

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laura Blackmon, County Manager
FROM: Gwen Harvey, Assistant County Manager
DATE: December 30, 2008
RE: BOCC Questions re: Outside Agencies Funded in 08-09 with Caveats

At the BOCC meeting on December 1, 2008, during discussion of proposed changes in the allocation of funding for outside agencies in the FY09-10 budget process, questions were raised about two agencies approved for funding in FY08-09 with caveats suggested by the Human Services Advisory Commission (HSAC). This memorandum provides an update regarding the status of the two agencies – the Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association and the Piedmont Wildlife Center.

Hillsborough Youth Athletic Association (HYAA)

Incorporated in 1976, the mission of HYAA is to provide recreational baseball opportunities for the children of northern Orange County. They strive to provide a fun, safe, and enjoyable program to the children who play in the program through education in the game of baseball, teamwork, good sportsmanship, and respect for others. The BOCC approved funding in the HYAA requested amount of \$23,625 in FY07-08. HSAC recommended funding in the amount of \$10,000, a lesser allocation given their concerns about the lack of evidence supporting outreach to and participation by diverse youth.

The performance agreement with HYAA for FY08-09 included the following language to draw attention to this concern, as was expressed orally to their leadership during the application review process – “HYAA shall identify {in it’s semi-annual and annual reports to the County} concrete steps taken and verifiable results achieved through outreach, recruitment, and scholarship assistance to increase participation among diverse ethnic minority, cultural, and socio-economic groups residing in Orange County”.

On December 17, 2008, County staff met with the Board leadership of HYAA to review the contract caveat and brainstorm proposals for attaining success during the fiscal term. Various ideas emerged for further exploration and implementation by HYAA – conducting a canned food drive to benefit Orange Congregations in Mission (OCIM), using goodwill ambassadors and personal influence to reach members of minority communities, enhancing ways and means for parents and other partners to donate to the scholarship assistance fund and promoting the fund more widely, and continuing to consult and collaborate with Orange County Recreation and Parks on mutual goals. HYAA leadership will also attend a future HSAC meeting to provide a briefing about their on-going work and clear commitment to diversity. They remain very open to ideas and suggestion

from the County and were appreciative and in attendance at the 2008 Forum dedicated to connecting outside agencies in Orange County with their non-profit peers.

Piedmont Wildlife Center (PWC)

The PWC was incorporated in 2002 and has been in operation since its rehabilitation hospital opened in the spring of 2003. Their overall vision is to continue to strive for excellence in wilderness protection, hoping to return as many injured, sick and orphaned wildlife as possible to their native habitat as healthy animals. The BOCC granted the PWC funding in the amount of \$20,000 in FY07-08, the same as FY06-07. HSAC had recommended funding of \$10,000 given concerns that Orange County appeared to be carrying a disproportionate share of expenses to benefits received in the Triangle community.

The performance agreement with PWC was modified in FY08-09 to include "Piedmont Wildlife Center shall identify concrete steps and verifiable results achieved in seeking to diversify its revenue stream to be less dependent upon the Orange County contribution, and garner financial support from other towns and counties commensurate with the services they are provided."

Orange County staff has remained in contact with the PWC executive leadership since the HSAC recommendation and BOCC authorization. Their Executive Director attended and participated enthusiastically at Forum 2008. The County Manager's Office was also contacted directly before news articles appeared mid-December referencing the agency's need for money driven by declines in community donations. PWC is making due with less, changing its full time veterinarian position to half time as a cost saving measure. As is the case with many charities across the state and country, contributions are down substantially. PWC appears to be responding to the fiscal situation with forthright, careful planning and assessing their means for continuing to serve the animals brought to them. They remain cognizant of concerns conveyed by the County to seek to diversity their revenue sources, especially among other Triangle governments.

Both HYAA and PWC are to provide performance progress reports to the County Budget Office in January 2009 and September 2009 for their FY07-08 contract years. Copies of these reports will be provided to the BOCC for your information. All performance progress reports for every outside agency funded by the County are received by the HSAC as part of its application review process for the next fiscal year.

If you have questions or concerns about the contents of this memorandum, please let me know and I would be happy to provide further details or extend my review.