



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR
November 19, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Jane Micallef, Director, Department of Health, Housing, and Community Services

Subject: Multicultural Institute Site Visit Report

RECOMMENDATION

1. Take no action on the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission's recommendation to conduct an audit of the City funded activities provided by the Multicultural Institute.
2. Review and accept staff's site visit report for the Multicultural Institute.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

During the FY 2014-2015 community agency allocation process, the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission (HWCAC) reviewed the Multi-Cultural Institute's (MI) funding application and expressed concerns about MI's Lifeskills Program. Commissioners felt that the cost for this program was high and it was not clear what services it provided. Commissioners also felt that GED classes did not appear to be taking place because there was no class in session when commissioners visited the facility in FY 2011. On March 20, 2013 the HWCAC, therefore, approved a motion (M/S/C: Sood/Flanders. Ayes: Sood, Reagan, Cross, Robinson, Flanders, Porter, Woodson, McMullan. Noes: None. Abstain: Davila. Absent: None.) recommending that City Council decrease funding for the program from \$71,394 to \$41,394. On June 25, 2013, City Council opted to support the City Manager's recommendation and approved a continuation of funding for the Lifeskills program for FY 2014 at the prior level of \$71,394.

On September 18, 2013 at its regular meeting, the HWCAC approved a motion (M/S/C: Sood/Reagan. Ayes: Cross, Flanders, Sood, Reagan, and Owen. Noes: Davila. Abstain: None. Absent: Woodson, Ramesh, Robinson, McMullan, Porter, and Davis.) recommending that City Council direct staff to conduct a program audit of MI. In light of the concerns the HWCAC raised about the Lifeskills Program during the RFP process, and in light of ongoing discussions about MI at HWCAC meetings, on August 30, 2013,

Health, Housing, and Community Services (HHCS) Department staff made an on-site monitoring visit to MI. The purpose of the visit was to investigate the particular concerns that the HWCAC has. HHCS staff spoke with MI's Executive and Associate Directors, observed a GED class, visited the lunch program, and reviewed backup documentation for the Lifeskills Program.

Job Placement:

The HWCAC was concerned that MI's proposal, which imports information directly from their FY 2012 year-end program report, showed that 220 people worked 300 days.

During previous site visits to MI, HHCS staff observed MI program staff providing outreach in the morning both one-on-one and with small groups with day laborers during week days at the day labor zone (West of 6th Street.) MI's program report shows that in FY 2013, MI served a total of 540 people with meals, job placements and GED classes. The report indicates that it matched 204 unduplicated day laborers with 309 "days of work". MI staff clarified that due to a problem with the report form, it actually placed 204 day laborers in 309 jobs. The number of days of work is actually not tallied or reported on the program report. These jobs could be one day, multiple days, or on-going. MI staff clarified that it did not have the capacity to track the numbers of days these day laborers actually worked in FY 2013. HHCS staff reviewed job placement documentation which provides verification of the services and outcomes the agency reported. Their actual outcome exceeds their contract goal of placing 160 clients in jobs.

Community Services:

The HWCAC was concerned that it was not clear in MI's proposal what constituted "community service days".

Due to the history of concerns about day laborers from property and business owners, MI has promoted community-building and outreach to the neighborhood since 2002. In FY 2013, MI reported that they distributed newsletters in the months of September 2012, December 2012 and June 2013 to the residents and businesses in the area, providing program and information updates. MI also reported that they outreached and provided newsletters to 12 businesses on October 2, 2013, including MAC, Import Tile, Paper Source, Anthropology, Teance, MIG, Mechanics Bank, ITT, Truitt & White, 5th and Hearst Lawyer's building receptionist, Aveda, and Jigsaw. With MI's support and coordination, day laborers organized street clean-ups along Hearst Avenue between Second and Fourth Street five times in FY 2013. The dates were July 30, 2012, August 27, 2012, September 24, 2012, October 30, 2012, and February 25, 2013. The clean-ups were documented with photos. The four outreach efforts and five cleanup days are the nine community service events that MI reported. MI did not provide backup documentation to substantiate the 114 people involved in these community service days.

GED Classes:

The HWCAC was concerned that GED classes were not happening at the time commissioners made a site visit and that clear information regarding graduation rates was not provided to the Commission.

MI offers Spanish-language GED preparation classes three times a year. The course is two hours long, and meets five days per week for five weeks. In FY 2013, MI allocated \$1,600 of its \$71,394 in Lifeskills Program funding for its GED/ESL tutors. During FY 2013, MI reported that of 57 students served, nine were Berkeley residents or day laborers. MI also reported that, out of the 45 students who took the GED exam in FY 2013, the passing rate was 53 percent. During the program visit on August 30, 2013, HHCS staff observed seven students in the GED class. HHCS staff also reviewed backup documentation and summary statistics for the GED outcomes that confirm MI's reports.

Meals and Additional Services:

The HWCAC was concerned that MI was using City funding to provide free meals, even though this expense was not specifically included in their contract with the City.

MI provides a hot lunch every Friday at Good Shepherd Church which is not funded by the City. At the site visit MI explained that it uses other funding and partners with Alameda County Food Bank to provide the meals and groceries available for clients to take away after the lunch. Educational workshops from different community agencies are provided during lunch time. On the day of program visit, HHCS staff observed 42 people having hot meals.

BACKGROUND

In 2002, the City approached Multicultural Institute (MI) to provide services to day laborers who congregate on the Hearst Street corridor in West Berkeley after residents and business owners in the neighborhood raised concerns. Since then, the City has funded MI to provide services to day laborers, outreach to the community in the Hearst Street corridor, and provide a mentoring and tutoring program.

On June 25, 2013, City Council approved continued funding for MI for FY 2014-2015 as part of the community agency allocation process. City Council allocated \$34,465 for the Mentoring for Academic Success program, which provides mentoring and tutoring to students from families that are disadvantaged economically and/or from underserved racial/ethnic backgrounds. Council also provided funding in the amount of \$71,394 for the Lifeskills Program to assist extremely low-income and poverty level Spanish-speaking male immigrant laborers and their families. Services include job placement, free meals, services for the community, and GED program.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Based on the site visit and documentation MI provided, HHCS staff concluded that the services MI provided are adequately substantiated. MI also submits program reports every 6 months, which document that the agency continues to meet its contractual goals. There is no need for any further investigation in the City funded services MI provides.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

Wing Wong, Community Service Specialist II, Department of Health, Housing, and Community Services, (510) 981-5428