

ITEM NO. 22-

**TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, IN COUNCIL,
ASSEMBLED YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE to Whom
was Referred a POLICY SESSION on VIOLENCE REDUCTION
FUNDING and Provide Direction to Staff as Appropriate.**

A Policy Session was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, beginning at 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, Council Chambers (Room 400), 419 Fulton Street, with Mayor Ali presiding, and with proper notice having been posted.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Council Members were present: Allen, Cyr, Grayeb, Jackson, Jensen, Kelly, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Velpula, Mayor Ali – 11. Absent: None.

Others present were: City Manager Patrick Urich, Interim Corporation Counsel Chrissie Kapustka, City Clerk Stefanie Tarr, Deputy Clerk II Courtney Coe, Police Chief Eric Echevarria, Network Administrator Paul Peterson, Illinois House Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth, representatives from City Departments, interested citizens and members of the media.

**Communication from the City Manager with a Request to
hold a POLICY SESSION on VIOLENCE REDUCTION FUNDING**

Mayor Ali opened the Policy Session at 6:04 P.M.

City Manager Urich asked the Council for guidance concerning the unprecedented funding that was available for violence reduction. He said the Council already appropriated \$1.3 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to apply to violence reduction efforts, and he said he would present four separate statements to the Council that evening for consideration.

City Manager Urich began the presentation with an explanation of the Reimagining Public Safety Act (RPSA), and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) establishment of the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP). He said the OFVP Local Advisory Council (LAC) in Peoria provided asset mapping of local resources and made recommendations for funding, and he listed some of the members of the Peoria LAC. He reviewed the State Grant program Restore, Reinvest, Renew (R3), funded through Illinois cannabis taxes, to fund programs in communities harmed by violence. He reviewed the \$1.3 million in ARPA funds that were allocated in the 2022 Budget and how those funds were being used. He said a Request for Proposal (RFP) would be distributed in August 2022 in the amount of \$700,000.00 to identify community-based violence prevention initiatives; combining the \$200,000.00 originally intended for the Cure Violence Program with the \$500,000.00 already allocated for community-based violence prevention initiatives. He said a focus when identifying violence mitigation programs was evidence-based interventions as the Treasury Department suggested. He explained the five Grant Focus Areas; Thriving Neighborhoods, Empowered Youth & Young Adult, Restoration & Resilience, Intervention, and Violence Reduction.

City Manager Urich asked the Council the following Policy Questions:

- Does Council support an RFP for \$700,000.00 of the ARP funds for violence prevention?
- Are there any additional items or modifications that Council would like to make?

In response to Council Member Kelly regarding the three separate sources of funding presented, City Manager Urich said since the ARPA funds were already approved by the Council, they were able to move forward with an RFP. He said since the State would provide

guidance on their grants and funding, two additional RFPs would be dispersed once those guidelines were identified.

Council Member Jensen asked Staff to include programs for legal assistance for expungement within the five categories of approved uses for the \$700,000.00 in ARPA funds.

In response to Council Member Allen regarding the deadline for the ARPA funds, City Manager Urich said the City had received the first and second tranches of funds that required appropriation by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. He recommended compiling a plan for the State funding because they could have a shorter deadline. Council Member Allen said he supported the RFP for \$700,000.00 in ARPA funds and asked if organizations could apply for support for multiple programs. City Manager Urich said multiple programs could be funded and the Council could choose to set a maximum award amount.

Council Member Oyler asked for City Staff to process the RFP applications instead of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, so Council could oversee the process.

Council Member Grayeb discussed recent violence events in Peoria, the desire of citizens to live in peace, and the incarceration of the perpetrators of violence. He said the catch-and-release method was detrimental to Police efforts and granted more compassion to the criminals than the victims. He said he would support a violence reduction program that enlisted parents and educators to determine solutions for youth influenced by media and video games. He said even when opinions varied on the Council, they all agreed that solving violence was the greatest concern, noting the RFP process should have been used from the start.

Council Member Cyr asked how the five categories of approved uses would correlate with the Peoria LAC asset mapping for the community-based organizations applying for ARPA funding. City Manager Urich explained the asset mapping process, how the Peoria LAC made recommendations for funding, and how the \$700,000.00 in ARPA funds would be allocated in the community to achieve the greatest benefit. He said all recommendations would be brought to the Council for approval or amendment.

Mayor Ali recognized Derrick Booth, Director of the Wraparound Center and IDHS RPSA Peoria LAC Member, who was in attendance; she noted his work on asset mapping, plans for fund allocations, and types of services to offer in Peoria. Council Member Riggerbach recognized Illinois House Representative Jehan Gordon-Booth who was in attendance.

Council Member Riggerbach discussed the composition and efforts of the Peoria LAC, and he asked for the Council to receive regular updates on their progress. He said he supported the RFP proposal, noting the importance of communicating the available funding to local organizations. When he asked about the willingness of CDBG to review the RFP applications, City Manager Urich replied that they were prepared to perform the initial review.

Council Member Ruckriegel said he supported the addition of legal assistance for expungement to the allowable use categories. After he inquired about the RFP timelines, City Manager Urich said the ARPA funds RFP would be issued in August 2022 then reviewed in September, and because of the City's flexibility with those funds, they could offer a deadline to spend the funds by the end of 2023.

Discussions were held regarding the process for local organizations to apply for funding, the possibility of offering a multi-tier application process, and the deadline to spend ARPA funds.

In reply to Mayor Ali regarding the incorporation of performance measures in the RFP, City Manager Urich explained the reporting metrics requirements in the RFP. Council Member Jackson noted the importance of reporting for transparency and equity.

Discussions were held regarding the violence mitigation efforts proposed by the Community Development Department to address hot-spot areas in Peoria utilizing available ARPA funds. The 2019 Ring Security Camera program, income support program funding initiatives, and the City of Peoria RFP process was also discussed.

Mayor Ali stated it was the consensus of the Council to support an RFP for \$700,000.00 of the ARP funds for violence prevention, evaluated by the Community Development Block Grant Commission (CDBG).

City Manager Urich continued the presentation with an explanation of three State General Assembly Grants identified in the State Budget that appropriated \$3,625,000.00 for Peoria: the \$3 million Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Grant for community development, violence prevention and administrative costs; the \$500,000.00 Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Grant for expenses related to violence prevention; and \$125,000.00 IDHS Grant for equipment for purposes permitted by Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and related federal guidance for the Peoria Police Department. He said the State of Illinois had not released guidelines on how the funds could be spent, noting the funds required a 2022 City Budget amendment Ordinance approved by the Council. He reviewed the Staff recommendations for DCEO funding allocations, including license plate reader technology, body cameras and patrol car cameras for Peoria Police Department and Peoria County Sheriff's Office, and workforce development and job training initiatives.

City Manager Urich asked the Council the following Policy Questions:

- Does Council support an RFP for \$500,000 of the DCEO funds for violence prevention?
- Does Council support the general initiatives identified by staff for this grant?
- Are there any additional items or modifications that Council would like to make?

Discussions were held regarding the three RFPs the City would issue to address and allocate available violence reduction funding, sponsoring family support programs, and the intention to fund programs which allowed an agency to apply for funding for multiple programs qualified in separate categories. The proposed Community Awareness campaign and marketing initiatives to communicate the violence reduction operations and available programs was discussed, as well as the partnership between the Peoria Police Department and the Peoria County Sheriff's Office regarding purchasing camera technology.

Council Members Riggerbach, Allen, and Jackson said they supported the proposal to issue multiple RFPs as guidelines for the State funding became available.

After Council Member Jackson listed infrastructure priorities to address in response to increased violence in the community, City Manager Urich announced \$2.5 million was allocated to the City of Peoria from the State of Illinois to fund lighting infrastructure efforts, noting the funds were separate from the violence reduction funding allocations. Council Member Grayeb said it was the responsibility of Ameren Corporation to provide adequate lighting infrastructure.

Continued discussions were held concerning the license plate reader technology, the Community Awareness campaign, and the role of the CDBG commission evaluating the RFPs. Council Member Riggerbach requested the Council be provided with a list of applicants to the RFPs and the CDBG meeting agendas so Council Members could participate and provide input.

The speeding concerns in Peoria, the disallowance of red-light and speed cameras in Illinois outside of Chicago, and options to address speeding in Peoria were discussed. Council Member Jensen said she supported funding additional license plate reader technology, asking if increased allocations would be necessary to provide adequate coverage.

Council Member Jensen asked for the Advisory Committee on Police-Community Relations to have a role in discussions regarding the review of eligible programs for the RFPs.

Continued discussions were held concerning red light cameras and speed camera legislation and the need for traffic safety mitigation measures in the community.

Mayor Ali stated it was the consensus of the Council to support an RFP for \$500,000.00 of DCEO funds for violence prevention and the general initiatives identified by Staff for this grant.

City Manager Urich continued the presentation with an explanation of the IDHS Grant for expenses related to violence prevention for \$500,000.00. He said once Staff received guidance from IDHS on approved fund uses, the City would issue a third RFP and would present a Budget amendment Ordinance to the Council for approval. He said applicants would be required to comply with the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) requirements.

City Manager Urich asked the Council the following Policy Question:

- Does Council support an RFP for \$500,000 of the IDHS funds for violence prevention?

Mayor Ali noted no objection was heard, and therefore it was the consensus of the Council to support an RFP for \$500,000 of the IDHS funds for violence prevention.

City Manager Urich described the IDHS Grant for equipment for purposes permitted by Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and related federal guidance, noting ARPA stated it must be technology and equipment to support law enforcement response. He said Staff recommended combining the \$125,000.00 IDHS Equipment Grant with the DCEO Grant for license plate reader (LPR) technology, after confirming the use fit with provided guidelines, noting a Budget amendment Ordinance would be necessary and required Council approval.

City Manager Urich asked the Council the following Policy Question:

- Does Council support the proposed purchase of license plate reader technology with the IDHS funds for police equipment?

Mayor Ali noted no objection was heard, and therefore it was the consensus of the Council to support the proposed purchase of license plate reader technology with the IDHS funds for police equipment.

City Manager Urich continued the presentation with a review of the Co-Responder Pilot Program Governor J.B. Pritzker signed into law (HB4736) in May 2022, noting Peoria was among four cities chosen to pilot the program, and he provided an overview of the plans for the local program. Police Chief Eric Echevarria detailed the changes to emergency call responses with the program, including the categories to assign to each call and which units would respond. He said connecting and providing services to the community in order to disrupt the cycle of violence while providing appropriate responses to emergency calls was the goal.

Discussions were held concerning building the amended structure of responding units within the Police Department, the initial implementation plan to cover hot spot hours, how the program would affect response times, and communicating the available resources to citizens in need.

The federal government call service 9-8-8 and the local United Way call service 2-1-1 were discussed, including how they involved local agencies.

In response to Council Member Kelly regarding funding responsibilities of implementing the HB4736 law, City Manager Urich said the State of Illinois provided \$1,825,000.00 for the first year of the Co-Responder Pilot Program to fund staffing, equipment, vehicles, training, technology and more. He said the Council should anticipate funding responsibilities shifting to a local level eventually, noting ongoing costs were estimated at \$600,000.00 per year. Council Member Jensen said she supported the Co-Responder Program but asked the Council to keep in mind the future funding responsibilities. City Manager Urich stated \$3.3 million was provided initially to aid in the implementation of the program.

City Manager Urich asked the Council the following Policy Question:

- Does Council support the Staff recommendation to keep the position at the Police Department funded with ARPA funds to assist with grant administration and compliance, as well as coordination with any sub-recipients.

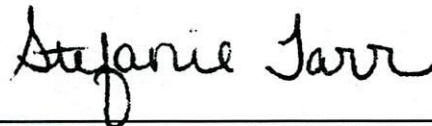
Discussions were held regarding the tasks and duties assigned to the Police Department Staff position to coordinate violence reduction efforts with the addition of grant management.

Mayor Ali noted no objection was heard, and therefore it was the consensus of the Council to support the Staff recommendation to keep the position at the Police Department funded with ARPA funds to assist with grant administration and compliance, as well as coordination with any sub-recipients.

Mayor Ali thanked Staff for efforts concerning the Violence Reduction Funding presented in the Policy Session that evening, noting the unprecedented funding available for Peoria to address the egregious concerns in the community. She requested Derrick Booth provide some insight from the perspective of the Peoria Local Advisory Council.

Derrick Booth, Director of the Wraparound Center and IDHS RPSA Peoria LAC Member, explained the Peoria LAC's mission to identify criteria for areas in the jurisdiction to target initiatives that would result with the greatest impact and improvement. He said the State funding allocation amounts were determined by violent crime rates.

Mayor Ali closed the Policy Session at 7:45 P.M.



Stefanie Tarr, RMC, CMC, City Clerk
City of Peoria, Illinois