

: OF THE CITY OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS :

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting was held by the Human Resources Commission (HRC) in Room 404 at City Hall, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois, on November 15, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. Chairperson Patrick Kirchhofer called the meeting to order @ 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following Commissioners were present: Brittney Ferrero, Patrick Kirchhofer, Judy Oakford, Mark Brown, Catherine Cross, Alexander Ikejiaku and Lisa Fuller. Absent were Shandra Bond, Farrell Davies, Brett Kolditz, Meiosha Zobac and Janice Zagardo.

Staff present: Kathryn Murphy, Abigail Youngblood

MINUTES

The minutes for the November 1, 2019 meeting were reviewed.

MOTION:

Commissioner Oakford moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Ranking and Funding Recommendations for 2019 Public Service Applicants

Staff Member Murphy read into the record Commissioner Oakford's conflict of interest with Hult Center. Due to the conflict of interest, Commissioner Oakford was not permitted to speak about the specific funding decisions for Hult Center, only overall funding decisions.

Staff Member Murphy presented three funding options to the Commission. She emphasized that the Commission may alter any of the starting points or create new funding formulas as they see fit. The models were created based on the anticipated public service budget of \$260,000. Congress has not passed a budget for the upcoming year, so this was a conservative estimate.

Staff Member Murphy explained the Excel spreadsheets were designed by dropping the lowest and highest score from each organization. Then, the total score was divided by the new denominator. This included dropping anyone who had a conflict of interest. This formula calculated an average score for each applicant. Staff Member Murphy reviewed the three options presented before the Commission as a starting point for discussion.

Funding Option 1- The first option took the average scores of the Commissioners divided by the total points they could receive, which was 240. This gave a percentage, which was then multiplied by the amount they requested to view their total amount they would receive. This process was followed until the \$260,000 had been allocated. This allows for only eleven programs to be funded, but it allowed for the most people to be served (1,905).

Commissioner Kirchhofer questioned why an organization would not ask for the entire \$30,000. Staff Member Murphy explained it was due to the math that was completed for the application for staff time that caused some applicants to be just under the \$30,000 amount.

Funding Option 2- The second option would fund fifteen programs. The organizations are ranked by their average scores and given a percentage beginning at 95% and declining at 5% or 10% increments as scores decline. Funding then decreased as scores decreased until all funds have been allocated.

Funding Option 3- The third option would fund all but two programs. The top programs would be funded at 95% and decline at 5% and 10% increments as scores decline. The lowest scoring application received the remaining funds available but did require some alterations to the percentages to ensure everyone received the minimum grant award. The last two programs would not receive funding due to a large drop in scores.

Staff Member Murphy clarified for Commissioner Kirchhofer that \$7,000 was the minimum amount of money a recipient could receive due to Commission regulations. Staff Member Murphy explained the last four organizations on the third budget option had edited percentages in order to ensure they received \$7,000.

Commissioner Kirchhofer questioned how many organizations had been funded in past years. Staff Member Murphy answered with the maximum number being twenty-one and the minimum number being fifteen during the last five years. Commissioner Kirchhofer clarified there were a total of twenty-one applicants for the 2020 grant year.

Commissioner Ferrero questioned if it was possible to remove the lower applicants from option two. Commissioner Cross remarked then it would appear to be option one. Commissioner Kirchhofer clarified there were eleven applicants in the first option, fifteen in the second option and nineteen in the third option and a \$7,000 award must be given to at least each application.

Commissioner Ikejiaku questioned which methods were used in the past to discover allocation amounts. Staff Member Murphy explained HUD gave recommendations to the average score as a base for the allocations amounts in order to meet HUD underwriting standards.

Staff Member Murphy explained option three was typically chosen in the past. Commissioner Ikejiaku stated option three gives everyone a little bit of money. Staff Member Murphy stated option three could be edited to give each applicant money if the commission wished to fund everyone.

Commissioner Fuller questioned if there was a risk of organizations not being able to run their programs if they were only given the minimum grant amount. Staff Member Murphy stated she had never encountered that, and typically organizations add any allocations to their grant funding, but it has been recommended to raise the minimum from \$7,000 to \$10,000 because of the amount of work between the City of Peoria Grants Division and the organization.

Commissioner Kirchhofer noticed there was around a ten-point break between the two lower organizations and the third lowest organization. The rest of the organizations were within a point after the first three which are separated by a five-point drop.

Commissioner Brown questioned if Staff Member Murphy had the raw ratings scores from each of the Commissioners without the names attached. Commissioner Brown asked to see the next lowest scores on the bottom two organizations after the lowest score that was dropped.

Commissioner Brown explained on the two lower organizations they received two very low scores compared to other scores for their organization and therefore it made their average score low. Commissioner Fuller recommended looking at the consistency of each rater to see if their ratings were consistently lower or consistently higher.

Staff Member Murphy explained typically graders are consistent with being easier or tougher on applicants across the board.

Commissioner Ikejiaku stated higher or lower scores may come from familiarity with the agency. Staff Member Murphy stated new applicants tend to score lower due to application process or not filling out the application as well.

Commissioner Brown requested removing the two highest and two lowest scores and then evaluate the rankings of each agency. Staff Member Murphy explained there was an issue because only ten Commissioners were present so by removing four scores only six rankings would be evaluated. Commissioner Brown expressed he is comfortable funding all the other organizations, but not the bottom two.

Commissioner Oakford stated the issue each year is deciding whether to provide more substantial funding to a few organizations or spreading the money thin to provide to each organization. Commissioner Fuller stated you must also weigh the number of clients that would be served.

Commissioner Brown reminded the Commissioners most grants are used for matching purposes and \$7,000 could become \$14,000. Commissioner Oakford stated all organizations would be able to run their program if they are not funded.

Commissioner Ikejiaku reminded Commissioners the highest organizations are receiving higher grant amounts based on the collective sense of the group. Commissioner Ikejiaku stated even if lower organizations are funded with only \$7,000 which does not devalue their work and the funding amount can still be useful.

Commissioner Brown expressed standardizing scores in the future to prevent internal variation to be inclusive as possible. Commissioner Brown expressed concern since the Commissioners know the reputation of the programs and some of them are new programs such as the Boys and Girls Club digital library program which could affect scores. Staff Member Murphy relayed the concern Commissioner Zagardo asked her to provide to the Commission regarding the Digital Preschool program since she was unable to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Kirchhofer stated the Commission should stay with the options presented and options can be discovered differently next year. Staff Member Murphy explained comments are given to applicants regarding their application so they can improve their application next year, but the application process is meant to be rigorous, and grant money is not automatically received.

Commissioner Fuller questioned if there are any workshops for applicants to attend to assist with their application process. Staff Member Murphy remarked there is a mandatory application training session.

Commissioner Cross questioned if applicants who do not receive funding will apply next year. Staff Member Murphy expressed that applicants are aware they may not receive funding, but that she has not experienced that deterring organizations from applying the following year.

Commissioner Kirchhofer questioned if anyone had any further comments.

MOTION:

Commissioner Ferrero moved to approve funding option 3, seconded by Commissioner Ikejiaku. The motion was approved by viva voce vote 6 to 1. Commissioner Brown voted against the motion.

Commissioner Brown requested to go on the record stating he would like to fund all the organizations if possible.

B. Approval of staff adjustments to 2019 Public Service awards according to the percentage increase or decrease in the City's 2019 CDBG allocation.

Staff Member Murphy explained that the US Congress has not yet passed a full year budget for HUD, so the City's 2020 allocation is unknown at this time. This request is for the approval for staff to adjust the

award amounts based on the percentage increase or decrease of the actual CDBG allocation compared to the anticipated budget amount. This would save a step for the Commission of having to reconvene if there is a larger variance in the 2020 allocation.

Commissioner Ferrero questioned if there was an increase if it would be possible to fund the bottom two organizations. Staff Member Murphy explained depending on when the budget is approved, we may already be through part of the CDGB funding fiscal year so to give organizations funding for only half a year is difficult on both parties.

Commissioner Ikejiaku questioned if the funding amount would only be increased, not decreased. Staff Member Murphy explained the Public Service amount is capped and if we receive a lower amount than we estimated we may have to possibly lower grant amounts. To try to avoid this possibility, the budget amount is lowered to an amount that is below or equal to the allocation amount. This prevents having to decrease a grantee's award money.

Commissioner Fuller questioned the consequences if a budget is not approved. Staff Member Murphy explained subrecipients will be reimbursed once the City receives the 2020 funding from HUD. Staff Member Murphy said all applicants are made aware they will be reimbursed late in the year and that this will be reinforced at the report training in January.

MOTION:

Commissioner Brown moved for the approval of staff adjustment to the 2020 Public Service awards based on the percentage increase or decrease in the City's 2020 CDBG allocation; seconded by Commissioner Cross. The motion was approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7 to 0.

Staff Member Murphy informed Commissioners their budget decision would go before City Council on December 10th. Staff Member Murphy remarked she would be in contact with Commissioners if it was not approved.

Commissioners Kirchhofer and Ikejiaku thanked Staff Member Murphy and her team for the organization of the process and stated it was well put together. Staff Member Murphy introduced Grants Coordinator Cassie Belter. Cassie will be taking over the Commission in the spring.

Staff Member Murphy thanked the Commissioners for their time during the application process and stated her enjoyment in working with them over the past five years.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Commissioner Oakford moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferrero. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by:

Abigail Youngblood