



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: July 14, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Virtual meeting only, via Zoom platform

Committee members present: Councilmembers Sylvia Ortiz (Chair), Karen Hiller, Brett Kell

City staff present: Carrie Higgins (Division Director Housing Services), United Way of Kaw Valley vendor staff: Brett Martin, Jessica Lehnerr, Joyce Katzer, Juliet McDiffet, Audrey Mott

1) Call to Order

Chairwoman Ortiz called the meeting to order at 10:02am Committee members, introduced themselves. Committee member Kell was absent during this portion of the meeting.

2) Review & Approve Scoring and Funding Recommendations

Brett Martin, United Way of Kaw Valley, reviewed that at the conclusion of the July 10th meeting, they had been asked to provide three scenarios related to possible new scoring opportunities and options. In a later email conversation, City staff had identified some additional dollars that could be made available for this process. United Way then created an additional scenario to show what that allocation could look like, should those additional dollars be made available. The funding options would be for programs numbered 1-21 [reference made to the spreadsheet provided to Committee members] with program number 21 not receiving the full percentage of their request due to the amount of final dollars left over.

Chairwoman Ortiz appreciated the scenarios and that staff had been able to find some additional funding. She stated that when she had seen the additional amount of funding available, she felt the appropriate thing to do would be to send it back to the Committee for a review with the fourth scenario to present.

Committee member Hiller referenced some comments sent via an email to Liz Toyne, Executive Assistant, this morning prior to the meeting and asked if Chairwoman Ortiz had received it. Chairwoman Ortiz had not received the information. Committee member Hiller felt there should be some conversation by

the Committee about what, of the additional dollars found by staff, the Committee would want to recommend. The staff's suggestion is that the additional dollars could come from the 2023 funds, rather than the 2024 funds. If the Committee chooses to include in the recommendation to use the 2023 money, then when/if the Governing Body chooses to adopt the recommendation, the money would be certain for the agencies. The issue is, what would have been done should the additional funds from the 2023 budget not be available. Likely, the Committee would ask for additional funds to be added to the 2024 budget, but that will take more time and the agencies would have to then be left hanging and waiting to see if the funds were for sure going to be there. If the Committee is considering doing something and 2023 money can be used, the Governing Body can approve the recommendation and choose to obligate the 2023 money and it would be firm with the agencies knowing what their allocations would be.

Chairwoman Ortiz asked Adam Vaughn, Financial Services, to explain where the additional funding was from. Mr. Vaughn explained the additional \$45,000 would be available from the 2023 budget. This money is from cost savings due to vacancy credits in 2023. In preparing for the 2024 budget, he had been asked earlier on to see if an increase would be possible. He set a proposed increase of \$57,000 for 2024. The total general fund contribution in 2024 specifically for the grants would be \$425K, instead of the roughly \$370K. This amount does not include any federal monies that might also be made available.

Chairwoman Ortiz stated that once it was known that the additional \$45K would be available for this process, she asked United Way to move forward with creating the additional scenario.

Mr. Martin provided an overview of the three scenarios, with the assumption that the additional \$45K would not be available, and were based on the original \$434,904 that was set for process. For the fourth scenario, he added the original amount to the \$45 to come up with the new total \$479,904 and re-ran the calculations.

Committee member Hiller mentioned that she had previously brought up the possibility of increasing the amount for 2024. She stated it may be partly a decision to be made by the Committee for setting the bar for what would then be the reference number for the 2025 process, as that meeting gets closer. Chairwoman Ortiz responded that was the reason she had asked staff to see if there was some addition funding that would be available for this year.

[Committee member Kell joined the meeting at 10:15am]

MOTION: Committee member Kell made a motion to adopt scenario option four, as presented by United Way of Kaw Valley, to increase the total funding by \$45K and to accept the recommended scoring and funding allocations. Chairwoman Ortiz seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Ortiz sought clarification from Mr. Martin in an amount rewarded to Papan's Landing that they received in 2023, for \$22,153. She inquired if that was the amount they had requested on their application? Mr. Martin confirmed that was correct.

Committee member Hiller inquired if the vote was for option four, with the idea to use \$45K from the 2023 general funding dollars, and if the Committee wants to make that recommendation to the Governing Body to accept that. And what the Committee's position would be about staff's proposal to increase the amount on the 2024 Budget to allocate an additional \$57K toward it. Chairwoman Ortiz felt this could be a second recommendation to be voted on.

Chairwoman Ortiz inquired with Mr. Vaughn as to when the last time was that this SSG money was changed. Mr. Vaughn indicated the amount was adjusted for the 2020 SSG cycle. Committee member Hiller noted that 2020 was the year when \$45K/a year was added to pay for the third-party vendor to help run the process. She reminded the Committee that, in the operating documents, it is stated that requests for less than \$10K would generally not be considered, as it was felt that \$10K was a minimum threshold that would make it worth the responsibilities of an agency to manage the grant as well as for the City to manage the grant. With using the proposed \$45K, it will mean the last program on the list will only receive \$5k, which is less than the agency's ask and below the \$10K minimum threshold. She suggested that if the Committee stuck with approving the programs that would receive the full recommended funding, that only \$39,774 would be needed, and that then matching the difference from the last time, as an alternative for consideration for not making grants for under \$10K.

Mr. Martin walked through discussion that was had with the United Way team related to suggesting the award that will fall under the \$10K minimum. He stated that the RFP states that application requests cannot be less than \$10K as a way to ensure there was enough money for the programs, and that it was also not an undue burden on United Way as the vendor or for the City of Topeka. However,

there have been times where awards were made for less than \$10K because of what was remaining at the end of the piece.

FINAL MOTION: Committee voted 3-0-0 to approve the motion as stated above.

Mr. Martin spoke of next steps, stating that with this vote, United Way will send out an additional correspondence to the agencies related to this decision and will change the text to indicate that this is now contingent upon the final approval by the Governing Body, but that the process has now moved through the appeals and has received full approval by the SSG Committee.

Chairwoman Ortiz thanked the agencies and noted that the Committee is committed to finding as much money as is available to help support those programs that do good work in the community.

Committee member Hiller suggested providing communication to the Governing Body about whether the Committee wants to make one or both of the recommendations, one speaks to the offer from staff to use 2023 money but then also that the 2024 budget will include extra money as well.

MOTION: Chairwoman Ortiz made a motion to approve the increase of \$57K for 2024 budget. Committee member Brett Kell seconded the motion. Approved 3-0-0.

MOTION: Committee member Hiller made a motion to recommend to the Governing Body the \$45K in increased funding to be used from the 2023 General Funds. Chairwoman Ortiz seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0-0.

3) Approval of July 10, 2023 Minutes

Committee member Hiller reviewed some amendments to the phrasing in the minutes. She will send her corrections via email to the Council's Executive Assistant to correct. On page 7, the text talks about changing the total of SSG money available and it states "Councilmember Hiller noted the total amount of dollars requested for the SSG program has not changed in some time. She had spoken about this to City Manager Wade, and he had said 'no'. Committee member Hiller requested that we increase the amount of money..." Continuing, "...the reference is made that the Committee could ask to have money to add back in to avoid cutting three agencies that were going to be cut." Committee member suggested the following change to state "...asked City Manager Stephen Wade in last year's SSG allocation money if there would be a possibility to increase and his answer had been 'no'. She stated the Committee could recommend increasing the

amount of funding during the Governing Body's process for the next year for the 2024 grants". Committee member Hiller stated the minutes had erroneously said "2025". Continuing, "Councilwoman Ortiz inquired how much increase Councilwoman Hiller was interested in requesting. Councilwoman Hiller stated a cut of roughly \$25K had been made. The Committee could ask to add that back so that we did not have to cut the agencies that would have been cut..."

Committee member Hiller made a motion to approve meeting minutes, provided her suggested changes be reflected for accuracy. Chairwoman Ortiz seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0-0.

4) Other Items

Committee member Hiller referenced the process calendar noting there is an option to do a study session in September or October, and prior to starting deliberations for the recommendations for the future year. With no meeting currently scheduled, before September, she would like to identify a topic today and begin looking at dates.

Mr. Martin stated that in terms of the September meeting, what has been done in the past was to take a look at process or taking a look at data that has come forward and they have shared it with the Committee. As far as this year is concerned, Untied Way does not have any new data to share or any major recommendations for the SSG process. They do have a few recommendations as they relate to scoring, however that is usually reviewed at a later meeting.

Chairwoman Ortiz stated there would not be a September meeting. Committee member Hiller suggested having the fall meetings get scheduled so all parties can plan accordingly. Chairwoman Ortiz agreed.

Interim City Manager Richard U. Nienstedt provided some closing comments thanking the Committee for inviting him to attend.

5) Adjourn

Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:34am

Meeting video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/0Wj3p9yKvtI>