August 21, 2015

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMISSION SUMMARY

: 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 St., Peoria, Illinois, on August 21st, 2015, at 8:30 a.m. Chairperson Rakoff called the meeting to order @ 8:30 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Chairperson Rakoff introduced the Commission member, Shandra Hennessey

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following Commissioners were present: Nancy Rakoff, Mark Brown, Norman Burdick, Shandra Hennessey, Patrick Kirchhofer, Judy Oakford, Greg Stout, Nancy Venzon, Ivan Williams – 9.


Council Liaison Present: Council Member Denise Moore

Staff Present: Kathryn Murphy, Nicole Frederick, Raven Fuller

Others present: None.

MINUTES

The minutes for the July 16th, 2015 meeting were reviewed.

Staff Member Fuller pointed out an error on page two, second paragraph where “current priorities” needs to be revised to “previous year’s priorities.”

MOTION:

Commissioner Oakford moved that the minutes be approved as amended; seconded by Commissioner Venzon.

The minutes were approved unanimously by viva voce vote 9 to 0.
OLD BUSINESS

A. Monitoring Visits of Grantees for 2015

Staff Member Kathryn Murphy explained that each year Staff must complete monitoring reviews/visits of the sub-grantees. Commissioners are invited to attend the monitoring. Staff must obtain some technical information, but it is a great chance for Commissioners to see the programs that they are assisting in action. Staff Member Murphy requested that if any Commissioner was still interested in visiting a particular sub-grantee to let her know.

Council Member Denise Moore introduced herself to the Commission and stated that she is the official Council Liaison to the Commission.

B. 2016/2017 Public Service Priorities

Staff Member Murphy stated that at the request of the Commission from the July meeting, she has distributed a survey that the Commission would use to rank their preferences of the 2016/2017 Public Service Priorities. She stated that since distributing the agenda packet for today’s meeting, additional surveys had been turned in so she distributed an updated copy of the survey results. She noted that the funding priorities for the 2016/2017 applications have not been set and the Commission would need to take a motion to submit a recommendation to Council for the funding priorities.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that in previous years the Council recommended that the HRC present a condensed list of priorities in order to avoid priority creep and to ensure that the qualifications for programs were not general.

Commissioner Kirchofer stated that the survey results showed a natural break between priorities voted five and six. He stated that using the top five made sense based on the survey results.

Council Member Moore noted that the top five seem to stay roughly the same the last few years.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that the Commission is on a two year grant cycle; therefore, the priorities will remain the same for those two years.

Council Member Moore stated that during her two years on Council, unemployment has been a large issue in the community. She stated that there are also large issues with vacant and abandoned properties, tenant rights, and slum landlords. She stated that since the priorities have not yet been voted on she wanted to express the importance of employment training and tenant/landlord counseling.

Commissioner Burdick noted that while grant money is decreasing the needs of the community are increasing. He stated that due to their limited funding, putting money towards one cause will take money away from another. He stated that the Commission’s survey results were based on their prioritization of critically important needs.
Council Member Moore stated that if more parents had employment training they may not need some of the other services such as child care services.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that child care services is a broad title that includes after school services, tutoring, monitoring, and many other programs. She added that many of these are necessary due to working parents having no other options for daycare.

Council Member Moore stated that she was not attacking any current funding, program, organization, or amount of money. She stated that if we lose the South Side and East Bluff that we will lose the City. She referenced a recent article from the Journal Star regarding the rate of unemployment in the 61605 area code.

Commissioner Brown stated that the HRC awards funding for programs and not agencies. He explained that the agency must create a program that fits the criteria of the priorities selected.

Council Member Moore stated that she knows of various agencies that have programs that could provide employment services including South Side Mission, His Helping Hands Resource Center, PCCEO, Carl Cannon’s program, METEC, and more.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that the Commission received a grant proposal from METEC in the past application cycle and their program was just below the award threshold.

Commissioner Williams asked if the agencies listed by Council Member Moore had alternative avenues for funding. He stated that the HRC appreciates agencies seeking multiple avenues of funding for their programs.

Council Member Moore stated that she had a recent meeting with the Mayor and City Administration to look for multiple avenues of funding within the City for these agencies and employment services.

Council Member Moore stated that many of the programs do not need funding. She stated that the programs will not stop if they do not get grants. She stated that you don’t always need to throw money at a situation to cause traction.

Commissioner Williams asked the Commission if there was interest in changing the priorities now, or allowing their survey results to go to Council as-is.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that the Commission needs to send a recommendation regarding funding priorities to Council.

Commissioner Venzon suggested that the recommendation regarding the priorities remain the top five survey results and let Council make revisions if necessary.

Discussion ensued between Commissioners, Council Member Moore and Staff regarding currently available employment services, benefit of employment services for community residents and the importance of skill development to obtain and retain employment.
MOTION:

Commissioner Burdick motioned to send the top five results of the survey to Council as their recommendations; seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Discussion:
Discussion ensued between Commissioners, Council Member Moore and Staff regarding the eligibility of services/priorities, the requirement of selecting a certain number of priorities, the importance of narrowing the focus of the funding priorities to maximize impact, ensuring the selected priorities meet the current community needs and including employment training in the recommendation of funding priorities.

Commissioner Williams suggested that the Commission send the survey results to Council with a recommendation that they select the five funding priorities; this way the Council will know what the Commission ranked as top funding priorities and that the Commission wants to ensure a focus on programs to maximize impact.

Council Member Moore noted that allowing Council to select the funding priorities only allows for the potential of agencies to submit an application for programs and does not guarantee funding.

MOTION:

Commissioner Burdick motioned to amend his original motion and to present the survey results as a ranked list and recommend that Council select five funding priorities; seconded by Commissioner Oakford.

Discussion:

Commissioner Kirchofer stated that the top two services (Child Care Services and Youth Services) are definitely priorities of the whole Commission.

Commissioner Oakford agreed with Commissioner Kirchofer and stated that the top five survey results are clearly their defined voices.

Staff Member Frederick clarified that the Commission is not restricted, by any HUD regulation, to recommending only five funding priorities; but suggested that this made numerical sense given the obvious break in survey results.

Council Member Moore stated that if the Council approved to have ten funding priorities, the Commission would have to abide by their direction.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that there is a tremendous amount of work involved with preparing the applications. She stated that she has been involved on both sides of the process for 40 years and that it is necessary to limit the priorities. She stated that as a role of the Commission it was customary to recommend specific funding priorities to Council.
Commissioner Burdick agreed with Chairperson Rakoff regarding the Commission’s customary role in funding priority recommendations. However, he stated that it is not the Commission’s role to remove the political pressure from Council. He stated that it is the Commissioners’ duty to provide input and allow Council to make the final decision.

The motion was approved by showing of hands.
Yea: Commissioners Brown, Burdick, Hennessey, Kirchhofer, Oakford, Stout, Venzon, Williams – 8.
Nays: Chairperson Rakoff. – 1

C. 2016/2017 Public Service Application and Evaluation Process

Staff Member Murphy created an updated draft application, materials and timeline for Commissioners’ review.

Chairperson Rakoff asked the Commissioners if they had any comments, edits or revisions.

Council Member Moore asked if the Commission asks sub-grantees for a report of expenditures and outcome results.

Chairperson Rakoff stated that the Commission reviews program budgets and projected outcomes at time of application submission. She added that Staff reviews outcomes and ensures reporting requirements are met for grant fund reimbursements. Staff provides the Commission with grantee updates through the year.

Council Member Moore asked what type of audits the agencies need to conduct in order to apply for funding.

Staff Member Frederick stated that the audit needed to be completed by an independent, third party Certified Public Account (CPA) for the agency’s most recent fiscal year. She added that if an A-133 audit is required the agency must include a copy with their application.

Council Member Moore asked if there were any provisions that would allow an agency to apply without an audit.

Staff Member Frederick stated that an audit must be completed.

Staff Member Murphy noted that an A-133 audit would only be necessary if the agency received more than $500,000 or $750,000 in federal funds; otherwise the agency would only need a regular internal audit.

Commissioner Williams asked if a definition of a regular audit and an A-133 audit could be included in the application instructions.
Chairperson Rakoff asked Commissioners if the current minimum grant amount of $10,000 is still acceptable. She stated that a minimum grant amount is a good practice and is helpful for Staff.

Council Member Moore stated that considering the management of Staff and assigned responsibilities is an internal City Administration issue.

Staff Member Frederick reminded the Commission that awarding a $2,000 grant and a $20,000 grant required the same due diligence for Staff and the agency.

Commissioner Kirchhofer stated that it was important to make the work of applying for the grant worth an agency’s time. He suggested making the minimum $8,000 due to the continued reduction in CDBG funding; but he is also comfortable with the current $10,000 minimum.

Council Member Moore noted that as funding decreases maybe the minimum award should decrease as well.

Chairperson Rakoff asked if any Commissioner wanted to make a motion regarding the minimum award; seeing none she continued the discussion.

Chairperson Rakoff noted a scheduling concern on the proposed timeline. She stated that agency attendance is required at the Clarification Meeting tentatively scheduled for October 28, 2015. With that date, Commissioners would only have four and a half days to review all the submitted applications and be prepared for the clarification meeting. Her concern is there may not be enough time.

Commissioner Oakford agreed that this would not be enough time to review all the applications.

Chairperson Rakoff suggested the alternative date for the Clarification Meeting be Friday, October 30, 2015.

Chairperson Rakoff also pointed out a typo that the maximum cap for administrative salaries. Currently, the application states 10%, that percentage should be 5%.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Oakford motioned to approve the application, materials and timeline with the following amendments – include the audit definitions, rescheduled the Clarification Meeting to Friday, October 30, 2015 and reduce the administration salary cap to 5%; seconded by Commissioner Williams.

The motion was approved unanimously viva voce vote 9 to 0.
NEW BUSINESS

A. Other Business

None.

B. Citizen Comments

None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Commissioners Kirchhofer motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Williams.

The motion was approved unanimously viva voce vote 9 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned @ 9:54 a.m.

[Signature]
Raven Fuller