



APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION

Thursday, October 1, 2020 7:00 P.M.

Remotely via Zoom

Present: Chair Larry Donoghue, Monika Bobo, Moika Long, Ald. Eleanor Revelle, Renee Phillips, Ellen Cushing

Absent: Kathy Feingold

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

Call to Order/Declaration of a Quorum

Chair Donoghue called the meeting to order at 7:07 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 Bobo seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Renee Phillips moved approval of the September 3, 2020 minutes. Ald. Revelle seconded the motion. The minutes were approved on a 4-0 vote, with Ellen Cushing and Monika Bobo abstaining.

2020 Emergency Solutions Grant Recommendation

Staff presented the 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant recommendation to be used for essential services/street outreach, operating expenses of homeless shelters, rapid rehousing for homeless households, homeless prevention for households at high risk of homelessness, and program administration, for a total of \$158,463.

Ms. Long asked what type of outreach was performed. Staff answered that it was street outreach and outreach in hotels performed by Connections for the Homeless and performed over the medium to long term.

Ms. Phillips asked whether there was a potential for this funding to overlap with other monies. Staff shared that subrecipients have a no duplication of benefits policy set up to verify that recipients do not get duplicate benefits for the same expenses. Having a Continuum of Care agency handling all requests ensures a better process around duplication of benefits.

Ms. Phillips also asked whether case management was already funded from other sources as well. Staff shared that with an increased influx of requests and additional funding for rapid rehousing came additional case management needs. Current funding provided does not cover the actual full need when it comes to case management needs.

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These needs are also likely to stretch into the long-term as the rapid rehousing cases are for 12 months periods.

Chair Donoghue remarked that the 2020 ESG funding available went up 8%, which was a welcome surprise. Staff shared that the ESG funding formula is linked to the CDBG funds formula. In 2020, CDBG and ESG funding went up but HOME funding went down

There being no further discussion, Ald. Revelle moved approval of the funding request, Ms. Cushing seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0.

Staff Reports

Staff gave an update on the status of the Evergreen project: closing is scheduled for the week of October 4 with the transfer stamps being one of the last steps.

Staff shared that the review of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) at 1930 Jackson Ave is underway with final approval needed before construction starts. Staff also shared the recent approval of revised ADU code allowing more cost-saving design such as internal ADUs and allowing for additional height.

Staff also shared the work in progress regarding a rent assistance program using CARES Act funding and potentially based on the Urban Institute Emergency Rental Assistance Priority Index, which takes several factors and data points in considering such as housing instability risk, the potential for COVID-19 impact and the equity index. Staff is also keeping in mind smaller landlords in building this program and hoping to target both at-risk tenants as well as landlords through this rental assistance.

New/Other Business

No new or other business.

Public comment

Tina Paden asked who residents should contact when there is a homeless person or person in need spotted in the City. Staff suggested reaching out to Connections for the Homeless so their outreach team can get in touch. Ms. Paden also asked for an update on the homeowner rehabilitation program. Staff shared that Community Partners for Affordable Housing were awarded a grant from the State and was currently focused on the rental and mortgage assistance program and likely needs time to set up the program. Ms. Paden also asked for clarification on the current eviction moratoriums. As of the meeting date, the State of Illinois moratorium was set to end on October 22, 2020, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) moratorium is set to end December 31, 2020. The CDC moratorium is national but is currently challenged in courts. The State of Illinois moratorium is broader with fewer restrictions.

Ms. Cushing asked whether there was an update on the Affordable Housing Steering Committee (AHSC). Staff reported that they would be sharing the Millenia Consulting reporting that was completed right before the stay-at-home order started in the Spring, with the AHSC first. Staff also shared that with everyone being overstretched addressing immediate and future COVID-19 needs, and without a clear view on what the future looks

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like, efforts have been put on hold on this committee. Needs have changed dramatically due to COVID-19 and the associated lifestyle changes (work from home, need for space, etc.). There is a need for a better grasp on what trends will be staying before making long term plans around housing.

Adjournment

There being no more business before the commission, Ellen Cushing moved to adjourn, Ald. Revelle seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously at 8:19 PM.

The next scheduled meeting of the Commission is Thursday, November 5th, at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion Johnson, Housing and Economic Development Analyst