



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

SOCIAL SERVICE GRANTS COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: April 5, 2022

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Location: 1st Floor Conference Room; Cyrus K. Holliday Bldg 620 SE Madison
(virtual attendance option also offered)

Committee members present: Councilmembers Karen Hiller, Brett Kell, Hannah Naeger

City staff present: Interim City Manager Bill Cochran, Corrie Wright (Housing Services), Carrie Higgins (Housing Services)

1) Call to Order

Chairwoman Hiller called the meeting to order at 1:02pm, and described the goal of this meeting. Committee members, City Staff, and United Way staff introduced themselves.

2) Elect 2022 Committee Chair

Committee member Kell made a motion to nominate Committee member Hiller to serve as the 2022 chair. Committee member Naeger seconded the motion. Committee member Hiller accepted the nomination. Motion approved 3:0. Councilmember Hiller will serve as the 2022 SSG Committee Chair.

3) Review Timeline

Chairwoman Hiller referenced the two new committee members. She wanted to ensure the committee understood the timeline for the 2023 grant cycle process, and to make sure to address any questions or concerns.

Brett Martin, United Way of Greater Topeka, walked through the 2023 Process Timeline. This was created and approved by the 2021 Committee, and approved by the Governing Body, however is helpful to review with current committee members.

Committee member Kell inquired about the appeal process, and inquired if an applicant would have the opportunity to submit any missing information that they may need to include after May 27th? Mr. Martin responded that once the

deadline passed, applicants would not be able to submit any additional information. There is a four-week application window, during which time United Way staff would be available to help applicants with any questions or concerns they have regarding their application or the process. After the application deadline, however, once the deadline has passed the opportunity to request information or share any technical issues will close and there will no longer be the opportunity to re-work those applications.

Committee member Naeger inquired as to the responsibilities of the City and Committee with this process, and what that timeline looked like? Chairwoman Hiller stated that the Governing Body set this funding cycle last Fall. The process runs from April to August, where the agencies are involved. Once the process is done, the Committee will review how the process went and make any recommendations to change the upcoming process to then take to the Governing Body in the Fall. This locks in the process, as it has been fully approved by the Committee and Governing Body, by January 1st and it is ready to begin.

Chairwoman Hiller requested to hear about the qualifications of the Reviewers. Mr. Martin answered that 3-5 Reviewers are vetted to have substantial grant reviewing experience to help work through the SSG process. Chairwoman Hiller noted that the SSG process is performance and outcome based. The current system is set up to require agencies to show they have had at least two years of track record for delivering and administering the program they are applying for before they are allowed to apply for the SSG for the first time. The underlying principals are that the City wants to provide core support and also to protect dollars, and to ensure the performance has been tested and proven. The point-score system will be reviewed next that will weight all of the sections within the application.

4) Training for SSG Committee on Grant Process

Mr. Martin noted that future meetings will review the Scoring and RFP. Committee member Hiller introduced the Funding Priorities sheet. Corrie Wright, Division Director of Housing Services, reviewed the Priorities Sheet with the Committee members, and highlighted the mission statement, minimum and maximum request amounts, the two agencies who had been approved to request a higher maximum threshold, and briefly touched on the method for scoring. Chairwoman Hiller noted that the list of six categories that the City has prioritized for program eligibility are:

- Senior citizen neighborhood-based programming ton include meals, activities, transportation
- Medical assistance for low-income individuals
- Programs for at-risk youth
- Emergency housing and utility assistance
- Neighborhood and independent living based services for persons with severe and persistent mental illness
- Support services for residents whom are non-English-speaking

The list has evolved over time based on where certain services were needed. The Priorities Sheet can be made available in advance by request. A training workshop will also be held in May for any potential applicant agencies to attend.

Chairwoman Hiller provided a bit of historical background as to prior process and current process.

Committee member Naeger inquired about the reasoning behind Shawnee County Medical Society and Positive Connections receiving a higher maximum threshold. Chairwoman Hiller responded that there had been a sense, from past Committee members, that those agencies merited to set aside the higher threshold. The decision happened at a time when the process was transitioning to the most current process, where there was more money allocated to this process and providing direct grants to agencies that provided services that were very closely tied in with the City. Some of the other agencies, YWCA Center for Safety & Empowerment (formerly Battered Women’s Shelter) and the Tenant/Landlord Counseling, and others, split off and were attached under the City Departments that they worked most directly with, to receive direct funding, and these two were the remaining programs that were outliers that had more than the \$25K maximum that was the agreed to be the new standard maximum for the grant. The subject comes up from time to time whether to keep these programs at this higher threshold or to place them back into the general pool.

Committee member Naeger inquired about the services provided by these agencies. Division Director Wright and Mr. Martin answered. Positive Connections is the community’s HIV/AIDS provider. They provide case management services, food services, various medical services and almost any other service that would be needed by someone who has the HIV/AIDS medical diagnosis. Shawnee Medical Society provides prescription assistance for those who are uninsured. They are

also able to leverage millions of dollars of donated care annually and connecting people who are uninsured with providers who provide that care. They also assist with getting uninsured individuals connected to health insurance if they are eligible and meet various types of requirements.

Division Director Wright added that when the change occurred, the two agencies went from being able to apply for a significantly higher dollar amount to what it is now. The reason the change was considered was because the \$25K maximum threshold was a substantial decrease in the amount of funding they had been receiving. Since that time, the increased maximum threshold amount was continued.

Mr. Martin walked through the Scoring Sheet. He reviewed the percentages on how the process works, noting the investment in the programs are heavily weighted toward outcomes. The score sheet total is out of 100 points. The first 15 points (15%) is related to the demonstration of community need. This is also how the applicant positions themselves, as an organization, which is meeting a particular community need. The next 50 points (50%) is based on performance, or how the program will meet certain outputs and outcomes. The way to differentiate between outputs and outcomes is that outputs are how much you do, and outcomes are how well you achieve that. The next 30 points (30%) is related to the capacity of the organization to be able to carry this program out. In other words, a program may have demonstrated a significant community need, and may have put out impressive performance measures, but this section of the application seeks to understand what resources the program is “bringing to the table” as an organization, in order to be able to carry that out. The final 5 points (5%) is related to collaborations or partnerships. The section seeks to learn how an agency/program is working with other programs/agencies in the community in order to drive their own work as well as to drive the larger work of the community. Chairwoman Hiller included that the score from the score sheet that then mathematically gets applied to their application amount to then come up with what the recommended allocations are.

Chairwoman Hiller stated the idea behind using the current process was to be as empirical as possible to keep the process as transparent, clear and fair as the Governing Body was able to make it.

Chairwoman Hiller requested that the Committee members be provided the scoring sheet and application form as a packet. According to the timeline, the

Committee will be meeting the week of July 5th as well as the last week of July to hear appeals. The Committee will work to complete recommendations on the 2024 process in October. One thing that has emerged over the past couple of years, there have been topics that the Committee has held a meeting to look at in that time between completing the current process and setting up recommendations for the upcoming year. This year, the Committee and United Way will speak about gap analysis. This will occur in October, or possibly September.

Mr. Martin made a point of clarification that the score does correlate to the amount awarded, however, when the process gets to the end of the dollars or near the cut-off, it could be that an organization perhaps scored 85%, but due to lack of funding, they may not receive the full amount of that request. At that point, it will be the remaining amount of funding that will dictate the grant award and not the percentage of the request.

Chairwoman Hiller provided some history as to the minimum and maximum request amounts and the reasoning they were set at those amounts. The goal was to help provide core funding to programs and that it needed to be worth everyone's time so the \$10K minimum threshold was set.

Chairwoman Hiller inquired when the applicants would receive the materials. Mr. Martin stated they would receive the information on April 18th, and will have the opportunity to look at it for the week prior, then they will attend the workshop on April 25th. Immediately following the workshop on the 25th, the application will be made live on E-Impact.

Chairwoman Hiller opened the floor to attendees if they had any questions currently about the upcoming process. There were no additional concerns.

5) Other Items

No additional items.

6) Adjourn

Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:41pm.

Meeting video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/rT9WQh3IoX0>