

: OF THE CITY OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS :

CDBG Public Service Advisory Commission

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting was held by the CDBG Public Services Advisory Commission virtually on GoToMeetings, on July 17, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. Chairperson Patrick Kirchhofer called the meeting to order @ 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll called showed the following Commissioners were present: Lisa Fuller, Kimberly McGhee, Catherine Cross, Sherry Cannon, Mark Brown, Alexander Ikejiaku, Jada Hoerr, Patrick Kirchhofer, Brett Kolditz, Farrell Davies, Brittney Ferrero, Liz Birkey, and Patrick Wilmington.

Council Liaison Present: Councilwoman Dennis Moore.

Staff present: Cassie Belter and Abigail Youngblood.

MINUTES

The minutes for the June 19, 2020 meeting were reviewed.

MOTION:

Commissioner Davies moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cross. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 13-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Welcome New Commissioners

Liz Birkey, Jada Hoerr, and Patrick Wilmington each gave brief introductions of themselves to the Commission.

B. Test Email

Staff Member Belter informed Commissioners the Information Systems Department had created a group email for all the Commissioners, and they would be receiving an email to ensure they were in the group.

C. Update on Current Subrecipients

Staff Member Belter presented on current subrecipients of CDBG funds. She pointed out there were quite a few organizations that were unable to provide services in the second quarter. Those able to provide serves were mostly crisis-based services.

Staff Member Belter stated the Grants Division would be hosting desk monitoring instead of on-site monitoring. This allows the Grants Division to request certain documents, and they will be notified if any discrepancies are found and any actions need to be taken.

Staff Member Belter explained that for the three new programs, the Grants Division is going to attempt on-site monitoring at some point in the year.

Staff Member Belter stated that there is a possibility that contracts will become extended through 2021 and divide percentage-wise new funding to the programs funded in 2020, although the Community Development Department is still awaiting further guidance from HUD.

Commissioner Davies received clarity on a section of the chart presented to Commissioners.

Commissioner Kirchhofer explained the process of funding CDBG Public Service Organizations to the new Commissioners.

Councilwoman Moore stated she would like the Community Development Department to consider the impact on organizations not currently funded, if funding is given on a two-year cycle.

D. Funding Recommendations

Commissioner Kirchhofer explained all five options presented to the Commission.

Staff Member Belter explained three different programs CDBG funds were used for regarding COVID-19; Public Services, Small Businesses and Household Assistance. She provided a brief overview of each program. Staff Member Belter explained if all \$300,000 is not utilized for Public Services, it may be provided to the Household Assistance program.

Staff Member Belter stated The Center of Prevention of Abuse had initially requested \$30,000 but \$4,000 was for laptops, which are ineligible and therefore their funding request was reduced to \$26,000.

Councilwoman Moore stated she was happy to hear more funding could be provided to the Household Assistance program as there is a large need for rent and mortgage assistance in the community. Councilwoman Moore requested an option with only \$200,000 given to Public Service recipients.

Commissioner Davies expressed her concern organizations would not be able to execute their programs if their funding amount was too small.

Councilwoman Moore stated Prairie State Legal Services' request was mainly for Attorney Fees to be used from mid-March through the end of the year and was concerned some organizations received PPP funding and were now receiving more funding through CDBG funding. Councilwoman Moore questioned if some organizations could be receiving funding from both programs and if the Commission could be made aware of this.

Staff Member Belter explained that would be part of the Underwriting Process and HUD has strict guidelines on Duplication of Benefits.

Councilwoman Moore received clarity regarding the Underwriting and Duplication of Benefits.

Commissioner Cross asked if the COVID Neighborhood Response did not receive full funding if they would be able to run their program. Staff Member Belter explained since there was no 50% match this year, it was a factor that would need to be considered.

Commissioner Birkey and Councilwoman Moore discussed the funding for Dream Center's full-time employee.

Councilwoman Moore expressed concerns for organizations to comply with social distancing guidelines. Commissioner Davies stated some organizations did a good job of including that information in their application and that for other organizations, social distancing would not be as difficult. Staff Member Belter stated that COVID-19 safety guidelines may be included in their grant agreement.

Councilwoman Moore stated the eligibility criteria of the Small Business program restricted some businesses from being eligible. Staff Member Belter explained with HUD funding and eligibility there was a lot of aspects not in the Community Development Department's control.

Commissioner Wilmington questioned where the additional funding for Small Business would be allocated if not utilized. Staff Member Belter explained that it would be used for other CDBG-eligible expenses.

Councilwoman Moore stated the City Council swept \$600,000 from other funding areas to fund these programs and if the funding is not used, it could go back into the neighborhoods.

Commissioner Davies questioned if there was any guidance from City Council regarding the evictions that could be imposed beginning in August. Councilwoman Moore stated she had already had individuals

worried they would be evicted and encouraged the Community Development Department to begin thinking how to handle the evictions that could be imposed beginning August 1, 2020.

Commissioner Wilmington asked if the same organizations typically apply for funding and the process for disseminating the information regarding the programs. Staff Member Belter stated there are typically a lot of repeat organizations and those who applied for the COVID-19 have previously received grant funding. She stated there is running list of all public service organizations, a press release, social media outreach, and television and radio interviews. Staff Member Belter stated they were open to new methods reaching organizations.

Councilwoman Moore stated there are a lot of smaller organizations that are not aware of the programs, do not have the personnel to apply for the funding, or are not audited and therefore would have difficulty applying for the funds. Councilwoman Moore suggested holding a training for the small organizations to allow them the opportunity to receive HUD funding.

Staff Member Belter suggested smaller organizations can work with larger organizations to receive funding.

Commissioner Hoerr requested clarity on the Mt. Zion Baptist Church and METEC organizations programming that would overlap. Staff Member Belter stated that, after the applications had been completed, the organizations clarified that the two programs would be separate.

Councilwoman Moore stated Mt. Zion does not have a full-time staff for grant writing and METEC has the staffing but not the experience.

Staff Member Belter stated there is an email specifically for the Grants Division that is closely monitored to answer questions immediately for applicants. Staff Member Belter informed Commissioners the Grants Division was open to suggestions on how to improve the process.

Commissioner Kirchhofer asked how many organizations received information regarding the funding opportunity. Staff Member Belter answered approximately sixty organizations.

Commissioner Kirchhofer asked how recipients of the Household Assistance would receive funding if additional funding was provided from the Public Service budget. Staff Member Belter explained a virtual lottery would be held Tuesday, July 21, 2020 to choose fifty recipients to be screened for funding. These fifty will be contacted by grants staff members and screened for funding, and the staff will continue until the funds have been disbursed.

Staff Member Belter stated the grants staff will work with each household and provide either \$5,000 of assistance or three months of assistance if needed. They will continue this process until the funds have all been exhausted.

Councilwoman Moore asked if any funds are being used for City Hall staff to administer the funding. Staff Member Belter answered HUD does allow some funding to be used by staff to administer the programs, but Director Black would have more information regarding the funding amounts.

Councilwoman Moore commented another stimulus program is coming from the Federal government to the States and therefore Peoria may have more funds coming to them. She stated there could be funding provided later that could go toward Public Service and the funding could be used for the Household Assistance program since it is a large need in our community.

Councilwoman Moore questioned the need to make decisions today. Commissioner Kirchhofer stated it was ideal so City Council could vote July 28, 2020. Councilwoman Moore clarified the date for the City Council was not set in stone and could be pushed back if the Commission wanted to wait to vote.

Commissioner Cannon noted some applicants had not received the minimum \$10,000 in the newest option. Staff Member Belter edited the option, so all recipients received at least \$10,000.

Commissioner Wilmington stated he wanted to see each organization receive their requested funding amount however, he had not anticipated there potentially being more funding in the future like

Councilwoman Moore suggested. Since there could be more funding, he was willing to consider only funding up to \$200,000.

Commissioner McGhee questioned if they only funded \$200,000 for Public Service if it was possible to assist some programs that were relying on receiving the full funding amount.

Commissioner Birkey questioned if it would assist other programs if the three lowest scoring organizations were not funded. This could allow additional funds to be available in the future. Commissioner Fuller stated the last organization was providing food and was hopefully the Commission would fund that organization since it provided such a basic need.

Councilwoman Moore stated she would be willing to give them all the additional funding since food is essential.

Commissioner Kirchhofer noted the drop off from scores between the 6th and 7th applicants. Commissioner Birkey stated she wanted to ensure the organizations would be able to complete their programs with the funding provided.

Councilwoman Moore stated smaller organizations at times struggle with the application process, but they provide great work. Commissioner Cannon stated she thought the food banks should receive more than the \$10,000.

Councilwoman Moore noted if they believe food is an issue then it should be a priority.

Commissioner Davies questioned if the Commission is not going to follow the scoring matrix, what good does the scoring do in the evaluation.

Commissioner Cannon stated the 61605 zip code is being hit greatest by COVID-19. Councilwoman Moore stated the CDBG funding is to cover the entire City, not only one zip code.

Commissioner Kirchhofer stated the most favored option was to fund all programs based on percentage to equal a total of \$200,000 and questioned how Commissioners would like to edit that option.

Commissioner Kirchhofer clarified that the minimum would be \$10,000 but the rest would follow a percentage that would allow for exactly \$200,000 to be distributed to the organizations.

Commissioner Cross questioned organizations that cannot use the funds, where the funds would be allocated if they cannot complete their program. Staff Member Belter stated they would have to find funding or move money.

MOTION:

Commissioner Wilmington moved that Option 6 be chosen where it would equal \$200,000 be distributed between the organizations with \$10,000 still being the minimum amount. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McGhee. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 13-0.

E. Timeline/Next Steps

Staff Member Belter stated the recommendation would be submitted before City Council and they would vote on the recommendation on July 28, 2020. Therefore, on July 29, 2020, organizations would be notified of their funding amounts.

Staff Member Belter thanked the Commissioners for their time and effort over the past few weeks.

Councilwoman Moore stated the Council members were thankful for their time and efforts as well and she was there to support them.

Commissioner Kirchhofer requested Staff Member Belter email the Commissioners the final numbers for Option 6.

Staff Member Belter reminded Commissioners the next meeting is Friday, August 21, 2020. However, if there is no business, the meeting may be cancelled.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Commissioner Cross moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ikejiaku. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 13-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by:

Abigail Youngblood

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