

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES FROM  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009**

**Board Members Present**

Barbara Bisno, Chair  
Anthony Jennings, Vice Chair  
Mary Coombs, Secretary  
Milton Pizarro  
Marjorie Weber

**Guests Present**

Diane Goldin, community member  
Eddie Thomas, student at Booker T. Washington Senior High

**Staff Present**

Ada Rojas, Community Relations Coordinator  
Natasha Colebrook-Williams, Community Relations Outreach Specialist  
Yarenis DeFalco, Administrative Aide II

I. Welcome & Call to Order

Barbara Bisno convened the meeting at approximately 6:00pm.

II. Economic Recovery Bill

The House of Representatives approved an Economic Recovery Bill, including several different program areas that focus on providing financial aid to those most affected by the recession. City of Miami Department Directors were assigned several programs and were asked to identify how these programs would be carried out if the funds were awarded.

Community Relations was assigned the following four sections: Community Services Block Grant, Emergency Food and Shelter, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Periodic Census and Programs, Communications.

The recommendations for each section were as follows:

### Community Services Block Grant

The Community Relations Board would like to ensure that all parts of the community are equally informed of the available funds. To this end, CRB would hold community meetings and also work with NET offices to inform the community. In addition, the CRB would serve as an oversight committee to ensure that funds are fairly distributed and there is transparency, which will require hiring staff with audit capacity. The CRB would also hold community meetings after some funds are dispensed to get feedback from the community as to whether or not the funds are being allocated to those in most need.

### Emergency Food and Shelter

Local community organizations/not-for-profit organizations (i.e. Red Cross, Daily Bread Food Bank, etc.) would be best suited to provide these services. The Community Relations Board would determine the criteria the organization would need to meet in order to run this program. The CRB would screen the organization to ensure that the party selected is the most appropriate to provide emergency food and shelter services. Examples of qualifications would include the number of years the organization has been in business, the communities it has served in the past, the reputation of the organization within the community, etc. The criteria should also be designed to ensure a fair distribution of services among different communities within the City, so it will be important to know the service catchment area for different organizations.

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Because this is a state program, and not a local program, the Community Relations Board will focus its attempt on lobbying Tallahassee, and coordinating community meetings to give individuals the opportunity to tell their stories.

### Periodic Census and Programs, Communications

The Community Relations Board will work with the NET offices to set-up centers where individuals can obtain information about census and other programs. The CRB will publicize the centers and help operate them.

## III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05PM.