



**AGENDA**  
**Housing & Homelessness Commission**  
**Thursday, October 1, 2020**  
**Virtually, 7:00 PM**

*As the result of an executive order issued by Governor J.B. Pritzker suspending in-person attendance requirements for public meetings, the Housing and Homelessness Commission members and City staff will be participating in this meeting remotely. Due to public health concerns, residents will not be able to provide public comments in-person at the meeting. Those wishing to make public comments may submit written comments or sign up to provide public comments by phone or video during the meeting via the public comment form, or by calling/texting meeting by 847-448-4311.*

Public comment form: <https://tinyurl.com/ycv36ne7>

Community members may watch the Housing and Homelessness Commission meeting:

**Online through the Zoom platform:**

<https://zoom.us/j/97541776004?pwd=WWV4Yy9YenA5Z3p1ZUVlVGVVVWhVdz09>

Password: 605917

**Or join by phone:**

Dial US: +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 975 4177 6004 Password: 605917

**Order & Agenda Items are subject to change.** Information about the Housing and Homelessness Commission is available at: [www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes](http://www.cityofevanston.org/government/agendas-minutes). Questions may be directed to Sarah Flax at 847.448.8684.

*The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Any citizen needing mobility or communications access assistance should contact Sarah Flax at 847.448.8684. La ciudad de*

*Evanston está obligada a hacer accesibles todas las reuniones públicas a las personas minusválidas o las quines no hablan inglés. Si usted necesita ayuda, favor de ponerse en contacto con la Oficina de Administración del Centro a 847/866-2916 (voz) o 847/448-8052 (TDD)*

**1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

**2. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES**

Members participating electronically or by telephone

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

- A. September, 3 meeting minutes 3 -5  
[hmc-minutes-20200903-DRAFT](#)

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**5. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- A. 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant Recommendation 6 - 8  
[BCC Memorandum-Community Development-Attachment - Pdf](#)

**6. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. Staff update:
- Evergreen project
  - HODC Accessory Dwelling Unit
  - CARES Act update

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

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## MEETING MINUTES

### HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION

Thursday, September 3, 2020 7:00 P.M.  
Remotely via Zoom

**Present:** Chair Larry Donoghue, Monika Bobo, Kathy Feingold, Moika Long, Ald. Eleanor Revelle, Renee Phillips.

**Absent:** Ellen Cushing

**Staff:** Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Manager, Marion Johnson, Housing and Grants Intern

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#### **Call to Order/Declaration of a Quorum**

Chair Donoghue called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM with a quorum present.

#### **Suspension of the rules**

Ald. Revelle moved suspension of the rules to allow for members to participate electronically or by phone. Moika Long seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Larry Donoghue requested the correction of a grammatical error in the minutes. Renee Phillips requested the correction of the spelling of a resident's name in the public comment section. Ald. Revelle moved approval of the July 9, 2020 minutes with corrections, Renee Phillips seconded the motion. The minutes were approved on a 5-0 vote.

#### **Renewal Contract for Landlord-Tenant Services with Metropolitan Tenants Organization and Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing for October 1, 2020 - December 31, 2021**

Staff presented the summary report of Landlord Tenant services provided by Metropolitan Tenants Organization/Lawyers Committee for Better Housing over the last contract year, including the number of cases handled this year compared to last year and the increase seen in inquiries from tenants as a result of COVID-19. Staff provided an overview of the renewal of funding for tenant and landlord services including the change to a 15-months term to align the contract year to the calendar year to simplify reporting, as well as a 10% increase in the monthly for the base scope of services as a result of the increase in the number of cases to be handled. The likely increase in activity resulting from the expiration of eviction moratoriums such as the State or CDC moratorium (currently set to end at the end of 2020) were also discussed.

John Bartlett, Executive Director of Metropolitan Tenants Organization (MTO) provided some background on the landlord tenant services provided and their proposal to continue administering it. He shared some of the issues that have come up due to

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COVID-19 such as when a landlord may enter a rented unit, breaking leases, eviction questions, and issues around maintenance repairs being delayed or deferred. Mr. Bartlett shared that the ability to support tenants and small landlords through the various challenges was crucial. Larger landlords, he explained, have been able to quickly respond to the application requirements for various rental assistance programs and to reach out to their tenants, and may benefit disproportionately from these programs as a result. His organization is concerned about the potential loss of small landlords as they tend to provide a higher percentage of affordable housing.

Ms. Feingold asked whether a 10% increase was enough to cover the increase in cases (currently at close to 15%). Staff shared that the increase was taking into account both the increase in cases as well as the economy of scale presented by a larger number of cases being handled. Mr. Bartlett confirmed the amount requested would cover the services proposed in the base scope of services.

Mr. Donoghue asked why additional billable services such as tenant organizing, mediation, and legal services had not been utilized much last year. Mr. Bartlett shared that due to the eviction moratorium in place since March, MTO has provided guidance and advice over the phone and via emails that are part of the base scope of services but had not provided formal mediations between a landlord and tenant. Mr. Swartz from Lawyers Committee for Better Housing shared that while legal consultations and pre-litigation work was moving forward, due to the closing of courts, the majority of litigation work is on hold and LCBH has not represented clients in court during the contract period.

Alderman Revelle asked how many work hours do 30-40 cases a month represent. Mr. Bartlett responded that each call is very different and the hours worked vary depending on the situation. Some calls can be a simple conversation to clarify tenants and landlord rights and email a draft letter. Others require more staff hours and include multiple calls and/or emails, as well as working with the tenant to reassure them.

Alderman Revelle suggested MTO join the committee again early next year or after the eviction crisis to share additional feedback.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Feingold moved approval of the funding request, Alderman Revelle seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

**Staff Reports**

Staff gave an update on the status of the Evergreen project: sharing that the process had been slowed down due to COVID-19. Building plans have been approved, but due to delays in the subsidy layering approval by HUD, the closing deadline has been extended until October 31, 2020.

Staff shared that the review of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) at 1930 Jackson Ave is underway and that the Emerson, a new mixed-income building for adults 55+ was currently being proposed by the Housing Authority of Cook County on the Perlman site that would provide very low-income units (up to 50% AMI) as well as “missing middle”

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units that are not commonly being constructed in TOD areas, as well as market rate units that would be competitive with other independent senior (55+) housing options. Staff also shared that the 1900 Sherman building proposal was moving along through the administrative process, and if approved, would provide additional affordable housing units without funding required from the City.

**New/Other Business**

No new or other business.

**Public comment**

Tina Paden asked for more information on the funding provided to the development project at the corner of Chicago Avenue and Howard Street in Evanston and the number of affordable units. Staff shared that the building was approved in 2018 but the plan for a ground floor retail garden center had changed, potentially slowing down the start of construction. Staff also shared that public funding for this project was from the TIF, not the Affordable Housing Fund.

Tina Paden also commented that Chicago had released several million dollars to help rehab affordable housing units and asked whether Evanston would do the same. Staff shared that Chicago, as a large city, had received significant additional CARES Act funding which Evanston did not receive. Staff also shared that CPAH would be administering a rehab assistance program for owner-occupied units but launch of that program was delayed due to the need to assist renters applying for the various Emergency Rental Assistance program which recently closed.

**Adjournment**

There being no more business before the commission, Alderman Reville moved to adjourn, Ms. Feingold seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously at 8:12 PM.

The next scheduled meeting of the Commission is Thursday, October 1st, at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marion Johnson, Housing and Grants Intern



## Memorandum

To: Members of the Housing and Homelessness Commission  
From: Sarah Flax, Housing & Grants Administrator  
CC: Marion Johnson, Housing & Grants Intern, Jessica Wingader, Grants & Compliance Specialist  
Subject: 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant Recommendation  
Date: October 1, 2020

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### Summary:

Staff recommends approval by the Housing and Homelessness Commission of 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) allocations totaling \$158,463: \$146,579 to two social services agencies (Connections for the Homeless and the YWCA Evanston/North Shore) that provide housing and services for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and \$11,884 to the City of Evanston for grant administration. The recommendation by the Housing and Homelessness will go to the Planning & Development Committee at the October 12, 2020 meeting and, if approved, move to City Council on October 12, 2020.

Funding source is the City's 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant entitlement allocation in the amount of \$158,463 from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development; account 250.21.2128.XXXXX with individual account numbers for external agencies funded and City administrative costs.

ESG funding will be used for the following eligible activities: essential services/street outreach, operating expenses of homeless shelters, rapid re-housing for homeless households, homeless prevention for households at high risk of homelessness, and program administration as outlined in the 2020 Action Plan, which was approved by City Council on April 13, 2020. This recommendation allocates specific dollar amounts to subrecipients for all direct services.

The City of Evanston's 2020 ESG grant is \$158,463; the 2020 recommendation maintains 10% of funding for Street Outreach and 32.5% of funding for Emergency Shelter operations as allowed under ESG regulations. In keeping with HUD's goal of prioritizing Rapid Re-Housing to implement the Housing First strategy of the Federal Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 that reauthorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 40% of funding is allocated to that activity and 10% for Homeless Prevention. The table below shows the 2019 ESG allocation of funds to

eligible activities, which reflect an increase in Rapid Re-Housing based on eligible clients, and the recommendation for 2020. Funding may be shifted between Prevention and Rapid Re-housing during program implementation to assist households that are eligible for each activity, if needed. Rapid Re-housing is funded at a higher level than Prevention, following federal priorities. The chart below shows the 2019 allocation based on greater need for rapid re-housing funds. The 2020 recommendation is based on this trend.

Eligible Activities	2019 Allocation		2020 Recommendation	
Street Outreach	\$ 14,602	10.0%	\$ 15,846	10.0%
Emergency Shelter	\$ 47,458	32.5%	\$ 51,500	32.5%
Homeless Prevention	\$ 14,903	10.2%	\$ 15,847	10.0%
Rapid Re-housing	\$ 58,108	39.8%	\$ 63,386	40.0%
Administration	\$ 10,952	7.5%	\$ 11,884	7.5%
Totals:	\$ 146,023	100.0%	\$ 158,463	100.0%

Staff recommends funding Connections for the Homeless and the YWCA Evanston/North Shore through subrecipient agreements to provide direct services consistent with the 2020 ESG allocation. Both agencies are members of the Suburban Cook County Continuum of Care, have the programmatic capacity to implement ESG activities and the administrative capacity to comply with federal regulations. The City will retain ESG Administration funds for program management and compliance.

Connections for the Homeless – \$15,846 for its Street Outreach program; \$36,500 for operating support of Hilda’s Place, its Emergency Shelter; \$15,847 for Homeless Prevention rent and utility assistance and case management; and \$63,386 for Rapid Re-housing rental assistance; total funding of \$131,579.

Hilda’s Place provides housing for single adults who may be chronically homeless or have lost housing because of unemployment, eviction, foreclosure, etc. ESG funds are used for operating expenses of the shelter including rent, repairs, maintenance, and supplies. Connections also provides services including case management and meals to residents of Hilda’s Place, and to clients of its street outreach program. Case workers help clients find employment and receive benefits such as Supplemental Social Security and Social Security Disability Insurance. Medical services are provided through a weekly in-house clinic and clients are referred to Erie Family Health Center, mental health providers and support programs for health services, including mental health and substance abuse. ESG funds are used for case workers and other program staff salaries and benefits.

Connections for the Homeless also provides Re-housing and Prevention services. Funds are used for direct assistance in the form of rent and utilities payments, as well as case management, housing location and stabilization services.

YWCA Evanston-North Shore - \$15,000 for operating support of its 34-bed shelter facility that provides safe housing for up to 90 days for women and children who are victims of domestic

violence. The YWCA provides case management, legal advocacy, crisis intervention, financial literacy and other services to help clients develop independence and self-sufficiency. The YWCA will provide housing, meals and supportive services to an estimated 140 women and children in its DV shelter in 2020. ESG funds will be used for essential supplies such as food for women and children staying in the shelter, and other operating costs. In FY2019 597 eligible clients were turned away because the shelter was full; highlighting the need for this essential service.

City staff participates in the client review committee for Re-housing and Prevention activities to ensure all requirements are met and procedures followed, including the appeal process for individuals or households deemed ineligible for services.

Evanston's 2020 ESG funds will be matched on a one-to-one basis with Mental Health Board funds from the City's Human Services Fund, State of Illinois funding and private resources, including in-kind contributions, to meet the requirement for ESG.