

**MADISON COUNTY SPECIAL GRANTS COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 16, 2018 4:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Clint Jones, Erica Harriss, Judy Kuhn, Bruce Malone,  
Liz Dalton, Gussie Glasper

ABSENT: Helen Hawkins, James Futrell, Chrissy Dutton, Ann Gorman

OTHERS: Trudy Bodenbach, Nadine Pfeiffer, Cynthia Ellis, Tony Fuhrmann, James  
Arnold, Lisa Ciampoli, Tom McRae, Jack Minner, Leslie DeVore, Mick  
Prince, Dave Goodrich, Mike Rodgers, Dustin Murphy, Matt Anderson

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

C. Jones introduced Leslie DeVore, Deputy Director of Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Development (DCEO) and Mick Prince, Weatherization Program Manager to the Grants Committee.

Leslie informed the Committee that She and Mick work in the Office of Community Assistance and manage Federal and State Grants.

B. Malone, L. Dalton and G. Glasper asked Leslie and Mick how Madison County is doing and why are we here at a Special Grants Committee meeting. T. Bodenbach answered the question. She stated that at the previous meeting, the Chairman and several others from the Chairman's staff, had asked to meet with Mick and Leslie to share concerns regarding the weatherization program. Things like when they came on board for the county, that the warehouse was a mess, stating that when they saw it they felt it was a case of extreme mismanagement of the weatherization program.

Also, they are concerned about the general comparison of having contractors vs crew based agencies like we have doing the weatherization jobs.

Mick stated that there was a lot of talk about contractor vs crew based agencies. Mick stated that he is a firm believer in the crew based agencies. And some of the reasons that he gave to the Chairman and others as to why, is because we have complete control of the quality and the finished end product, no overhead expenses associated with the mark up of materials and other expenses.

The big warehouse was a giant warehouse, but the program was (as is his understanding) renting it very, very cheap and doesn't see it as abuse having the giant space. He stated that he thinks crew based agencies are the way to run the program because in every

instance they are cheaper than contracting the work out. A lot has to do with the material mark ups that contractors have associated with the work. Mick stated that there was discussion regarding being Union or non-Union and he stated that it does not concern him. B. Malone stated that we don't pay the full Union wage anyway. In reality, the crew members are not even making the full scale Union wage, the County only pays 75% of the scale.

Mick stated that it seems when we use contractors that the contractors are making a lot of money and when we use the crew guys, they are making nothing and the quality of work shows.

He stated that last September he came to Madison County with the Dept. of Energy Monitors because he picked the Madison County Agency to run the program, and he wouldn't have picked Madison County if he didn't think that the quality wasn't going to be good. It's not just the quality of the home after the work is done, but also the quality back in the office, such as the files are in impeccable and in order from an administrative standpoint. That is also what his monitors have seen. He stated that this grant is the hardest grant to administer because of all of the requirements. It is pretty rare when there are no findings in an Agency and there were no findings in Madison County's program.

Mick stated that the federal monitors stated that Madison County's program is an "Anomaly" and they do not see this quality of work anywhere else in the nation.

B. Malone said that some of the oversizing is related to the stimulus money from the Federal Government and we tried to "ramp" it up but in the long run, didn't work out like they wanted. But, we have downsized the warehouse and are getting rid of some of the vehicles.

Mick stated that Madison County is not alone in having excess vehicles and Leslie stated that it is a state wide problem that they are trying to rectify.

J. Minner stated that he thought the original plan with the stimulus money was that the excess trucks & trailers were to be given back to the state after we were done with them. Mick stated that he didn't think that was correct. Mick said that it is very rare that these programs get a ramp up where they can go out and get the tools and everything they need.

G. Glasper asked if that was the major complaint or what was the major complaint. T. Bodenbach answered the question stating that the other major complaint from the Chairman & staff was that we are top heavy management wise in having a Program coordinator and a Planner. Especially if they would contract the work out. Mick stated that Program policy states that every Grantee has to have a Program coordinator for weatherization. The administrative burden for this grant is embarrassing but it all flows down from the Dept. of Energy and HHS. There are so many documents required for the program and he stated that he didn't know how a coordinator could do all the necessary paper work without administrative help. He stated that he doesn't think

having both a Coordinator and Planner as “top heavy”. He said that you need that much management to operate this weatherization program.

L. Dalton asked Mick if he thought the weatherization program might ramp up again and he stated that there is also talk of utility funding. Dave G. said that we have already signed the application for utility funding and have started the process. Mick stated that we have always spent out any funding that we have requested for just weatherization.

Leslie then stated that it is important to know, that a carpenter just can’t come in and complete this type of specialized work that our crews do.

Dave G. also stated that 3 of the crew members are certified to do the assessments, inspections, and final inspections. We do not have to bring in additional people to do these things. Leslie commented that this is important because they are seeing around the state, agencies that don’t have enough people to do the assessments and final inspections.

L. Ciampoli asked if the crews are employees of the county and T. Bodenbach answered that they are employees of the County. The County just sends their benefits to their Union instead of IMRF.

T. McRae asked why aren’t the crews paid the full scale instead of just 75%. Dave G. stated that it was an agreement that was set up by the County. J. Minner stated that it was done that way so they would have steady work instead of being in and out of work. Matt Anderson, one of the crew members, stated that they would rather sacrifice the full scale pay in order to have the steady work.

T. McRae commented that initially when we had the stimulus money anticipating a bigger demand, but it never materialized.

Dave G answered that he couldn’t get enough crews because the apprentices/carpenters that were laid off lived outside of the county and to work here you have to live in the County and there was also a freeze on hiring at the time in the County and it never did ramp up to where they needed it to be.

L. Dalton stated that now the complaint about the warehouse being too big, the equipment we are not using has been addressed, and we are in a smaller building, the materials are being disposed of or used now, the trucks are being sold or disposed of that we don’t need. What is the problem?

L. Dalton asked if we could have an auction to get rid of the big surplus of things that we can’t use anymore. Dave G. stated that we have already gotten rid of all of the windows through auction and we are now auctioning off the last few trucks and trailers and trading in some of the trucks. So, we have downsized and we are back to where we started before the stimulus money with the size of the weatherization building.

E. Harriss asked that if we benchmark our agency against St. Clair County with working rates- crew based vs contractor- does the data show that we are helping more people with the same budget by doing crew based, correct?

Leslie said that from a state perspective, the State doesn't compare from county to county because there are so many factors and variables to consider. The state spends different amounts of money of each house so it depends on the need of the home. E. Harris then asked Leslie's opinion on if we are doing the correct thing by using crew based. Leslie stated that in her and Mick's opinion, crew based is the best and most efficient way of delivering these services.

C. Jones asked Leslie and Mick if there was anything that the administration brought up of concern to them. Leslie stated that she thinks that the biggest issue was the warehouse and labor costs. She stated that the administration struggles with understanding that a crew based agency equals equality. She also stated that if we were not successfully running the weatherization program, that we would have seen her a long time before now.

J. Minner asked Leslie and Mick their assessment of the weatherization program. Leslie commented that from their perspective, Mick had a choice as to where he wanted to bring the Department of Energy. The Department of Energy is the most difficult to operate because they look at every little thing to try and find something to write you up on. Leslie stated that they had a choice as to where to bring the Department of Energy and they chose to bring The Department of Energy to Madison County, because Madison County is, as the federal monitors stated, an anomaly. Leslie said that is a compliment to Madison County's crew and office staff. Mick stated that it takes months to get everything in order because they ask for so much information which includes having all documentation in order, the system, and then they actually go and perform an inspection of the home that was weatherized.

Leslie stated that if Madison County would have a quality issue, and significant problems, then she and Mick will be in and Madison County would have disallowed costs and those disallowed costs do not come out of the Grant but from the County budget.

L. Ciampoli asked that if we would want to do a comparison or change our system, would any contractor be able to come in and do the job or are there requirements they would have to meet? Mick replied that there are certifications that are required programmatic and they have trainers at U of I that do certifications and there are EPI certifications that are required also. This is such specialized work that the crews do, that not any ordinary contractor could come and do the air sealing and the technical work that the crews do on these homes. He stated that it's not carpentry, it is a specialized field - it's really home performance.

L. Ciampoli then asked if there were contractors out there that do this as a specialty. Mick answered that the problem is that there is code in Illinois that is specific to municipality and there are contractors that do insulation work, but they have never seen a blower door

which is what we use to test the air tightness of a door. He stated that there may be some contractors out there that do that type of work, but they are very hard to find.

B. Malone stated that he has seen one being used in his district, he watched the crew work on a house and a blower door is not something that a guy with a pick up truck and a ladder is going to do.

Matt Anderson stated that the first thing they do on a job is the blower door test. Then they perform their work and track their progress with the blower door test. At the end of the job, they have to perform a CAZ (Combustion Appliance Zone) test. They have to troubleshoot any problems in the home before they leave, such as testing to see if the water heater is back drafting, and if they find something, they have to make the necessary repairs before leaving the home that day. Matt also commented that when he talks to other carpenters he knows about what he has to do on a home, that they have no idea what he is talking about. He stated that what the crew does is different, but the guys that are on the crew now have been working together so long, that if he gets a work order and he sees something wrong with the order, he will call another member of the crew and ask them to check the standards. He stated that they are all very well trained and a very cohesive team working together. He feels that if that gets broken up, that you will lose the quality in workmanship and the care that goes into working on the homes in this county. He also stated that they all could just go to the hall and get jobs, but they enjoy working for the County and would rather work for the County knowing that they are taking care of their neighbors.

Mick stated that to Matt's point, the housing stock we work for are very poor and a lot of contractors are not interested in doing work on those homes and they do not want to work with our clients either.

B. Malone thanked Leslie and Mick for coming today.

T. Bodenbach then commented that since she started with Community Development at the beginning of the year, 6-7 months ago, that she was led to believe that there was mismanagement with the Weatherization Program and there were things that needed to be fixed. Since then, she has been trying to find something wrong and has not found anything that is wrong or mismanaged with the program. She stated that she will continue to try and find proof of mismanagement and she stated that there is always room for improvement, but there is nothing mismanaged. She also stated that she is proud to work with the crews and employees of Community Development.

B. Malone commented that he feels that there is an anti-Union bias in some of the leadership/administration and that is why they are trying to compare contractors with the Union crews and say that the contractors would be better than the Union crews. Which we have known all along that the Union crews are not even getting full union salary. They only receive 75% of union scale and Leslie and Mick have just told us that it is cheaper to use the Union crews.

C. Jones then stated that any issues that the Administration has brought to him have been addressed. Leslie said if we had any other questions to give them to Trudy. B. Malone asked Trudy to send her report regarding these issues that she has already given to the Grants Committee, to the whole County Board and that would be very helpful. She stated that she would make it available to all County Board members.

D. Goodrich then invited any board member that wants to go and see what the crews do, that they more than welcome to come and see. We have nothing to hide.

Trudy then thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A Motion to adjourn was made by L. Dalton, second by J. Kuhn.

**Motion approved unanimously.**

Next meeting Date: Monday, September 10, 2018 at 4:00 pm.