March 17, 2017

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 March 17, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. Chairperson Nancy Rakoff called the meeting to order @ 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following Commissioners were present: Nancy Rakoff, Shandra Bond, Farrell Davies, Amr Elsamny, Patrick Kirchhofer, Brett Kolditz, Judy Oakford, and Jessica Zobac - 8

Absent: Mark Brown, Wayne Cannon, Greg Stout, and Nancy Venzon – 4

Council Liaison Present: None

Staff Present: Kathryn Murphy, Dakota Reed

Others Present: None

MINUTES

The minutes for the November 18th meeting were reviewed.

MOTION:

Commissioner Oakford moved that the minutes be approved; seconded by Commissioner Davies. The minutes were approved unanimously by viva voce vote 8 to 0.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Status of 2016 Grants

Staff Member Murphy gave the commissioners a status report from the close out of the 2016 grants. Each organization met the service numbers, however, two grantees – Common Place and Neighborhood House – did not spend all of their funding. Common Place had a remaining balance of $3.17, while Neighborhood House had a remaining balance of $681.93. One Neighborhood House staff member was out on medical leave, resulting in a lack of staff hours to cover all of their funding.

Due to a Public Service cap of 15% of the total yearly grant amount, the remaining funds will be reallocated to other CDBG programs after approval from the City Council.

Commissioner Kirchhofer questioned the variance between the contract outputs and actual outputs, specifically looking at the large gap in Dream Center’s numbers. Staff Member Murphy clarified that this issue was discussed at the end of last year; deciding if the status report should show only the outputs
that are being funded by the grant, or everyone in their program. In this case, the Dream Center included all of the participants in their program.

Commissioner Amr Elsamny joined the Commission at 8:33am.

Commissioner Kolditz questioned how the Commission is able to confirm the actual outcomes. Staff Member Murphy explained that the outcomes are reviewed during monitoring visits by reviewing public service application forms and the outcome measures stipulated by the grantee.

Commissioner Davies wondered if the funds are always being used for services to improve outcomes, rather than maintain them. She noted having funds go to students maintaining an A or B may not be as an effective use of funds as improving a student receiving C or D. Staff Member Murphy noted that while past practice has allowed grantees to pick their own outcome measures, this is something the commission can review and revise as they see fit.

B. Status of 2017 Grants

Staff Member Murphy reviewed that the 2017 funding was approved by City Council. Staff is still waiting on the HUD allocation for 2017. Currently there is a continuing resolution for federal funding through April 28th, but HUD cannot release allocations until they have full year funding amounts. After the full year budget is passed, HUD has 60 days to release allocations to entitlement communities. Once the funding is confirmed from HUD, Staff Member Murphy can confirm the numbers with the grantees. The grantees will still be required to turn in their quarterly reports for the number of people served whether or not the funding has been confirmed to ensure progress is being made.

Staff Member Murphy reviewed that the Commission is anticipating and budgeted for $224,000 for 2017. The Commission also agreed that Staff Member Murphy will make adjustments to the budget up to a maximum of 5% variance in the total funding amount.

Chairperson Rakoff asked if the 2017 grantees have started their services. Staff Member Murphy confirmed that is the case.

Commissioner Davies requested clarification on the national budget eliminating funds for 2018. Staff Member Murphy confirmed that would not affect the 2017 funds, but would go into effect in 2018.

Staff Member Murphy reminded the Commission of two report training sessions that were held in January. The grantees were informed at that time that the finalized numbers wouldn’t be revealed until after they are confirmed from HUD.

Chairperson Rakoff asked the Commission if there were any more comments on the status of 2017 grants. Commissioner Elsamny requested information on the organization that filed a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) form to review the evaluation sheets from the Commissioners after they were not approved for a Public Service grant. Staff Member Murphy updated the Commission that the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Peoria filed a FOIA and the requested information was provided by the City. Staff has heard nothing further on the matter.
NEW BUSINESS

A. 2018 Priority Recommendations

Staff Member Murphy stated that although the proposed budget eliminates CDBG, the Commission is advised to carry on as if they will receive 2018 public service funding until it is confirmed that no funding will be available. Commissioner Elsamny requested clarification on the statement that the entire commission would become useless if CDBG is cut. Staff Member Murphy confirmed this comment and explained it would be up to City Council if they wanted to assign other duties to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Elsamny asked if there is a plan B for the Commission if CDBG funding is cut. Staff Member Murphy stated that she is hopeful that CDBG will not be cut from the federal budget. However, if CDBG is eliminated there are remaining funds from prior years that can be carried over. These funds could not be used for Public Service due to the 15% cap, but could be used to keep federally funded staff on board.

Chairperson Rakoff reviewed the schedule that the Commission has followed in the past. The schedule includes retrieving information and statistics about the City from Staff, the Commission will then take a survey to rank their priorities for which public services should be funded, followed by the City Council approval.

Staff Member Murphy offered to update the PowerPoint presentation she presented last year with new data, along with any additional information the Commission would like to review. Staff Member Murphy mentioned data from the community conversations on race and economic opportunity could be included in the presentation.

Commissioner Zobac stated that she appreciated the opportunity for conversation after the data was presented because each commissioner has a different perspective. That conversation allows for a broadened scope of perspective. Commissioner Kolditz agreed with Commissioner Zobac's statement that that conversation went well and had a positive impact on broadening their perspective.

Chairperson Rakoff clarified that the next regular commission meeting is held in April, 2017. Staff Member Murphy stated that she and Staff Member Reed could acquire the data that the Commission has requested for a presentation at the April meeting.

Commissioner Kirchhofer requested a summary of how the survey was evaluated last year. Staff Member Murphy and Commissioner Davies explained that the Commissioners rank their top five priority areas by their personal level of importance. The scores are then weighted and combined for the total scores ranked by the Commission. Commissioner Zobac appreciates the discussion following the survey results, so the Commission can be mindful of overlapping public services.

B. 2018 Public Service Application and Evaluation Process

Staff Member Murphy explained this discussion could clarify if the grantees should only count CDBG funded participants. Another discussion point would be deciding if the Commission should be allowed to edit the applicants’ logic models, or set minimum outcome expectations. Limiting the number of applications per organization is another topic that has been mentioned by the Commission previously.
Commissioner Elsamny brought to light that he previously mentioned the necessity of examining the other funding sources of each organization in addition to the data provided by Staff Member Murphy. This process could help the Commission determine the “neediest” Public Service applicants.

Commissioner Zobac asked for clarification on Commissioner Elsamny’s definition of “need”. Commissioner Elsamny explained that his perspective on the situation is an already funded organization may not benefit from CDBG’s additional funds nearly as much as an organization that does not receive funding from other sources.

Commissioner Davies chimed in to express her concern that at that point the Commission starts picking winners and losers. Commissioner Davies believes that the Commission does not have enough information from each organization to determine who is the “neediest”, and by doing so, they would be trying to determine something that the Commission should not do.

Commissioner Elsamny suggested adding another section to address this in the application. Staff Member Murphy explained that each applicant is already required to provide audits, which are reviewed by Staff. Financial mismanagement may disqualify applicants from receiving federal funds.

Commissioner Bond pointed out that the applicants’ budgets are on the application already. Chairperson Rakoff said she would like to dig deeper into the organizations' budgets due to one organization that did not include their full funding report in the past. Chairperson Rakoff and Commissioner Davies recommended adding a question to the budget page of the application to provide information on the percentage of the organization’s total budget that is funded by the Public Service grant.

Staff Member Murphy reviews the evaluation process. The high and low evaluation scores are thrown out, the remaining scores are averaged to determine how the public services are ranked among the Commission. Monitoring visits and clarification meetings are mandatory for each applicant.

Commissioner Davies expressed her concern with how the organizations determine their outcomes. She explained that some organizations include maintained results to their outcomes, which conflicts with her belief that only improved results should be included. This belief is highly motivated by the lack of funds available.

Commissioner Oakford mentioned another point of view, that some people need role models. The people that maintain their results and are funded by public service can motivate someone else to improve their results.

Commissioner Davies addresses the responsibility that the Commission has to use the tax payer dollars effectively. Commissioner Zobac adds that the Commission has a responsibility to evaluate and balance effectiveness and value.

C. Commission Vacancy

Chairperson Rakoff announced her resignation as the Chairperson of the Advisory Commission on Human Resources.
Chairperson Rakoff reminds the Commission that the previous Vice Chairman, Josh Moore, resigned last year. The Commission will assign a Chair and Vice Chair at the next meeting.

Staff Member Murphy informs the Commission that the Mayor is looking to fill all (two) openings in the Commission.

Staff Member Murphy announced the next meeting will be Friday, May 19th. The June meeting will be moved back one week to Friday, June 23rd due to staff travel.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**

Chairperson Rakoff motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Bond. The motion was approved unanimously viva voce vote 8 to 0. The meeting was adjourned @ 9:28 a.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

[Signature]

Dakota Reed