Meeting: Economic Opportunity Council Community Action Plan Public Hearing

Location: Pacheco Community Center

Date: 20 May 2009 Time Convened: 7:05p Time Terminated: 8:00p Recorder: Kristin Cooke

Members in Attendance:

Members Not in Attendance:

Members of the Public:

Staff in Attendance:

TOPIC	RECOMMENDATION / SUMMARY
Call to Order	• 7:05p
Introductions	EOC members present introduced themselves to the public including the sector they represented and their history with the Economic Opportunity Council.
Overview of EOC and Purpose of Public Hearing	Tracy Fraas and Ed Lerman presented to the group on the history of Community Action Agencies, and on the purpose of the public hearing.
Public Comment	Member of the public Blanca Campos of Pittsburg asked if the EOC could help fund a program for the low-income population to learn how to work in green jobs, particularly construction?
	 Ed Lerman replied that the EOC is currently engaging with organizations that provide green job training for weatherization, solarization, construction, cleaning, etc. through the Michael Chavez Center.
	 Member of the public Blanca Campos of Pittsburg commented that people in the local community are not aware that food stamps are separate from WIC and also need help accessing food stamps or other food programs if they are not legal citizens.
	Member of the public Denice Mullaney of Brentwood commented on the lack of available counseling providers who accept MediCal.
	 Ed Lerman replied that children currently enrolled in Head Start may be referred through CSB's mental health program. CSB's Family Partnership manager will provide resources for the other children. We will also attempt to get the information out to the broader community.

- Member of the public Maria Rocha of Concord commented on the difficulty enrolling infants into childcare.
 - o Camilla Rand, CSB Division Manager, will work with her directly.
- Member of the public Ericka Givens of Bay Point spoke of the difficulty in locating resources for children transitioning from Head Start to kindergarten so that parents are able to continue working or going to school.
 - Ed Lerman replied that this can be identified as a need in the CAP. CSB's Division Manager and Assistant Directors will also develop a document with current resources for parents
 - Delphine Smith, EOC Member, suggested that parents contact their local parks and recreation programs, many of which provide scholarships.
- Member of the public Diana Estrada of San Pablo commented on the availability of affordable tutoring services for children in kindergarten and first grade. She also asked how the public will be able to access the services that come out of this public meeting.
 - Ed Lerman responded that all information on EOC activities is available on the CSB website. There is also a 1-800 number listed for those who do not have access to the internet. Kristin Cooke will email the information to Policy Council staff for distribution.
- Member of the public Tania Medrano of Richmond noted the lack of safe places for children to play out of doors. There is a need for parent and child programs after work hours.
 - Ed Lerman noted that First Five centers, located in San Pablo, Concord, Bay Point, and Pittsburg offer these services. We will help to get the word out.
 - Member of the public Simone Dollarhide of Pittsburg stated that Boys and Girls clubs in the Pittsburg area are offering summer programs from 8am – 8pm with a sliding fee scale based on income. Pittsburg residents and children attending school in Pittsburg can attend for free. Baseball is also offered.
- Member of the public Maria Cortez of Bay Point expressed concern over the homeless population and about the safety of the community.
 - Ed Lerman responded that a program addressing homeless prevention and rapid rehousing is already in existence. Funding is coming into the County and we will be working with various homeless services, both directly and collaboratively.

- Melissa Alfaro of Oakley suggested a program to help families find housing after foreclosure whether they were owners or renters.
 - Ed Lerman discussed the new Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program being implemented by the county Health Services Department and Community development Department, in conjunction with community based non-profits and other county agencies, to prevent homelessness and get people back into their houses. Cynthia Belon is the contact person within the Health Services Department.
- Member of the public Denice Mullaney of Brentwood asked for resources on safe and affordable housing.
 - Ed Lerman noted that Section 8 housing may be re-opening due to the ARRA dollars the Housing Authority will receive.
- Member of the public Karen Lane of Oakley asked for resources for young males with no children such as shelter availability or housing assistance.
 - Ed Lerman commented that this man may qualify for assistance since he is not working. First contact could be East Bay Works One Stop center on Port Chicago Highway for help with resume writing and skill building.
- Member of the public Karen Lane of Oakley also noted the need for winter activities for children and families that do not cost a lot of money. Is it possible to provide enclosed, safe areas for children to play during the rainy season?
 - James Sullivan, EOC member, noted there will be a playground built in that area within the next year which will be ADA accessible. It will be enclosed so no children may enter or leave without their parents. Construction will begin soon, however, it may take some time to complete the project.
 - James Sullivan, EOC member, also suggested contacting the John Muir and Kaiser Foundations regarding programs for medical care as well as the United States Public Health Service. (Ed - not sure what this related to?)
- Member of the public Marlene Kerry of Richmond asked if the EOC could work with the Housing Authority to send out a bulletin regarding services that will be coming available.
 - Delphine Smith, EOC member, stated that this information is printed in the newspapers; however, much is word of mouth.

- Member of the public Michelle Cossey of Richmond noted that the Brookside and Las Deltas centers had fliers stating that Fairfield was accepting Section 8 applications.
- Member of the public Tania Medrano of Richmond commented that residents would like help getting the word out when Section 8 has funds available. Most know how to get on the waiting list, but never hear anything back either way. Those who are already on the waiting list should be notified.
- Ed Lerman summarized that we are hearing a common theme around poor communications network between programs and residents. The EOC can possibly help facilitate that communication. He also referred residents to the 211 number for immediate problems. The line is manned 24 hours per day.
- Member of the public Martha Rivas of San Pablo asked what happens to the people who have applied for Section 8 who have had a change in contact information?
 - Member of the public Ericka Givens stated that the Housing Authority sends information to the last known address. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep their information updated.
- Member of the public Martha Rivas of San Pablo asked for more resources for single parents such as health care, after school child care, general assistance, and housing.
 - Member of the Public Melissa Alfaro of Concord was concerned that the income levels to qualify for these programs were too low for many families.
 - Ed Lerman stated that many of the income guidelines are set at the federal poverty level which does not account for the cost of living in different states. Some programs adjust the ceilings slightly to 100-130% of the federal poverty level. EOC could play an advocacy role in the area.
- Member of the public Blanca Campos suggested that local neighborhood Americorps programs be offered for children to beautify their own communities rather than working in an office during the summer.
 - Ed Lerman discussed the Richmond Summer Youth Employment Program through EHSD's Workforce Development Board, which is partially funded by the EOC. The EOC will also be ratifying part of their stimulus funds to this program. There are few employers willing to work with a lot of teens during the summer. We are looking into a program at CSB that will train student workers for clerical jobs, childcare,

	maintenance, etc.
	 Member of the public Marlene Kerry of Richmond also noted that Neighborhood Coordinating Councils will sit with community members to hear what is needed. There is also the Monument Community Partnership in Concord.
	Member of the public Melissa Alfaro of Oakley stated there is a need for more shaded areas in urban communities.
	 Ed Lerman suggested the EOC could possibly advocate with the Community Development Department.
	 Member of the public Blanca Campos noted that there is also a playground on the corner of Grant Street and Solano Way in Concord, Mateo's Dream, which is a shady park.
Next Steps	Ed Lerman thanked the group for their input and informed them that all the input would be included in the Community Action Plan that is going to the State Government, and that the input would help guide the group when creating their strategic goals for the next two years.
Evaluation and	No evaluation.
Adjournment	Adjourned 8:05pm