



**Financial Literacy Council
Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2009
Conference Call**

Council Members Present:

Cassandra Grayson
Paul Auslander
Deidre Newton
Obdulio Piedra
Richard George
Dulce Suarez-Resnick
Doug Heinlen

Council Members Absent:

Liana Fox

Others Present:

Tami Torres
Harriet Sespico
Amanda Lewis
Ned Pope
Nina Banister
Misty Cash
Brit

Call to Order and Welcome

The Financial Literacy Council met via conference call on May 20, 2009. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Obdulio Piedra at 10:04 a.m.

Member Handbook

Harriet Sespico addressed the first agenda item, the draft Member Handbook, by asking if everyone had had an opportunity to read the material that had been previously provided. Doug Heinlen voiced concerns over the stated travel limitations and the possibility that meetings would only be conducted via teleconference. Tami Torres suggested that the handbook be revised to state that the council members would meet in person no less than twice per year. The council members agreed with this suggestion. Doug also had a concern that small businesses were mentioned in the handbook as being one of the primary focuses for the council. Tami noted that this parallels what the statute mandates for the council. It was suggested that small business be defined as businesses with 50 or fewer employees and less than \$10 million in annual sales. This was agreed upon by the other members. It was also suggested that e-mail addresses for the council members be included in the handbook. Cassandra Grayson gave a motion to pass the handbook as amended. Doug Heinlen seconded the motion. The adoption of the member handbook passed.

Ned Pope, Deputy Director, Collins Center Foreclosure Mediation Program

Ned Pope was introduced and welcomed. Ned stated that the Collins Center has 3 districts in Florida; 1st circuit (Pensacola), 19th circuit (Port St. Lucie) and 11th circuit (Miami). The program focuses on post-foreclosure filing. Their customers have been foreclosed upon. This distinction is important as they are not attempting to avoid foreclosure, they are attempting to reverse foreclosure. There is no cost to the customer. They meet with a federally certified HUD

counselor to determine an affordable amount and timeframe for payment. Mediations are scheduled and closed within 30-35 days (max of 60 days). The Miami-Dade area sees approximately 3000-5000 foreclosures per month. Other areas see about 1000-1500 per month. The program has worked 13 mediations and reached 8 settlements. Deidre Newton mentioned that Palm Beach County currently has approximately 45,000 homes in foreclosure and asked for the Collins Center to assist. She commended Ned for taking the lead and praised the program. Ned also stated that the Collins Center does not want to interfere with other innovations in providing solutions to the crisis. Dulce Suarez-Resnick noted that lenders do not appear to be cooperating and asked if Ned felt the trend was getting better or staying the same. Ned answered same and that resources are the issue, not that the banks do not want to cooperate. Obdulio Piedra asked how the Financial Literacy Council members can help. Ned asked for assistance with encouraging public officials to get on board with the program. Obdulio stated that he had emailed the link to the program to all the members and Ned mentioned he would follow-up with his contact information. The council members thanked Ned for his time and for sharing this information.

Richard George and Cassandra Grayson – Financial Literacy Program for Seniors

Richard and Cassandra have worked together regarding the challenge issued by the CFO to put a mandatory financial literacy program in schools beginning fall 2009. They have learned from the Department of Education that there is a program already mandated to begin during the 2011-2012 school year for high school students in conjunction with economic courses. The comment was made that the highest drop out rate is between 8th and 9th grade and that it is necessary to begin teaching financial literacy in middle school in order to be the most effective. It was suggested to go back to Mary Jane Tappan at DOE to inquire how the CFO can help make this happen. Richard and Cassandra will continue to research and report and find out what other schools are doing. They will provide an update at the next council meeting.

Update regarding letters to colleges and universities

Harriet noted that 6 responses had been received in response to the letter issued by the FLC regarding credit cards. Of the six, none of the schools took responsibility or acknowledged accountability. It was stated that it would be interesting to see what the larger institutions would submit. It was agreed that a follow-up letter would be sent to those schools not responding by June 15th. Responses will be put into a matrix. The council members will send a letter with the matrix to the CFO outlining the responses and suggesting possible next steps.

Next meeting

It was discussed and agreed that the next meeting would take place via teleconference on Wednesday, July 22, 2009 beginning at 10:00 am. Harriet will send out the appropriate notices. It was suggested that the next in person meeting take place in Largo during the month of October 2009. Further details will be discussed at the next meeting in July.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 am

The next meeting will be via teleconference on May 13, 2009 at 10:00 am.

Deidre Newton made a motion to adjourn. Cassandra Grayson seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:32 pm.