



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

SOCIAL SERVICE GRANTS COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
City Hall, 215 SE 7th Street, Suite 255
Topeka, KS 66603-3914
Tel: 785-368-3710
Fax: 785-368-3958
www.topeka.org

Date: May 13, 2019

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Holliday Building, 1st Floor Conference Room 620 SE Madison

Committee members present: Councilmembers Michael Padilla, Michael Lesser. Councilmember/Committee Chair Jeff Coen was absent.

City staff present: Sasha Haehn (Director of Neighborhood Relations), Corrie Wright (DNR)

1) Call to Order

Councilmember Lesser called the meeting to order at 9:00am. Councilmember Jeff Coen was absent.

2) Approve Minutes from April 23, 2019 Meeting

Councilmember Padilla made a motion accept the minutes from April 23rd. Councilmember Lesser seconded the motion. Motion carried 2:0:1.

3) Agency Appeal Process

Corrie Wright, Neighborhood Relations, introduced the process of how the agencies would appeal their scoring results with the 2020 Grant process.

Kathy Votaw, Topeka LULAC Senior Center, addressed the committee. Ms. Votaw noted that she was new to this particular grant process and had questions about the scoring process. Ms. Votaw spoke about need for continued programming and funding noting that the services and need for the service have continued to increase. Funding has been lowered for 2020. Ms. Votaw is concerned that without the requested funding, LULAC will not be able to provide the programming to the senior population in the ways they currently are. The scoring on the administration of the grant was more heavily weighed upon rather than the needs of services.

Ms. Wright noted that LULAC received lower scoring in two areas past grant administration 5 out of 10. Using 2018 reporting period. First quarter demographic report was incorrect; the second quarter financial report was

incorrect; and the third quarter financial report was incorrect which the reasoning for loss of points was. With regard to Outcomes on Prior Grants for 2018, one of the outcomes was missed and received a 15/20 score on that. Councilmember Padilla inquired with staff about the letter that LULAC sent. Ms. Wright noted that in 2017, LULAC received full points as their grant was received on time. There were some discrepancies voiced between staff, Committee members and Ms. Votaw with regard to timeliness of receiving the grant request and communication between staff and Ms. Votaw. Councilmember Padilla inquired if Ms. Votaw reviewed the application after receiving the scoring to make an appeal. Ms. Votaw noted concerns about deficiencies with the online program, mainly noting that dates when a report was submitted on one date and then corrected on another date, the application is considered sent on the later date.

Ms. Wright confirmed that with EcImpact, changes made to the application are considered to be a new submission and that training on the system was made available prior to the application season. Ms. Wright further stated that DNR staff is always available to answer questions.

Councilmember Padilla inquired about the scoring points of twenty and ten, noting that it is such a large variance that it can make a big difference to agencies. Councilmember Lesser shares concerns brought up by Councilmember Padilla, however feels it may be more appropriate to discuss changes to those systems at a later time to be implemented into the 2021 season, rather than trying to make changes after the fact at today's meeting.

Councilmember Lesser and Councilmember Padilla agree that they would want to meet once again to vote on the appeals after hearing from agencies today.

Ms. Haehn noted that due to the City's budget schedule, a meeting would need to be made before the 2020 Budget Development Process, which would mean the final recommendation would need to happen by the second Governing Body meeting in June. Further, once the current application process is completed, the committee will need to meet once more in late summer to evaluate the scoring criteria and the priorities for 2021.

Ms. Votaw noted that she had concerns with regard to the evaluation process, she had difficulty reaching staff. Staff was able to produce copies of email communication with Ms. Votaw.

Councilmember Padilla inquired if Ms. Votaw had any final statements. Ms. Votaw did not.

Sandra Clear, Sole Reason, addressed the committee and noted some issues she found with the online application system. Being on the side of the grant submitter, versus the side of the policy maker, Ms. Clear noted the following issues:

- The weighing of score is off. If an agency receives high scoring through most of the process, but failed in one area, the full score is suffering. Ms. Clear would prefer a more holistic approach to include the current process, but adding in an overall review of the program.
- The current scoring of 0-3-5 based on the number of partners an agency has. Ms. Clear feels this scoring should be changed to 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to reflect the number of partners.
- Outputs and outcomes - it was easy to confuse and switch the information around. The reviewer should have the discretion to realize what happened and not deduct points if the information is complete and accurate, just switched around.
- Client Input Formal Process - Ms. Wright read the definition of this topic. Ms. Clear stated that her reply of “we don’t” lost points. Ms. Clear discussed how the wording of that is difficult for new programs or agencies who have not been through the process before and have nothing to base an answer off of. Ms. Clear suggested changing the language to inquire what would be done with the program should money be awarded.
- With regard to final scoring, Ms. Clear feels the individuality of the organizations is being lost due to such stringent processes.

Councilmember Lesser inquired with staff about new agencies and if new programs were being counted against them. Staff noted that if an agency is new, the score is not counted against them. Councilmember Lesser stated he would like to have another meeting in the future to get comments and suggestions on how to better the process, but that for the remainder of the meeting at hand, he would like to only hear agency appeals to the particular scoring they received.

Councilmember Lesser and Councilmember Padilla discussed not making changes to the process mid-season. Councilmember Padilla expressed a general agreement, but would like to have the opportunity to make a change if deemed necessary. Councilmember Padilla expressed concern for finding a way to fund agencies

more equally rather than one getting a large or full amount of requested funding and another not receiving any.

Debra Dawkins, East Topeka Senior Center, addressed the committee to appeal that transportation for medical appointments for seniors. This is the only agency which provides this service in all of Shawnee County. The loss of the 2020 funding is a significant portion of the budget, and the transportation program would get cut. Ms. Dawkins provided statistics for the program in 2018 and thus far for this year. Ms. Dawkins is asking for reconsideration to scoring as the application was submitted late.

Councilmember Padilla inquired about the time of operations for when the East Topeka Senior Center was open for operation. Ms. Dawkins noted the building is open weekdays from 9:00am-2:00pm and that the transportation program runs from 10:00am-2:30pm.

Tawny Stottlemeier with Community Action addressed the committee to discuss the loss of funding to the Latino Family Development program will prove fatal for the program. Ms. Stottlemeier feels that there were mistakes in the scoring process. Two areas where points were lost were in Past Grant Administration and Past Grant Performance. Ms. Stottlemeier noted that Community Action data was accurate and presented timely. The third area where points were lost was in Board Compensation. Community Action has a board of thirty-three members. In the Grant Application, it states that 65% of the Board attend meetings. With such a small board, it is difficult to have 65% of the board members were not at every meetings. Ms. Stottlemire feels it is more important that a board meet quorum and conduct the business they are tasked to do. Ms. Stottlemire hopes this committee and Governing Body will make changes to the funding.

Councilmember Padilla inquired about the Latino Family Program and if there are other agencies within the community receiving funding. Ms. Stottlemire stated there may be other programs, but none currently seeking funding through this process. Ms. Stottlemire further stated there are not enough programs in Topeka assisting the Latino families.

Councilmember Padilla reflected that the work being done in the Community Action program is critical and necessary.

Ms. Wright responded: Board representation is 65%, and as Ms. Stottlemire had stated, Community Action scored under that. Past Grant Administration for third

quarter was submitted incorrectly with negative balances and Rachelle Vega-Retana (DNR) went back and corrected the information on Eclmpact. On Outputs on prior grants, two of the outputs and one of the outcomes were not met leading to the points lost.

Debbie Lake, Pappan's Landing Senior Center, addressed the committee stating that the outcomes dropped. Ms. Lake noted that during the online process, Ms. Lake clicked on an "achieved" button and assumed that it was correctly done. However, it was later discovered that the information had not been entered. Overall, the outcomes were met with the exception of transportation which served 96% of what was projected. Ms. Lake asked for reconsideration as a mistake was made during the reporting process and Ms. Lake would hate to see critical funding be lost to the senior population due to an error made on her part.

Dennis Tenpenny, Board President for Pappan's Landing, stated that Pappan's Landing was given 50% based on missing one outcome. That they received a 3 out of 5 in Organizational Leadership for not meeting the 15% minority representation on the Board when they were less than one percent from meeting that mark yet scored two points less. Lastly, Pappan's Landing received an 88% of the scoring, but since the approval rating is 90%, Pappan's Landing will not receive funding. Mr. Tenpenny noted that all three senior centers were in attendance at the meeting and that all three offer critical funding to the City's senior population and all are on the chopping block.

Ms. Wright noted that at the time of receiving the application, the numbers were much different at the time of the meeting versus what was submitted for the reviewers which is why the funding is much different. Ms. Wright noted they received 10 points, but actually should have received fewer. With regard to the outcomes and outputs from prior grants were zero, as Ms. Lake did not enter those.

Ms. Wright noted that she was simply the messenger and is in favor of all of the agencies. Councilmember Padilla reflected on those sentiments and agreed that it is the City's duty to provide the best services and processes as are available. Councilmember Padilla noted that change is difficult, however if it is something that can make us more responsive and accountable, Councilmember Padilla appreciates those efforts.

Councilmember Lesser noted that he agreed with statements made by Councilmember Padilla. Councilmember Lesser is appreciative for the

organizations who spoke today and were able to evaluate the appeal process and what interpretations that need to be reviewed. This discussion has provided some important information for the committee members and staff to review and think critically about.

4) Committee Discussion

None.

5) Other Items Before the Committee

No other items.

6) Set Next Meeting Date

Next meeting will be Wednesday May 22, 9am

Wednesday May 29th morning 9am will be a tentative date should the committee not feel ready to take action.

Ms. Haehn pleaded to not change the current scoring process for this cycle, however changes could made for future programming.

7) Adjourn

Councilmember Coen adjourned the meeting.

Meeting video can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/MT_jFmgC2y0