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NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF STATE

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE OF PROCEEDING: February 17, 2022

APPEARANCES:

- MATTHEW CIOTTI, Community Services Program Analyst
- MIKE BOBBITT, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Youth & Community Development
- MARGARET M. EVANS, CSBG Advisory Council
- ANDREA OGUNWUMI, CSBG Advisory Council
- MAURICE A. REID, CSBG Advisory Council
- ALAN JONES, CSBG Advisory Council
- LAURA ROSSMAN, CSBG Advisory Council
- TINA ZERBIAN, CEO, Connecting Communities in Action (CCA), Inc.
- DANIEL MASKIN, CSBG Advisory Council
- JEFFREY LEWIS
- CHARLES QUINN, CSBG Advisory Council
- YVETTE MILLER, EOC
- MIGUEL SANTOS, CSBG Advisory Council
- ROBERT J. RODRIGUEZ, Acting Secretary of State
- VILDA VERA MAYUGA, Deputy Secretary of State for Economic Opportunity
- MANUEL A. ROSA, Director, Division of Community Services
- AIMEE KOLLAR, Associate Director of Contract Processing, Division of Community Services
- JACKIE ORR, Chief Executive Officer, New York State Community Action Association

Ciara Jonas
Official Court Transcriber

1 MR. CIOTTI: This is just going to be attendance
2 for Advisory Council members. Those of you attending from
3 community action agencies or otherwise, we'll capture your
4 attendance through the WebEx. So as I call your name,
5 please unmute yourself and let me know that you're here.

6 THE COURT REPORTER: This is --

7 MR. CIOTTI: Bill Chong?

8 THE COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, this is Maggie,
9 the court reporter. Can I have the name of the person
10 that's speaking, please?

11 MR. CIOTTI: Matt Ciotti, C-I-O-T-T-I.

12 THE COURT REPORTER: Thank you.

13 MR. BOBBITT: This is Mike Bobbitt, representing
14 Bill Chong, on behalf of New York City Department of Youth
15 & Community Development.

16 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you, Mike.

17 Margaret M. Evans?

18 MS. EVANS: I'm here. Thank you.

19 MR. CIOTTI: David Hahn-Baker? Absent.

20 Michael Martin?

21 Andrea Ogunwumi? Oh, I see that you're
22 attending, Andrea. So I'll mark you as present.

23 Maurice A. Reid?

24 MR. REED: Yeah, present.

25 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you.

1 Miguel Santos?
2 Alan Jones?
3 MR. JONES: Present.
4 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you.
5 Laura Rossman?
6 MS. ROSSMAN: Present.
7 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you. Denis is not with us
8 today.
9 Tina Zerbian?
10 MS. ZERBIAN: Good morning. I'm here.
11 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you.
12 Dan Maskin?
13 MR. MASKIN: Present.
14 MR. CIOTTI: Stuart M. Mitchell? Or a Jeffrey
15 Lewis (ph.) representing?
16 MR. LEWIS: Here.
17 MR. CIOTTI: Charles Quinn (ph.) -- oh, you're
18 here. Thank you.
19 MR. LEWIS: Sorry.
20 MR. CIOTTI: Charles Quinn?
21 MR. QUINN: Good morning.
22 MR. CIOTTI: Thank you.
23 Yves Vilus?
24 All right. We are one short of quorum today.
25 Tina, I believe you're chairing the meeting

1 today.

2 MS. OGUNWUMI: Excuse me, I'm Andrea Ogunwumi.
3 Did you count me present?

4 MR. CIOTTI: Yes. I -- I got you, Andrea.

5 MS. OGUNWUMI: Great, thank you.

6 MS. MILLER: Good morning. This is Yvette
7 Miller, representing Eric Poulson from the EOC.

8 MR. CIOTTI: Yeah. Okay, I've got you. So
9 correction; we now have met quorum and can proceed.

10 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you. Good morning, everyone.
11 Denis Wilson is unable to join us today. I am Tina
12 Zerbian, and I am the CEO with Connecting Communities in
13 Action in Cattaraugus County, and first vice chair. So
14 good morning, everyone. We'll dive right into the agenda.
15 I do hope that Denis is well.

16 As long as we have quorum, can we take a look at
17 the minutes from October 27th? I do have a -- a change
18 because I was listed as second vice president and Dan
19 Maskin was listed as first vice president. In actuality, I
20 am first vice president and Dan, I believe, is considered
21 the immediate past president, if we could make that change.
22 Are there any other comments or questions on the minutes?

23 MR. LEWIS: I move that we accept the minutes as
24 presented.

25 MR. JONES: This is Allen Jones. I second that.

1 MS. ZERBIAN: Motion's been made and seconded.
2 All those in favor, please say aye.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aye.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aye.

5 MS. ROSSMAN: Aye.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Aye.

7 MS. ZERBIAN: Anyone opposed? Or abstaining?
8 Thank you.

9 Moving on. Today, we have a special guest -- two
10 special guests. The first is our Acting Secretary of
11 State, Robert Rodriguez. Is the Secretary here with us? I
12 am not seeing the Secretary. Does anyone know if he is on
13 his way?

14 MR. ROSA: Hi, Tina. This is Manny. We -- we're
15 checking with his office, but I see something "executive
16 office" here, so I don't know if he's on, he's just having
17 difficulties getting on. I see something from the
18 executive office on the --

19 MS. MILLER: No, Mr. Rosa. This is Yvette Miller
20 from --

21 MR. ROSA: Hold on a second, please.

22 MS. MILLER: -- EOC. That's why it says
23 executive office.

24 MS. ZERBIAN: Okay.

25 MR. CIOTTI: This is Matt. I'll go see what I

1 can find out. Hold on a moment.

2 MS. ZERBIAN: All right, thank you. Well, we do
3 have another guest with us today. And that's Vilda Mayuga.
4 So why don't we move along and hear from Vilda today?

5 MS. MAYUGA: Hi. Good morning, everyone. I just
6 really have very short remarks. It's wonderful to see all
7 of you. I hope Denis is okay. I really was looking
8 forward to seeing him through video, but I will give him a
9 call.

10 Separately, I really just wanted to join today to
11 share that I am -- basically to (indiscernible) my last day
12 with the Department of State. I have accepted a position
13 with the New York City -- Mayor Adams's administration, of
14 the Commissioner over there of the Department of Consumer
15 and Worker Protection. So I'm really excited about that.
16 I'm going to be taking some time off next week and then I
17 will start on March 1st.

18 Mike, I know we'll be working a lot together. So
19 some of you, I'll get to continue seeing. I hope we can
20 find ways to keep collaborating. I know there's tons of
21 work that continues to be done. And I've had a wonderful
22 time working with all of you. It is just an incredibly
23 committed group of people.

24 And I always appreciated so much that you keep us
25 on our feet. You're not shy to express concerns. And I

1 think that really demonstrates a true collaboration between
2 government and community-based organizations. I truly
3 believe you are all the ones that can really tell us what's
4 going on. I feel like oftentimes, I -- I tell Manny and
5 other colleagues here that we have to fight back. The
6 sitting behind a desk and issuing policies and things like
7 that may be very well intentioned, but completely
8 disconnected to what's actually needed on the ground and
9 what makes sense in practical terms and to operationalize
10 maybe amazing ideas.

11 But again, I really thank you all so much for all
12 of the collaboration, all of the honesty, all of the hard
13 work. I got to work with all of you during COVID, and I
14 just -- I still feel like we're just part of a movie and
15 just -- we're going to read about ourselves in the history
16 books, I think. Once this thing -- it keeps evolving into
17 something else that's not a pandemic. And just take all
18 the lessons. I mean, trial by fire as they say, right. It
19 brought a new meaning, I think, to that phrase. And just
20 keep up -- keep doing all the amazing work.

21 I'm sure the Secretary's really looking forward
22 to being here. So we'll figure out soon when -- I just
23 acknowledge equal challenges. But he's very much committed
24 to all of this work and his prior work as a -- as an
25 assembly member, also for our state. He's very well aware

1 of these issues and representing East Harlem in New York
2 City.

3 So that was it. That -- that's really -- I -- it
4 sort of worked out really well. I'm really excited that I
5 was able to join you. I'm literally -- today is -- I mean,
6 everything you can see behind me, everything's down and
7 it's all cleaned out, the -- the office. So thank you so
8 much. It's been just amazing, and I really look forward
9 to -- Manny doesn't get rid of me. I have his personal
10 number. So he will have to respond to me. If he doesn't,
11 I'll send Mike. You're going to represent me in pushing
12 him from city to state.

13 So thank you. That was it.

14 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Vilda. Thank you for
15 your support during your tenure with us. And I'm sure I
16 speak for everyone when we wish you the very best of luck
17 in your new role.

18 MR. BOBBITT: I would -- I would echo that. The
19 Department of State's loss in this instance is the city's
20 gain. So I am looking forward, very selfishly, to being
21 able to continue to work with you.

22 MS. MAYUGA: Thank you.

23 MS. ZERBIAN: Thanks, Mike. For the record, I
24 see that Miguel Santos has joined us. Welcome, Miguel.

25 Does anyone know if the Secretary has been able

1 to join us as of yet?

2 MR. ROSA: We're trying to communicate with his
3 office. So I know he's trying to get in.

4 MS. ZERBIAN: Okay. All right. Well, why don't
5 we move along the agenda. And Manny, you're next on the
6 agenda.

7 MR. ROSA: I'm next.

8 MS. ZERBIAN: I'm going to hand it over to you
9 while we're waiting for the Secretary.

10 MR. ROSA: Okay. I would follow the Deputy
11 Secretary, right? It's kind of ironic.

12 I'm going to take a moment of personal privilege
13 for one second because I think that she was a little bit
14 too short in her remarks. She could go on and on and on.

15 I don't -- I -- the Deputy Secretary and I are
16 more than just business colleagues. We had formed a very
17 strong personal bond as well as -- one of the things that
18 she's taught me along the way. This network has been and
19 will always be fortunate to have her in our service, very
20 frankly. There are so many things that she has done behind
21 the scenes, very frankly, on behalf of CAAs that -- if
22 there's been exposure in the governor's office, if there's
23 been exposure with other state agencies and in the public,
24 in great measure, it's due to her advocacy for us.

25 She has been a tremendous asset to CSBG, very

1 frankly. To me personally, obviously. But there are not
2 enough words. There really are not enough words to express
3 my personal gratitude and the gratitude that we have for
4 what you've done, Vilda. There are times when we face a
5 whole bunch of crises. Not only the pandemic, very
6 frankly, but what do we do with funding and what do we do
7 in terms of direction of innovation, very frankly, and
8 having voices heard that have not been heard previously.
9 The liaison with Secretary Rosado and so forth and so on.

10 So we're going to miss you, very frankly. I know
11 that you have my personal number, you know where I live,
12 you -- you know where I work, you know my office in Albany.
13 So I know that we're not going to necessarily separate any
14 time soon, but --

15 MS. MAYUGA: (Indiscernible) --

16 MR. ROSA: -- I think that (indiscernible) --

17 MS. MAYUGA: -- told you about the chip that
18 I've --

19 MR. ROSA: Yeah, yeah. My wife also told me,
20 too. So yeah. But to the degree that -- to the degree
21 that we can thank you and express our thank you and be of
22 service to you in your new position, we're here, very
23 frankly. And we can only pray that you are happy in your
24 new position and that you will find great success. And as
25 Mike Bobbitt said, our loss is the city's great gain. So

1 we love you, and we thank you for what you've done for us.
2 So thanks. Okay.

3 MS. MAYUGA: Thank you.

4 MR. ROSA: Okay. Now onto -- onto the business
5 at hand, right.

6 I've been -- just want to get a few updates.

7 I want to thank Jackie Orr and NYSCAA for the
8 work that we're doing on the monitor work group. We have
9 taken on the task of taking a holistic look at how DCS and
10 DOS monitors CSBG and the agencies and how we can have a
11 stronger bond and collaborative, very frankly. And it's --
12 it's an A to Z type of review. And Jackie's been very
13 helpful in framing some of the work for us, and the members
14 of the work group have been very vocal. We've looked at
15 things like the monitoring guide. We're looking at the
16 principles, very frankly, of what monitoring should look
17 like. Outcomes, hopefully, trying to be able to look at
18 terms like success and what does that mean.

19 As part of this, and as many of you know, there
20 was an attempt to try to revise the tracks tool. And we,
21 based on internal conversations, have decided to take yet
22 another look at the tracks tool to make it more
23 comprehensive. We've gotten very good advice about that
24 and very good guidance on that.

25 So we -- and we are now working not only with the

1 work group, but we've also reached out to (indiscernible)
2 and some other experts to make a comparison with other
3 states of how best to do utilize the triannual review. And
4 in so doing, then we will be able to have a better product
5 that we believe -- that would allow us, number one, to,
6 based on monitoring on the comprehensiveness of
7 (indiscernible). And number two, offer the technical
8 assistance that's needed, again, based on the
9 comprehensiveness of the reviewed user database --
10 hopefully that we will have to reduce redundancies in the
11 requests for documents -- which I think will make everybody
12 happy here -- and at the same time, bring the office into
13 at least the twenty-first century. I can't say to 2022,
14 but clearly, by having a database on hand and working with
15 the monitoring group and working on various changes and
16 revisions that we can make, moving forward we'll have a
17 better -- I think better outcomes and a better
18 understanding of what it is that DCS and the DOS is trying
19 to do when we work with the network and we speak to the
20 network about monitoring and technical assistance and
21 looking at outcomes and innovation and making the
22 partnership stronger.

23 So I was asked to -- to talk about the tracks
24 tool, and that's where we're at at this point. And we'll
25 continue to inform the (indiscernible) to our cause and

1 also through the work group to make the recommendations
2 based also on internal discussions that we have here at
3 DOS.

4 I also want to thank many of the executive
5 directors that we have spoken to on a variety of issues,
6 such as racial equity, fatherhood, volunteer engagement.
7 It helps make our state plan a little stronger. We're in
8 the first year of a two-year plan for 2022 and 2023. We
9 will use 2022 to plan for better outcomes on volunteerism,
10 fatherhood, as well as continue work on racial equity. And
11 we will be able to inform the network with a little bit
12 more clarity on the direction of where we would like to go
13 with these projects upon getting input from the network.

14 I know that there has been concern about the
15 continuing resolution. The House has passed a version of
16 the continuing resolution. We're waiting on the Senate to
17 pass. I checked yesterday afternoon. They had not done
18 so. The House version goes through March 11th, and we'll
19 just wait to see what the Senate is going to do. I have
20 not heard this morning; they may have done something, but I
21 have not heard anything. So again, we're working off a
22 continuing resolution, which is basically 2021 budget
23 figures.

24 In terms of CARES, I want to thank all the
25 members of the network for the hard work that they have

1 been doing to spend the CARES money. The pace has been
2 picking up a little bit. We want to thank the YCD because
3 they really picked up the pace and they did a nice job with
4 theirs. There are a few agencies that just about completed
5 their allocation -- use of their allocation, we hear,
6 sometime at the end of March. And for the most part, we
7 have been also working with amendments to either the work
8 plans or budgets to try to ensure that all the money is
9 spent. We have decent conversations with the Office of
10 Community Services of the HHS. They're very concerned
11 about the rate of spending, very frankly. They don't want
12 to see any money returned to Washington. Obviously, this
13 is highly scrutinized dollars. And also it's a chance for
14 CSBG to shine. But I will tell you that in speaking to
15 colleagues around the country that there are a lot of
16 challenges in spending this money because there was a whole
17 bunch of CARES money in general. There's not just CSBG.

18 So our agencies have been trying to use their
19 imagination. And moving forward we do know, and we
20 believe, very frankly, that with the expiration of the
21 moratorium on evictions, that more agencies are going to be
22 doing rental assistance. So I think that that money is
23 going to pick up as well.

24 And finally, we will -- we will be picking up on
25 the trainings with the agencies. We're looking at a

1 schedule, including training on the new contract that
2 hopefully will be released in May or June of this year.
3 We're in the middle of (audio interference) Aimee Kollar is
4 going to speak about this. We're in the middle of putting
5 together our annual report that is due on March 31st. Most
6 of you should have received your forms. So if you need
7 help, please give us a call.

8 I see that the Secretary is on. I'm going to cut
9 my remarks short and give deference to our Secretary. So
10 thank you very much for listening to me.

11 Tina?

12 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Manny. I will make room
13 for questions for Manny. But first, we want to welcome our
14 Acting Secretary of State, Robert Rodriguez. Good morning.

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Good morning, everyone. And
16 thanks. Thank you, Manny. I appreciate it. And we'll --
17 we'll get you back on stage to do the real work. But I
18 just wanted to take the opportunity. I did not want to
19 miss this meeting. We know how much good that we're all
20 doing on here in terms of distributing much needed funds to
21 help support all the people throughout New York State. So
22 thank you so much. And I appreciate all your patience.

23 But I just wanted to say good morning. It's
24 really a pleasure to be here with you to learn more about
25 community services and the work that I hear that you do.

1 I recently started as the Acting Secretary of
2 State under the leadership of Governor Hochul. And I'm
3 thrilled about the opportunity to collaborate with the
4 programs that you all run and bring change to the
5 communities across the state. So of course I want to thank
6 my staff that does a great job of -- of helping to direct
7 the leadership of the program, Vilda Mayuga, Manny Rosa,
8 and all of the staff at our Division of Community Services.
9 Day in and day out, they do their best to help New York's
10 communities in many areas. And of course, your efforts
11 help to inspire the progress and the economic recovery that
12 we continue to want to see happen throughout the state.

13 And I'm sure Vilda may have already mentioned it,
14 but I have to bid her a -- a deep and heartfelt farewell.
15 We are going to miss her sorely, but we really congratulate
16 her for the opportunity that lies ahead. She was selected
17 by Mayor Adams -- the administration, to be the
18 Commissioner for the Department of Consumer and Worker
19 Protections. So the city's gain is certainly our loss, but
20 we will continue to work together and collaborate on
21 different initiatives. So I just wanted to thank Vilda.
22 And it's her drive and passion here at DOS that has made
23 great things happen in terms of the CSBG program. So I
24 just wanted to say thank you, and congratulations to Vilda
25 for the work that you're going to be doing and the work

1 that you have done with us.

2 So more importantly, I want to thank all of you,
3 the community organizations that we rely on to provide
4 critical services. In my previous hat, I served as an
5 assembly member representing East Harlem, El Barrio. And
6 before that, I did work on the local community board. So
7 for the better part of a decade, I have been trying to
8 bring change about in my community, in my corner of the
9 world. And now we have the opportunity to do that across
10 the State of New York. But you guys are doing it day in
11 and day out. We would not be who we are as a state if we
12 did not do our best every day to provide a high level of
13 services to the constituents that we all service. And I
14 know that you do that. And so I don't just talk about it,
15 I believe in it. I've believed in it all my life. And of
16 course, seeing the work that we've done and on this
17 platform just allows me to serve constituents in a
18 different way.

19 So just to talk a little about myself for those
20 of you who I haven't had the opportunity to work with
21 before. My focus in the legislature have very much been on
22 affordable housing, preserving public housing, making sure
23 that we create community-based development projects in our
24 community that actually hire people from the community,
25 doing things before they were fashionable in terms of

1 community benefits agreements, and making sure that when we
2 created the first mall in East Harlem and people thought
3 that malls couldn't exist in inner cities, that not only
4 was it possible, but it was possible to do good in
5 different places. And I think an extension of that is the
6 work that we do in our small cities and towns around with
7 downtown revitalization programs. So it has to be
8 something more than just development. It has to be about
9 people. It has to be about the community services. It has
10 to be about workforce. So that's what I think we bring
11 together at the Department of State and your work with the
12 work that we do in other areas comes together to really
13 help people in terms of finding their way.

14 As well as being a legislator, finance is my
15 background. I did public finance for fifteen years. So
16 not only do we talk about building projects and developing
17 communities, at some point you have to know how to pay for
18 this stuff. So I've done a lot of work in terms of trying
19 to make sure that we can build things and pay for them and
20 not impact taxpayers in a way that it's burdens they can't
21 afford.

22 So I look forward to keeping up with this
23 exciting work and working with all of you. We know that in
24 particular, the pandemic has put a lot of challenges on our
25 social services and the Division of Community Services and

1 all the work that they do. And the networks provide the
2 foundation for creating new opportunities for New Yorkers,
3 for being able to help them reach the next stages of
4 progress and growth. And that's really what this upcoming
5 216 billion dollar budget that we are rolling out in the
6 current -- in the process of attempting to pass with our
7 partners in the legislature try to do. Remember that we're
8 taking care of people, investing in our future, and making
9 sure that we do so in a way that makes sure that the State
10 of New York is in good fiscal strength.

11 But one our priorities, as you all know, is to
12 break down the barriers that keep our residents
13 economically stagnant. And all of you are our partners on
14 the ground that help this integral effort. So you're
15 working hard to help New Yorkers in jobs skills, job
16 training, community outreach, virtual career fairs, and
17 other ongoing initiatives and to move job seekers to
18 permanent work, including your own needs to fully staff and
19 be able to serve the community. And you were doing that
20 before it was fashionable. And right now, we are looking
21 to expand on the work that you're doing and literally
22 creating an office of economic and workforce development
23 just to make sure that we get it right now that we have the
24 resources to be able to do that and an ambitious investment
25 program both around infrastructure, but also climate and --

1 and green jobs, as well as healthcare, and as well as
2 teachers. So -- but these are industries and really
3 they're about people, and getting people into those jobs.

4 So while there are many other economic hardships
5 resulting from the pandemic, with the eviction moratorium,
6 which Manny mentioned. That's still a reality. It's a
7 reality that exists and that we have to continue to address
8 in the budget, but also through providing services to
9 people and continuing to work tirelessly to support those
10 families that are either potentially facing eviction and/or
11 continue to be in need of state support as we attempted to
12 address and demonstrate through the ERAP program and the
13 local homeowner's assistance program.

14 But we know that there's more work to do, not
15 just there, but throughout the state. And there's a real
16 opportunity for a better future if we work together and
17 bring the necessary tools to our neighborhoods. In
18 particular, with the support that we had through CARES and
19 through pandemic relief in addition to what we do through
20 CSBG, we know that we're able to put resources on the
21 ground that really are helping New Yorkers be more
22 resilient and to move forward in their lives in this really
23 critical time. So I just wanted to applaud all of you for
24 the work that you do and look forward to continuing to work
25 with you and learn the best way to support your ongoing

1 endeavors because we all have the same goal, which is to
2 help every single New Yorker find their true success,
3 potential, find their way out of poverty -- out of economic
4 hardship into a brighter economic environment in the
5 future.

6 So thanks for giving me the opportunity to be
7 here and to meet all of you. And I have read all of the
8 bios of the leadership here, and I've just been impressed
9 by the leadership and the breadth that we have of service
10 providers across the state, participating in this program.
11 And the truth is, I don't think there's a part of the state
12 that's not represented in this body. And really hearing
13 about the issues from you is how we figure out a better
14 roadmap and formula to serve people.

15 So thank you all. And I look forward to hearing
16 more from you and hopefully meeting you in person in the
17 near future. And just -- I'm truly grateful for the
18 collaboration that we have, the resources that we put into
19 work, and changing outcomes for people.

20 With that, I'll turn it back to Manny.

21 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you so much. I know that we
22 are very excited about the opportunity to work with you and
23 your office moving forward. We hope that this is the first
24 of many opportunities to get to know one another.

25 Manny --

1 MR. ROSA: Yes. Thank you --

2 MS. ZERBIAN: -- (indiscernible) --

3 MR. ROSA: -- (indiscernible) --

4 MS. ZERBIAN: -- with you, and --

5 MR. ROSA: Yeah. I just want to thank the
6 Secretary. I -- just to share a little behind the curtain.
7 When we first met, we talked about the Advisory Council and
8 the first thing that the Secretary said to me is "Let me
9 know when." That was exactly his words. So his
10 availability today at our first meeting since his
11 appointment is really special, very frankly.

12 And I -- I need to tell you, Secretary, that you
13 have, in this network, some tremendous dedicated public
14 servants that -- they have saved a lot of people during the
15 pandemic, very frankly. They're not getting the credit
16 that they are due. But I'm looking forward to working with
17 you because they've shared that with me. So thank you,
18 Secretary, for joining us.

19 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. And I have a little
20 bit of time, so I'm going to hang out with you a little
21 longer and --

22 MR. ROSA: Okay.

23 MR. RODRIGUEZ: -- do some more learning.

24 MR. ROSA: Okay, great.

25 Tina, I wanted to let Aimee do the annual

1 report -- the reading of the annual report, if that's okay.

2 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Manny.

3 MR. ROSA: Okay.

4 MS. ZERBIAN: Aimee Kollar, you're up.

5 MS. KOLLAR: Good morning. I feel like I have to
6 say please don't hang up. Manny asked me to go over the
7 annual report, and I know this is not everyone's favorite
8 thing to do each year. So I just wanted to go -- just do a
9 brief review of the annual report in its entirety.

10 So our CSBG (indiscernible) next site. Yep. The
11 CSBG annual report is made up of four modules. Module 1
12 includes information on the state administration of funds
13 to the CSBG-eligible entities, the use of the state
14 administered and discretionary funds for training
15 assistance, and information on the CSBG-eligible entity
16 meeting organizational standards and implementing ROMA.
17 There's nine sections in Module 1. And Module 1 is
18 completed by DCS.

19 Module 2 is the CSBG-eligible entities capacity
20 building and resources. This module is broken down into
21 three sections. Section A is the -- all expenditures by
22 the CSBG-eligible entities. Section B, capacity building.
23 And Section C is all allocated resources. Module 2 is
24 completed by the network and is due to DCS on March 8th.

25 Module 3 is the community level. This includes

1 information on implementation of strategies and results
2 achieved for communities where people and low-income live.
3 Module 3, it's a community initiative status form. Most of
4 you should be familiar with this, as this is on C-4D on
5 your work plan. The submission of this module is optional,
6 but I -- I do need to share with you that we believe in the
7 near future that this is going to become a requirement.

8 Module 4 is individual and family level. This
9 includes information on services provided to individuals
10 and families, demographic characteristics of people served,
11 and results achieved for individuals and families with low
12 incomes. Again, this is broken into three sections.

13 Section A is the individual and national performance
14 indicators. Section B, individual and family services.
15 And Section C is the all characteristics report. This is
16 also due to DCS on March 8th.

17 Okay. So why don't we do this? The annual
18 report fulfills the CSBG Act requirements. As many of you
19 may be aware, each state that receives CSBG state funding
20 must submit a state plan. And within this plan, the state
21 must identify how they plan to operate CSBG and use CSBG
22 funding. The annual reports are required and are used to
23 indicate how the CSBG network actually operated and used
24 funding. These annual reports provide information on the
25 CSBG network's progress with organizational standards and

1 state accountability measures. And they also provide
2 information for the Office of Community Services, state and
3 local CAAs to manage and improve results.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right.

5 MS. KOLLAR: Now, because you are already
6 familiar with Modules 2 through 4, this morning, I'm just
7 going to do a review of Module 1. As you can see here,
8 Module 1 is made up of nine sections, and we're just going
9 to do a quick review of each section.

10 So Section A is the state administration. In
11 this section, the lead agency and the department of the
12 lead agency is identified. The authorized official lead of
13 the agency is identified. And any additional programs
14 administered by the state CSBG lead agency are identified.

15 Section B is the state-wide goals and
16 accomplishments. In this section, we have to provide any
17 progress that we have made on our most recently submitted
18 state plan, the CSBG-eligible entity overall satisfaction.
19 This is the information -- this information comes from the
20 American customer survey index that each agency in the
21 network is sent to complete every two years. The CSBG-
22 eligible feedback and involvement -- here we have to
23 explain how we consider your feedback. State management
24 accomplishments -- we have to describe what we feel, as a
25 state, is our top accomplishment for the fiscal year. The

1 CSBG-eligible entity management accomplishments -- this is
2 a description of how responsible, informed leadership and
3 effective, efficient process led to high quality,
4 accessible, well-managed services and strategies. You may
5 be familiar with this. This is one of the narratives we
6 ask you to submit with your annual report. The innovative
7 solution highlights -- this is a description of how
8 eligible entities address a cause or condition of poverty
9 in the community using a innovative or creative approach.
10 This also is one of the narratives we ask you to submit.

11 Section C, we just need to provide the eligible
12 entity updates. So it's really just a list of all the
13 agencies in our network.

14 Section D is organizational standards. We do
15 have to provide a description of how -- of our assessment
16 process for the standards, the overall organizational
17 standard performance -- which is a target versus actual.
18 We are required to set what we feel is our target in the
19 state plan, and then we need to report on your actual
20 performance. We have to identify any challenges and
21 factors contributing to the difference between the target
22 and actual results. We have to provide the percentage
23 meeting the organizational standards by each category and
24 provide the number of technical assistant plans and quality
25 improvement plans as a result of not meeting standards.

1 Section E is the state use of funds. In this
2 section, we have to show that we have provided the network
3 with the required ninety percent of funds. Planned versus
4 actual allocation -- the planned allocation is generated
5 from our state plan. We have to report here what we
6 actually allocated to you based on our notice of grant
7 award. Actual distribution timeframe -- we have to
8 describe if we made the funding available to the network
9 after it received our grant notice. For state
10 administrative funds, we have to identify the amount that
11 we obligated for administrative activities. We have to
12 provide the number of staff that was funded by CSBG and
13 provide a description on the use of the remainder funding
14 the discretionary funds. Here, we also identify what types
15 of organizations the state worked with to carry out CSBG
16 activities for the fiscal year.

17 Section F is training and technical assistance.
18 We provide a description of how the state provides training
19 and technical assistance and also on the types of
20 organizations through which the state provided training and
21 technical assistance.

22 Section G is state linkages and communications.
23 In this section, we have to provide a -- we have to
24 describe the activities that the state supported with CSBG
25 discretionary funds. We provide a description of the

1 linkages and coordination at state level that the state
2 created or maintained to ensure increased access to
3 services. And we have to provide a description of how we
4 assured that each eligible entity used linkages to fulfill
5 service gaps.

6 Section H is monitoring corrective action and
7 fiscal controls. In this section, we have to provide a
8 description on the actual monitoring visits conducted
9 during the reporting year. We describe our monitoring
10 policy and how we provide monitoring reports. We have to
11 describe or explain if there has been any corrective action
12 plans. And we report on the single audit reviews. In this
13 section, we provide the dates that the single audit was
14 accepted into the Federal Audit Clearinghouse for each
15 agency.

16 And finally, Section I is the ROMA section. In
17 this section, we provide a description on CSBG-eligible
18 entities ROMA participation. We describe how we as a state
19 provide ROMA support and how we review each agency's ROMA
20 data.

21 And the last slide here is just the -- now, this
22 is the second year this has happened where we've had to do
23 a CARES supplemental report. And I just wanted to remind
24 everyone, we here at the state have to do a Module 1, but
25 it is a modified version. So we will only have to complete

1 Sections A, B, E, F, and G. You guys will do Modules 2 and
2 4, but again, these are modified versions. And there are
3 Sections A and C related to CARES funding for Module 2.
4 And for Module 4, only Section B, outcomes achieved through
5 use of CARES funds, is to be completed. And these are due
6 on March 8th as well.

7 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Aimee. Are there
8 questions for Aimee on the annual report, or are there any
9 questions for Manny on his report?

10 I just want to comment on Manny's report that as
11 a member of the group that's doing a review of the
12 monitoring, that it's empowering to know that we have a
13 voice. So I want to thank the Department of State for
14 that.

15 Next on the agenda, we have Jackie Orr, CEO with
16 New York State Community Action Association.

17 MS. ORR: Great. Thank you, Tina. And I
18 appreciate the opportunity to give an update on what NYSCAA
19 does.

20 And Aimee, I just want to do a shout-out to you.
21 That was a great overview of Module 1. Sometimes I don't
22 think our agencies pay enough attention to Module 1 and
23 what the state needs to report. So I think it's always
24 good to keep that in front of our agencies. So thank you
25 for that.

1 All right. So I'm going to do a brief overview
2 of what NYSCAA has been involved with. And I also want to
3 thank Manny and -- as well. The monitoring work group has
4 been empowering, as Tina said, I think. It's been really
5 good. There's been a number of community action agency
6 executive directors and leadership staff on that group.
7 And we've only met for a few months, and I think we're
8 making great progress. So I like that we continue to have
9 that partnership.

10 So as far as NYSCAA, as many of you already know,
11 we have e-learning. So we have several courses as a part
12 of NYSCAA Learn. It's for community action agencies staff,
13 board members, and volunteers. It is becoming more and
14 more popular. Right now, we have over 1,900 NYSCAA Learn
15 users.

16 So we recently finished two courses, one on
17 adverse childhood experiences. And thanks to our certified
18 ACEs trainers who were able to help us put that together.
19 And that's been a very valuable addition to our library of
20 courses.

21 And then we also have a new course on the
22 community action plan. Some of you may remember that we
23 had a training for the network a year ago. And out of that
24 training came a desire to work on our community action plan
25 and to make it more robust, perhaps, in some places where

1 we could do that. So we have an interactive course. And
2 really what it does is it integrates ROMA and ROMA concepts
3 and principles into our community action plan and kind of
4 connects the dots for people who may not have been able to
5 see that or make it more clear, I think. And then our
6 learners have the opportunity to build a, what we call, a
7 well-constructed community action plan. So we've gotten a
8 lot of really positive feedback about that because it's
9 fun. For those of you who haven't been a part of -- done
10 our courses, we have Phoebe (ph.) here as our staff person.
11 And she makes them as interactive and fun as they can be.
12 And they're also a great learning tool.

13 Also from that community action -- community --
14 community action plan course, we have worked very closely,
15 NYSCAA and the Department of State, in putting together
16 community action plan templates, so -- for agencies to use
17 when they're developing their community action plans. So
18 we've released eight templates so far. That has been a
19 great opportunity for community action agency staff who are
20 part of that work group to work through the process and be
21 able to share it with the community action agencies across
22 the state. We're really thinking that this is going to
23 change how our data looks down the line. It's an effort
24 to -- if -- to make sure that those of us who are providing
25 the services and programs are reporting in the same way, so

1 our reporting is similar across the state. So we've come a
2 long way to making that happen. And work -- that work
3 group is continuing because we're still not done yet.

4 We, of course, continue with our ROMA work. As
5 Aimee mentioned, that's a part of what DOS reports on. So
6 we do regional ROMA trainings every -- well, we're doing
7 five in 2022. We do them virtually. And we, at NYSCAA, we
8 take bets on how quickly they're going to sell out. With
9 forty-seven community action agencies and new staff and
10 staff who want to go through them again, usually within an
11 hour after us posting them, they're fully subscribed. So
12 we're doing one later this month, and then in April, and on
13 from there. We have a very active ROMA alliance. And the
14 ROMA alliance is actually the group that started -- came up
15 with the idea of working on the templates. And we work
16 together in talking about implementing ROMA practices and
17 principles within an agency. We have ROMA trainers and
18 ROMA implementers who make up that ROMA alliance. And we
19 also meet separately with the ROMA trainers and
20 implementers because -- to talk about specific topics that
21 are relevant to both groups. And I work really closely
22 with Jessica (ph.) at DOS.

23 Let me see what else I want to talk about. We
24 have a lot of affinity groups and many ways for the network
25 to engage with each other. And I'm particularly passionate

1 about this, because as a learner myself, I like the
2 opportunity where we can grow and share and share best
3 practices and support each other. So we have communities
4 that practice this, we have learning groups, and we have
5 affinity groups. We just launched our new affinity group
6 for frontline workers. So that's exciting. They met for
7 the first time earlier this month. And then on behalf --
8 the network has requested another affinity group for agency
9 staff who work specifically with senior programs. So that
10 group will be meeting very soon. We just got the list of
11 folks that we have. I think there's thirteen people who
12 are interested. So that's great. So it's really, again,
13 an opportunity for community action agency staff to get
14 together and share challenges and successes and to get
15 support from each other because that's the best thing about
16 having a network, is we aren't alone.

17 We have an Emerging Leader Institute, which we
18 fondly call ELI. That's going great. We have fifty-five
19 for this year. I know, I could see Tina grimace and so did
20 I because that's a big group. We have thirty-six in 1.0,
21 meaning they're joining us for the first time. And then we
22 have nineteen in 2.0, which means they've come back for a
23 second year. So that's good. That's actually a good
24 number. Having nineteen in their second year is good
25 because it's big enough, but small enough for us to have

1 those good conversations. The 2.0 group work on projects
2 that they design within their agencies, and then they share
3 with the entire group.

4 So that's just a -- I mean, I could go on for
5 hours. But that's just a brief overview of kind of the
6 highlights of what NYSCAA has been doing and will be
7 continuing to do. We also do our publications, like our
8 newsletter and our poverty report, our ED manual.

9 We will continue with our conference. We're
10 hoping to do an in-person event this year in September. In
11 '21 -- '20 and '21, of course, they were virtual. So we're
12 hoping that we will be able to do it in September. We're
13 looking at Rochester. And then, of course, our fondly --
14 fondly, when remembered ED seminar. We have a seminar
15 every year for executive directors and CEOs, and we were
16 able to hold that in person in October of '21. So we're
17 hoping that we can do that again this year.

18 We have some exciting things happening with our
19 CARES funding. We had -- we're doing motivational
20 interviewing. Our CARES funding is supporting staff to go
21 through a motivational interviewing course, ten weeks,
22 three hours every Thursday morning. They've been finding
23 that very productive in working with their customers and
24 their clients. And then as folks finish that course, we
25 have a motivational interviewing group where we can

1 continue to talk about and apply those skills that we
2 learned with each other and with our clients.

3 We are working on two reports, NYSCAA is, in
4 response to COVID. One is the internal processes and
5 procedures that agencies made and their policies. That is
6 about ready to be released within the next couple weeks.
7 All of you as EDs will be seeing a survey coming out in the
8 next couple weeks. Our second report is really going to
9 focus on the -- the services that we needed to change, the
10 pivots that we needed to do, and was that successful. Are
11 those -- are those service changes some things that we are
12 continuing or not and why. And we kind of want to get into
13 any service delivery changes that were made as a result of
14 COVID and that were sustained because they were successful.
15 So I'm really excited about that. Once we finish that
16 report, we're going to kind of make it live in that we're
17 going to bring the agencies who have participated or want
18 to share more information and have some panel discussions
19 around those service delivery changes.

20 We also have a social justice committee. That's
21 been working now for about a year. And we're continuing to
22 meet regularly and we will -- are looking at engaging a DEI
23 consultant to work with us on doing DEI assessments within
24 our agencies. So stay tuned for more information about
25 that.

1 We've held a series of webinars as well and we
2 are going to continue to hold the webinars using some of
3 those CARES funding as well.

4 For those of you who don't know, we as -- NYSCAA
5 is the lead association for Region 2, which is New York,
6 New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. So
7 we have this HCCT grant that we're working under with the
8 Office of Community Services. Human Capacity and Community
9 Transformation is what HCCT stands for. And we had a
10 regional convening on Tuesday, and I think it went really
11 well. We had agencies share their initiatives. So there
12 were a number of -- we had four initiatives from New York,
13 two in New Jersey, and one in Puerto Rico. And I think the
14 synergy was great. We had Dr. Howard, the director of OCS
15 at the federal level, come and meet with us and kick off
16 the day. And Manny spoke as well as his counterpart in New
17 Jersey, and the association president in -- in Puerto Rico.
18 And there was a lot of good information that was shared. I
19 liked the synergy between New York and New Jersey. We sent
20 out an evaluation at the end, asking folks if they wanted
21 to continue to have conversations or share information,
22 that we can do that. So there will be future learning
23 opportunities as well. The shipping containers temporary
24 housing was really interesting. So we definitely want to
25 hear more about what that one agency in New Jersey is

1 doing.

2 And so that -- and so we continue to work with
3 New Jersey and Puerto Rico associations to continue to
4 build those partnerships. And we with -- also have doing
5 some communities of practices, as I mentioned before,
6 around leadership, trauma, informed care, and best and
7 evidence-based practices.

8 So we are a small but mighty group. And with
9 that, I'm going to turn it back over to Tina.

10 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Jackie. For those of
11 you who are not intimately involved with the community
12 action network or running a community action agency, I
13 can't say enough about Jackie and her team and the support
14 that we get from NYSCAA. It's just -- it's remarkable, the
15 amount of work that -- that they do and -- and the support
16 that we get. And we would not be as wonderful and
17 successful as we are without them. So thank you, Jackie.

18 Any questions for -- for Jackie?

19 MR. SANTOS: Just very brief, Miguel Santos in
20 Buffalo. Jackie, I'd like to learn more about these
21 affinity groups, how we can network throughout the state so
22 that we can offer support and resources. I'm very familiar
23 with community action. And I'm also curious to find out
24 more about the social justice committee so that we can just
25 pair together so that we can move forward. Thank you.

1 MS. ORR: Oh, I had to unmute there. Okay, good.
2 So we can be -- we'll be in touch, and I can provide you
3 with more details. Our affinity groups are growing. Some
4 of them are very specific to community action, like we have
5 an HR affinity group. So that's for human resource
6 professionals within community action agencies. And then
7 we have a finance affinity group for finance staff within
8 agencies. But others of our affinity groups are more topic
9 based, like I mentioned with our senior group that we're
10 starting with our frontline.

11 So Miguel, yes. Let's definitely talk more. And
12 I'd like to connect, too, about our social justice
13 committee as well because we're still -- that is still kind
14 of in the formation stages. So we would like to -- we're
15 still working on our agenda and our goals and our action
16 steps in that group. So I would love to connect more and
17 have further conversations about that. That would -- that
18 would enrich our group.

19 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you. Any other questions for
20 Jackie?

21 MR. BOBBITT: I just look forward to --

22 MS. ZERBIAN: All right. Moving --

23 MR. BOBBITT: -- continuing to hear more about the
24 ACEs work. That's work we've been -- we weren't at the
25 front of queue, but we hope to get in -- in the queue to

1 bring some of that to New York City. So it's exciting to
2 hear how it's being sustained.

3 MS. ORR: Yeah, yeah. And we're now -- actually,
4 I forgot to mention, Mike, that's a good thing. So yeah,
5 it's on our plan with working with DYCD. And we are also
6 now -- the certified trainers, I believe there's fifteen in
7 the community action agencies. And we are now -- kind of
8 like our ROMA trainings, we are now offering them on a
9 regular basis to community action agency staff in the
10 network. So we did our first one last month, and we have a
11 series going throughout the rest of the year, which
12 complements our e-learning ACEs courses as well. So -- and
13 we just got some new materials. Tina, I see you. So I'll
14 share -- well, I'll share it with all of the ACEs. But we
15 got some new materials we can share as trainers with our
16 participants. So good news.

17 MS. ZERBIAN: Great. I look forward to hearing
18 about that.

19 MS. ORR: Thank you.

20 MS. ZERBIAN: Is there any old business? Is
21 there any new business?

22 MR. QUINN: Tina, I'd like to bring something up.
23 It's an old issue, but I don't know that the Advisory
24 Council has ever addressed it. And I think as we're coming
25 out of the pandemic and employment is an issue and racial

1 equity is a big -- a new focus point -- it's not a new
2 issue, but it's a new focus point of what we're doing.
3 I -- I do think we need to look at agency employment and
4 wages.

5 To the people we hire as community action
6 agencies, the folks tend to come from our communities. And
7 quite frankly, many of them don't look like me. And it's
8 not great for our workers, and it's not great for our
9 agencies. We hear from individual agencies all the time
10 that employment is a huge problem. We can't keep staff,
11 we're losing them to local government, state government,
12 school districts. We can't keep people. We've been
13 working on a minimum wage standard for a very long time.
14 But it might be time to start addressing this through
15 policy.

16 It's not anything new. As a matter of policy, we
17 have M/WBE requirements in our contracts. In our other
18 programs, like Head Start and Weatherization, we've had
19 prevailing wage requirements to make sure people are being
20 paid adequately. And I think the Advisory Committee should
21 look into it as a matter of policy for our agencies. If I
22 had my druthers and I was waving a scepter of the king, I'd
23 say we could go to the MIT website and look at the
24 prevailing wage for your county and that's what people are
25 getting paid to work in state-funded programs. It's

1 somewhat of an embarrassment that the people that we employ
2 can continue to be clients of our agencies also.

3 So I'd just like to propose that the Advisory
4 Committee take that on as an issue.

5 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Charles. Is this
6 anything that we should look at in terms of a subcommittee,
7 a small group of folks that are willing to work on this
8 issue?

9 MR. QUINN: I'd be willing to do that.

10 MS. ZERBIAN: I thought you might be.

11 Anyone else?

12 MR. SANTOS: This is Miguel Santos in Buffalo. I
13 was happy to hear that Robert Rodriguez spoke about
14 housing. We know that housing is a huge problem throughout
15 the country. We see the migration of people from downstate
16 New York moving all over, including upstate New York. I
17 look forward maybe to make contact with Manny to talk about
18 the reentry population, the disabled population, and the
19 refugee immigrant population. Refugees and immigrants have
20 always been super important in New York State, maintaining
21 the -- our population.

22 And I would like to discuss other housing
23 programs for homeownership, like Habitat for Humanity and
24 other programs that assist people that own homes so that
25 they don't lose their homes. And homeownership for these

1 particular populations so that just as what Charlie just
2 said about people that look like him, homeownership -- we
3 need to take a look about homeownership for a nice, diverse
4 population.

5 So Manny, I'd like to have a -- a conversation so
6 that you can guide me and we can guide the conversation.
7 Thank you very much.

8 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Miguel. And I know that
9 one of the things that NYSCAA does is issues a -- a
10 directory so that you can look for -- particularly look for
11 housing programs and which community action agencies are
12 involved in housing. So that might be a resource that
13 Jackie could share with the entire Advisory Council if
14 that's helpful.

15 MR. SANTOS: Please. Please, that would be
16 great.

17 MS. ORR: Yep, I can do that.

18 MS. ZERBIAN: (Indiscernible) --

19 MS. OGUNWUMI: Also, Tina. This is Andrea. And
20 I want to thank Miguel and also Charlie for their comments.
21 I think that looking at the fact that we employ a welfare
22 state within our agencies, I think that'd be a great social
23 justice topic to review. So I see Jackie's nodding her
24 head. So I'd just like to suggest that. And I know we'll
25 all be involved and engaged. Thank you.

1 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you, Andrea. I see that
2 Jerome (ph.) had also chatted in that he would be
3 interested in joining a -- a small group.

4 So Manny, maybe that's something that we can
5 follow up with and see if we can (indiscernible) --

6 MR. ROSA: Yeah. I'll follow up with you and --
7 and Denis and Dan. Let's schedule something in the next
8 month or so to put together.

9 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you.

10 MR. ROSA: Thank you.

11 MS. ZERBIAN: Thank you. Is there any other new
12 business? Then our next meeting is scheduled for May 19th
13 at 10 a.m. And if there's no other business, then I would
14 entertain a motion to adjourn.

15 MR. QUINN: So moved.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll second.

17 MS. ZERBIAN: There's a motion. Is there a
18 second?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll second it.

20 MS. ZERBIAN: Motion's been made and seconded.
21 Have a wonderful rest of your week everyone. And we'll see
22 you all again in May.

23 (Proceedings concluded)

24

25

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