

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville NC for their regular workshop session. All board was present.

1. Chairman Nelms called the workshop session to order.
2. Chairman Nelms asks Dr. Sue Ledford, Four Square Executive Director to speak. Director Ledford stated that she was here today to share with the commissioners what she does. Director Ledford stated that many residents benefit from the services that are offered at Four Square Community Action and they service Cherokee, Clay, Graham, and Swain Counties. Director Ledford stated that they have limited funding under the community services block grant but organizes under FSCA. Director Ledford stated that she joined Four Square in April 2022 and served as a public health director for thirteen years. Director Ledford stated that there are so many needs here and across our state.
3. Director Ledford stated that the services provided are:
 - a. HUD Section 8 Housing, Head Start Childcare, Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP), Energy and Housing Repair Program-Weatherization, Urgent Repair and Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation. Director Ledford stated that they serve (35) low-income individuals annually and you must be under HHS poverty income guidelines. Director Ledford stated that there are challenges with funding in our rural area where we have a lack of population density drives funding formula as related to low-income population and the poverty guideline of 125% is a barrier for many low-income individuals and working families. Director Ledford stated that our HUD Section 8 Rental Assistance-Housing Choice Vouchers is a program to assist very low-income families, the elderly and the disabled to afford to provide safe and sanitary housing in the private market and this funding is available annually.
 - b. The Head Start program is for children three to five years old and supports children's growth through research based high quality comprehensive services that reinforce early learning and development, health, and family wellbeing.
 - c. A new program Medicaid Health Opportunities Pilot Program is an unprecedented opportunity to test the integration of evidence-based non-medical intervention into the state's Medicaid program and will provide non-medical services to qualifying Medicaid members across four domains: housing, food, transportation, and interpersonal violence/toxic stress. Director Ledford stated that this grant will be available for ongoing funding.
 - d. Healthy Opportunities Networks Leads and Region is a sub-grantee of Impact Health.
 - e. Weatherization Assistance Program to provide weatherization services for low-income families to help reduce household energy costs.
 - f. Urgent Repair Program to repair houses of very low-income homeowners with special needs: i.e., elderly, disabled, single parent household, and/or five or more in the household. Director Ledford stated that the goal of the program is to provide repairs and modifications to alleviate poor housing conditions which pose a threat to the health and safety of the homeowner.
 - g. Essential Single-Family Rehabilitation is designed to encourage comprehensive rehab of single-family homes owned and occupied by eligible low-income persons (62) years of age or older and/or disabled.
 - h. Heating and Air Repair and Replacement Program is to provide for the inspection, repair and replacement of heating and air systems for low-income residents.
 - i. Region A Housing Consortium – Home Grant is to benefit individuals and families in “qualifying populations” stay in homes and can partner 50/50 with landlords to make healthy/safety repairs.
 - j. Duke Electric is to reduce energy consumption for income-qualified customers by directly installing energy efficient measures and providing education on energy efficiency.
 - k. Nantahala Highlands Cashiers Trust is to supplement existing Housing Repair Projects for additional funding needed and has a limited amount of money.
 - l. Healthy Homes Initiative – Blue Cross Blue Shield is a program to assist with Health and Safety needs in homes.
 - m. Duke Energy Helping Home Fund is to assist in Health and Safety projects, heating system repairs and replacement, and appliance replacement through rebates and reimbursements.

- n. Cost Pool – Indirect funding from programs that allow addressing overarching expenses, and staffing such as finance, administration, technology, phones, office supplies, etc. Director Ledford stated that if there are remaining funds they go back into the communities.
- 4. Director Ledford thanked the board for their time, thanked Connie Orr for being an active board member and stated that if she could assist, please let her know. The board thanked Director Ledford for the information.

Jacob Nelms, Chairman

Natasha Williams, Vice-Chair

Lynn Cody, Member

Keith Eller, Member

Connie Orr, Member

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board