The Special Meeting was held by Human Resources Commission (HRC) in Room 420 at Twin Towers, 123 SW Jefferson Avenue, Peoria, Illinois, on August 9, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. Vice Chairperson Patrick Kirchhofer called the meeting to order @ 8:31 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll called showed the following Commissioners were present: Catherine Cross, Lisa Fuller, Patrick Kirchhofer, Farrell Davies, Alexander Ikejiaku, Brittney Ferrero, Meiosha Zobas, and Shandra Bond. Absent were Jessica Zobac, Mark Brown, Brett Kolditz, and Janice Zagardo.

Council Liaison Present: Councilwoman Moore

Staff present: Kathryn Murphy and Abigail Youngblood

MINUTES

The minutes for the November 2, 2018 meeting were reviewed.

MOTION:

Commissioner Kirchoffer moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ferrero. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 8-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. HUD Consolidated Plan Presentation and Discussion

Staff Member Murphy gave a presentation on the HUD Consolidation Plan.

Commissioner Bond arrived at 8:34 a.m.

Commissioner Kirchhofer inquired about the amount of CDGB money that is allocated to public service. Staff Member Murphy explained to the Commission public service only receives 15% of the $1.7 million which is $265,000 per year because it is capped at 15%.

Commissioner Davies requested the eligibility for affordable housing include data regarding families as well as individuals because she was concerned it did not show the desperation of the housing situation accurately enough. Staff Member Murphy stated she would work on obtaining that data.

Commissioner Kirchhofer inquired about who makes the decisions on how CBDG funding is spent. Staff Member Murphy explained it is a variety of different methods, with the past five years being projects in the 2014 Consolidated Plan. She explained the survey is being used to receive feedback from the community on how to use funding the next five years by creating programs for the next Consolidated Plan.

Commissioner Kirchhofer questioned who decided the Dream Center received $400,000 and how many Code Enforcement Inspectors were hired. Staff Member Murphy explained it was staff and City Council’s decision with City Council having the final decision on all funding allocations.

Staff Member Murphy informed the Commission the Salvation Army closed its day drop in shelter due to a lack of HUD funding and there became a need in the community for a shelter that homeless citizens could go to during the day. Both the Salvation Army and the Dream Center became facilities that are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Due to this, significant rehabilitation was needed. As this is an eligible CDBG
activity, a notice of funding availability was released for shelter renovations. This decision involved the City Council, the City Manager, and the County.

Commissioner Davies inquired about how Peoria’s quality affordable housing compares to other communities such as Rockford. Staff Member Murphy explained she recently attended a meeting with regional HUD recipients that are comparable to the size of Peoria and during their discussions they discovered many comparable communities are in similar situations with older homes in the community.

Commissioner Davies questioned if they had any discussion regarding livable wage for those at the hourly level through economic development and was concerned that houses were being built that could not be afforded. Staff Member Murphy explained there had been discussions about utilizing the economic development opportunity in CDBG. Businesses that have been spoken with were concerned about following regulations when using federal funds and if a business receives more than $2,500 you must pay prevailing wage and follow Davis Bacon. Staff Member Murphy explained with CDBG funding they can work towards trying to get people trained for better employment utilizing the economic development funding.

Councilwomen Dennis Moore arrived at 9:03 a.m.

Councilwomen Moore invited Staff Member Murphy to the send the information to the Fair Housing Commission for them to discuss impediments related to employment and economic development since there are only a small amount of people who apply for training funds due to audit requirements. Councilwomen Moore suggested being more proactive by reaching out to groups to help them understand the benefits of being a program under a large organization.

Commissioner Kirchhofer asked if any CDBG funding had been used for demolition purposes. Staff Member Murphy responded CDBG funding has been used for demolition in the past. However, there is a limit on how much can be spent on demolition due to regulations that a certain percentage must directly benefit low income individuals and demolition does not directly benefit them according to HUD.

Commissioner Kirchhofer inquired about a business receiving more than $2,500 in funding they must pay prevailing wage and questioned what prevailing wage was. Staff Member Murphy explained prevailing wage is set by the State or Federal government depending on job classification. More information regarding Illinois prevailing wage can be found on Illinois State Prevailing Wage Determinations.

Councilwomen Moore added in the East Bluff new homes were built on Barron Street and because of prevailing wage requirements it would require an addition $50,000-$60,000 per home. Therefore, homes are not being built because of the additional cost when using federal funds.

Commissioner Davies noted the need for paying decent wages for individuals to be able to afford the houses being build. Commissioner Davies added prevailing wage is not only required at the State level but the Federal level also. Councilwomen Moore stated with CDBG funding the City must work within the perimeters provided understanding that they can be limiting.

Staff Member Murphy ended the presentation and encouraged Commissioners the opportunity to complete a survey to provide feedback regarding priorities in areas that were not discussed. Staff Member Murphy added there had been over 500 responses to the survey from the public and the survey was to end August 23, 2019.

Commission Kirchhofer questioned if surveys were direct mailed to the general public. Staff Member Murphy explained communication had been done electronically through social media, issues updates, and email to social service agency partners in hopes to access their clients. Staff will also be attending a soup kitchen and food pantry to help people take the surveys. Forty-five surveys were also taken at PCCEO and meetings are arranged at the East Bluff and the Friendship House.

Commissioner Ikejuku expressed concerns about the digital divide. Staff Member Murphy agreed and added that staff was also going out into the community such as at the Dream Center Backpack Giveaway event and other community events to gain input with physical copies of the survey. Councilwomen Moore
added staff was at the Southside Community United for Change Neighborhood Association meeting and the presentation was provided.

B. Citizen Comments

A public hearing was held to allow for citizens to address the HUD Consolidated Plan. Upon three calls for comments, the public hearing was closed with no comments.

C. Other Business

Commissioner Kirchhofer informed the Commission that Chairman Jessica Zobac has resigned due to personal reasons. The Commission thanked her for her service and wished her well.

There was discussion regarding the nomination for a new chairperson of the Commission.

MOTION:

Commissioner Davies nominated Commissioner Kirchhofer for Chairperson. Commissioner Fuller seconded. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 9-0.

MOTION:

Commissioner Davies nominated Commissioner Shandra Bond for Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Ferrero seconded. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 9-0.

Commissioner Bond inquired about when the next scheduled meeting was. Commissioner Kirchhofer reported it was scheduled for November 1, 2019 at 8:30. The meeting will be held in City Hall Room 404. It will be an extended meeting for clarification lasting approximately half a day.

Staff Member Murphy reminded the Commission about the opportunity to attend monitoring visits of the funded organizations. Commissioner Kirchhofer added going on a visit was a good way to learn about the citizens they are serving. Staff Member Murphy offered if the time of the monitoring visit does not work, to reach out to the agency and schedule a tour.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Commissioner Bond moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ikejuaku. Approved unanimously by viva voce vote 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by:

Abigail Youngblood