: Thank you Roberta. One of the things that I do want to point out is that this did take some studying and review of federal guidelines. The on call part I know that you're talking about volunteers that literally are on call and can be called in at any time. Any [actual] call, service, or actions is 100% claimable. I don't want you to get that confused. The only part that hit the 50% part is where the state may get into a little bit of a bind trying to support it in an audit. That's the part that we are actually discussing and I know that we have some differences there. We do try to be a little bit conservative. Obviously these grants under the Department of Finance and Administration. Obviously that is conservative inherently by the nature of the department, it's not intended to harm the organizations or keep them from being able to use these hours. One of the benefits to having this is it does open up something that wasn't there at first, it does help some, may be not as much as you would like to see. What makes us nervous is, if a cost is

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disallowed as in federal auditors come in and we can't prove out cost. Remember that from a federal auditor's perspective justification is not achieved by saying that there is a need or the organization has a need. Which is true. You have to support how those organizations developed those policies. If this was just an audit on the [provider] organization it would be a lot easier for the organization to show how they support on-call hours. But the state has to cover all the on-call hours in a policy from a platform or a foundation that supports all of those programs. I think the last paragraph states that each organization has to have its own established policies and procedures. That adds credence and credibility for the feds that the state isn't just saying that organizations say they have it so we are just going to go with it. We are basing it on the fact that organizations do have some policy and procedure in place on how they handle on-call hours or volunteer hours for their organization. I think that we are getting to a better discussion on this, what makes it difficult is our policies have to cover across the board. While I understand Rape Crisis Centers or another particular service providers may be hit a little differently with the policy - maybe some a little more than others. What I ask that you all give consideration to is that we cannot develop a policy just based on one service provider type. That's my best discussion on that. Please understand we try our best to be as fair as we can. We have done the work to be on the liberal end as far as the allowance of the percentages, but just know that as the state administrative agency we must have statewide policies to cover every organization that we fund. We cannot apply a separate type of policy for Rape Crisis than we would another entity. Federal regulations state that we must be consistent with our costs. Costs cannot be treated differently based on the fact it's federal or nonfederal, we have to be consistent. Those are restriction on the state agency. To help you understand that part Monie, if it was just particular to the agency, discipline, or provider yes you could have all of those thing in place without an issue in an audit. But we have seen audits and seen them from other states and how the states are having to reimburse the federal government. Arkansas does not want to be in that predicament and we haven't been so far. We are a little bit conservative but we try to give credence to the needs of the providers without adding a possible burden to the state. If the costs are disqualified, the state could have to pay back three times as much as the match was. That is a federal fact, based on percentage allocation of match. Match is always a smaller portion of the program, and federal dollars cover most of it. When the state is found in violation or cost are disqualified they don't ask for just match they ask for the federal dollars back based on the unmet match. That could be quite a bit of money.

Monie: Hey Doris, I think that it is hard to follow this conversation on the teleconference. So, I say we revisit this when we have a meeting where we are all sitting there together because a lot of this is becoming convoluted. And I think it would be better to have a face to face discussion with everybody at the table. Then to listen to the reasons because I am getting lost within everything that you're saying is just because we are not there and we can't I don't know. I can't follow all that.

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Doris: I got you. Here is what I am going to recommend next is standard quarterly meetings. We can add this to the agenda, this is just a proposal from us, you don't have to do it on this call but what would be a good for a standard advisory board meeting. I don't see the need for monthly meetings. There is not that much going on. We are just processing payments and paying invoices once the grants are awarded. There is not a whole lot going on that we need monthly meetings for. I don't imagine that you want to just be in a monthly meeting unless there is an issue. I would recommend that we have quarterly meetings. This might be one of those things that we need to sit down and discuss face to face at the next quarterly meeting. If there are no other questions on match. Then we can go on and talk about if we can do quarterly meetings as a standard meeting. Where we are with DFA and the advisory body does center on the award process but we want to implement more regular meetings on a standard basis if you all are amenable. Maybe we can do that quarterly.

Monie: I think that because we are a board now we need to have quarterly meeting at least.

Doris: Ok. Will you guys be willing to look at your calendars? I have standard meeting monthly and I'm sure you guys do too. If you would look at your calendar and send a suggest date like second Tuesday.

Mira: I like the quarterly meeting idea. Maybe we can look at what month that falls in and then send Autumn dates not trying to give you more work Autumn. Someone as to be the unified point. So like September what are we looking at?

Doris: Yes that's good.

?: we are looking at September.

Doris: September is going to be our next quarter.

Mary Beth: Do you have dates that are that are good and have Autumn just send those out.

Doris: Does anyone have a particular week that might be helpful. The first week is busy for me the second week is best. Not right know but if you can think of a week that works better let her know. She can schedule the day from there

Mary Beth: If we wait we are not going to have the time we need to get it on there now.

Doris: You're right

Joyce: Try and keep in mind national heath observance days. We do so much please keep those dates in mind.

Doris: Okay Thanks Joyce. Anything else? Well, I don't have any other particular new business but I put it on the agenda just in case you guys had anything else that you would like to present for a future agenda any thing comes to mind? Okay, I appreciate all of your communications. I'll take just a few more moments to see if any one has any comments

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about the meeting as a whole or questions that we need to go over. I'm glad to have had full participation. There are a few things that we need to get to you one is the map, another is to check on the pdf. format, the updated timeline, and to check on the new and old grants check mark. Thanks every one we will email you about all of this. Thank you