

Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: September 7, 2010

Date Submitted: September 3, 2010

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator
Alfred Nelson, Director, Wakulla County Housing Division

Subject: Update to the Board Regarding the Current Status of Funding to the Wakulla County American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Weatherization Assistance Program

Statement of Issue:

This agenda item provides the Board with an update on the current status of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funding to the Wakulla County Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Background:

Last year, Wakulla County was awarded a total \$664,886.99 in ARRA WAP Funding to weatherize 144 homes. This substantial increase in funding also included increased production expectations of the WAP program with the ultimate goal of getting the ARRA funds out into the community to stimulate the floundering economy, along with providing much needed weatherization services to the citizens of Wakulla County. The ARRA WAP funding was to be spent over a three (3) year period, beginning September 1, 2009. The WAP funding is distributed to Wakulla County by the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on a reimbursement basis; as each home is weatherized.

On April 29, 2010, the DCA sent a letter to Wakulla County regarding ARRA WAP funding and concerns it had over the production rates and noted that should production rates not increase it may be necessary to obtain alternate weatherization service providers in Wakulla County. (Attachment #1) This letter was received by Wakulla County on May 5, 2010.

Since that date, the County has been engaged in a continuing dialogue with DCA program staff in an effort to address the DCA's concerns over production rates and operational issues within the Wakulla County Housing Division. On July 27, 2010, the County Administrator, County Attorney, Chairman and County staff met with DCA agency staff and the Assistant Secretary to discuss the status of the Wakulla County ARRA WAP funding, and whether it would be prudent to seek an alternate provider to administer the ARRA WAP funding in Wakulla County. At this meeting, no decision was made by DCA on this issue, but it was noted that unless the June and July homes submitted by the Wakulla County Housing Division showed significant progress from earlier submissions, the alternate provider alternative was a likely scenario.

Analysis:

On August 24, 2010, DCA notified Wakulla County that it was going to seek an interim provider for the ARRA WAP funds. (Attachment #2) A meeting was scheduled on September 2, 2010, for DCA agency staff and Wakulla County staff to discuss the transition of the ARRA WAP funds, as well as to determine the impact this transition will have on the Wakulla County Housing Division. At the September 2, 2010 meeting with DCA, it was determined that the Capital Area Community Action Agency, Inc. (CACAA), a non-profit organization, would be the interim service provider for the ARRA WAP funds in Wakulla County. DCA noted that Wakulla County's current contract for the ARRA WAP funds would remain in effect for the time being, however, Wakulla County Housing Division will not be utilizing ARRA WAP funds for any weatherization services performed on residences after the month of July 2010. Rather, DCA is reallocating regular annual WAP allocation funding to Wakulla County to perform weatherization services from the month of August onward.

A copy of the Weatherization Assistance Modification is attached as Attachment #3, and will be placed on the BOCC's agenda for approval on September 20, 2010. The DCA has agreed to allocate an additional \$171,149.00 in regular annual WAP allocation funds to Wakulla County, so that the Wakulla County Housing Division can continue to refine its weatherization services – including production rates and operational issues – over the next several months.

During the interim period, CACAA will be providing weatherization assistance to Wakulla County residents utilizing the ARRA WAP funding allocated for the County. CACAA has indicated that it would be willing to utilize local contractors to perform the ARRA WAP work. Wakulla County staff anticipates working with CACAA to coordinate client intake space and client lists. This coordination will help ensure that Wakulla County residents in need of weatherization services will not experience a delay or disruption in the services. Additionally, Wakulla County will remain in regular contact with the DCA in an effort to move towards reallocation of the WAP ARRA funding in the near future.

Options:

1. Accept the update to the Board Regarding the Current Status of Funding to the Wakulla County American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Weatherization Assistance Program.
2. Do not accept the update to the Board Regarding the Current Status of Funding to the Wakulla County American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Weatherization Assistance Program.
3. Board Direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1

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Attachments:

1. April 29, 2010 Letter from DCA Re: ARRA Weatherization Production
2. August 24, 2010 Letter from DCA re: ARRA Weatherization Interim Provider
3. Weatherization Assistance Program Agreement Modification Dated September 2, 2010