



FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

RECORD OF ACTION FOR
APRIL 22, 2019

Supervisor Candace Andersen, Chair
Supervisor John Gioia, Vice Chair

Present: Chair Candace Andersen
Vice Chair John Gioia

Staff Present: Julie DiMaggio Enea, Senior Deputy County Administrator

Attendees: Kathy Gallagher, EHS Director; Carolyn Foudy, EHSD; Donna Van Wert, Workforce Dev Board Director; Yolanda Vega, WDB Vice Chair; Patience Ofodu, EHSD-WDB; Jeff Shoot, EHSD-WDB; Maureen Nelson, EHSD-WDB; Julia Taylor, County Admin Office; Enid Mendoza, CAO Sr. Deputy; Yen Do, SEIU Local 1021; George Carter, EHSD-WDB; Oscar Dominguez, EHSD-WDB; Mariana Moore, Ensuring Opportunity; Linda Lavendar, East Bay Leadership Council; Carly Finkle; Larry Sly; Noramah Burch, EHSD-WS; Rebecca ____, SEIU Local 1021

1. Introductions

Chair Andersen called the meeting to order 2:05 p.m. and invited attendees to introduce themselves.

2. Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to three minutes).

Yen Do spoke about her concerns regarding the number of IHSS (In-Home Supportive Services) positions that had been eliminated, the need for additional staff due to the CalFresh expansion to SSI, which she predicted would increase caseloads by 200%. She requested to meet separately with the Supervisors to discuss her concerns.

3. ACCEPT status report on the Employment and Human Services Department's implementation of the CalFresh expansion. (Kathy Gallagher, Employment and Human Services Director)

EHS Director Kathy Gallagher presented the staff report and summarized that of the approximately 7,500 people who are eligible for the CalFresh expanded benefits and who are expected to participate based on State assumptions, 6,527 are already receiving IHSS MediCal benefits or have existing MediCal cases, and 2,512 are members of households in which a resident is already receiving CalFresh benefits. Therefore, a significant number of applicants will already have records in the CalWIN system that will not have to be recreated. Adding new beneficiaries and

their income to households already receiving benefits would normally impact the level of benefits for a household; however, the State will provide supplements to preserve existing benefit levels so that no household will be negatively impacted.

Supervisor Gioia verified that the eligibility requirements for the expanded SSI benefits are blindness, disability, and over 65 years of age.

In anticipation of the increased workload, Kathy reported that her department is training existing staff on the new requirements; these staff can process applications received beginning in May. Additionally, EHS is interviewing, from a list of 41 applicants, individuals for appointment to 14 temporary positions (10 eligibility workers and 4 clerical workers), who will become trained and ready to begin processing applications in June. She explained the difficulty in attaining any certainty about additional workload. She mentioned that CalWIN automation of the applications will become available on May 13 and an intake template is being developed by EHS to capture intake data until the new CalWIN automation becomes available.

As to funding, Kathy reported that the State allocation of \$973,280 will expire on June 30, 2019 and the FY 2019/20 will not be received before September 2019. The County Administrator authorized, in the interim period, \$300,000 to be leveraged with federal funds.

Rebecca of SEIU Local 1021 opined that a reason for the predicted 75% application rate was likely due to the long wait times to apply for and receive benefits, citing an example of a person waiting on the phone for four hours for assistance.

Larry Sly and Carly Finkle commented that it is unrealistic to assume that individuals who are not eligible for the expanded benefits will not apply. They believe that as many as 25,000 people might apply, even though less than half that number are actually eligible to receive the expanded benefits. They expressed concern that EHS is not prepared for the potential onslaught of applicants. He commented that Contra Costa residents cannot register for these benefits over the phone as residents of some other counties can do.

Kathy responded that, with the five additional permanent staff, she has a staff of 130 eligibility workers in total who could process applications. EHS is relying primarily on community partners to conduct outreach to eligible people. The department is also contacting CalFresh households, and placing information in General Assistance packets and on the department's web page.

Mariana Moore said she is more concerned about the overall EHS structure and lack of sufficient frontline staff in CalFresh. In her opinion, more could and should be done to address whole-system deficiencies. She expressed frustration about these concerns not being addressed and suggested that the partnerships might not continue.

Kathy explained that EHS staffing levels are driven by State and federal funding reductions. In recognition of the reduced funding, EHS is reassessing its service delivery model in terms of reduced plant and increase automation. She concurred

that phone registration should be a future goal.

Lindy Lavendar suggested that the prior expansion of benefits to students might provide some indication of the increased workload to be anticipated with the new expansion of benefits.

The Committee accepted the staff report and directed staff to forward it to the Board of Supervisors for its information. The Committee requested EHS to report back to the Committee on June 10.

AYE: Chair Candace Andersen, Vice Chair John Gioia
Passed

4. ACCEPT the report from the Employment and Human Services Department on the Workforce Development Board and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act updates and DIRECT staff to forward it to the Board of Supervisors for their information.

Donna Van Wert presented the staff report, commenting that in this transition year, participation is lower than normal. She stated that the data is not complete and may not be indicative of actual experience due to a lag time in reporting.

She itemized certain actions for consideration by the Board of Supervisors, including:

- *approval of updated regional and local plan, which must be approved by August 1, 2019*
- *approval of a regional MOU, combining two program phases, that designates Contra Costa County as a fiscal agent on behalf of the region, due June 30, 2019*
- *authorization to form a non-profit (510(c)(3)) organization to serve as a fundraising arm of the Workforce Development Board.*

The Committee accepted the report and directed staff to forward it to the Board of Supervisors for its information.

AYE: Chair Candace Andersen, Vice Chair John Gioia
Passed

5. The next meeting is currently scheduled for Monday, May 13, 2019.
6. Adjourn

Chair Andersen adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.