



AGENDA
Social Services Committee
Thursday, April 13, 2023
Virtual 7:00 PM

Pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/7€(2), SSC members and City staff will be participating in this meeting remotely. It has been determined that in-person meeting of the City's Boards, Commissions, and Committees are not practical or prudent due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Accordingly, the Social Services Committee may be convened, and members may attend by means other than physical presence consistent with 5 ILCS 120/7. Residents will not be able to provide public comment in-person at the meeting. Those wishing to make public comments at the Social Services Committee may submit written comments in advance or sign up to provide public comment by phone or video during the meeting by completing the Social Services Committee online comment form available by [clicking here](#) or visiting the [Social Services Committee webpage](#): and clicking on Public Comment Form.

Community members may watch the SSC meeting online through the Zoom platform: Please click this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83961283626?pwd=STdURINmaGxsY0Rld3FhVmJNYVVPZz09>

Passcode: 741501 Or join by phone:

Dial US: +1 312 626 6799

Webinar ID: 839 6128 3626 Passcode: 741501

Page

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. [March 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes](#) 3 - 4

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

5. NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Best Practices and Assessment Measures** 5 - 25

This memo will summarize best practices in provision of social work case management services, the general criteria used to assess provision of case management and safety net service, and criteria specific to each category. Incorporated into the overview, staff also describes how this information was captured and presented in prior years and suggests ways of restructuring reports and as a starting point to the applications evaluation process discussion.

N/A

For Discussion

[Best Practices and Assessment Measures - Attachment - Pdf](#)

- B. **Assessment of Third Party Ranking Organizations** 26 - 28

This memo will summarize the largest third party charity rating organizations, outline how agencies are measured, and offer an assessment of rating strengths and gaps.

N/A

For Discussion

[Assessment of Third Party Ranking Organizations - Attachment - Pdf](#)

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. ADJOURNMENT



Draft

MEETING MINUTES
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 9, 2023 7:00 PM

Social Services Committee

Members Present: S. Olds Frey, D. Ohanian, A. Ngola, K. Rolling, Councilmember Burns

Members Absent: Councilmember Reid, K. Hayes, S. Lackey

Staff Present: S. Flax, M. Johnson, J. Wingader

Call to Order / Declaration of Quorum

Chair Olds Frey called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Suspension of the Rules

Vice Chair Ohanian moved approval to suspend rules to allow for participation electronically or by phone, seconded by Mr. Rolling; a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for January 19, 2023

Mr. Rolling moved approval of the meeting minutes for January 19, 2023, seconded by Vice Chair Ohanian; a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Application and Report Review Process for Case Management and Safety Net Services

Staff summarized the history of the staff/community engagement and legislative processes that shaped the new allocation process, objectives, and intended community impact goals for the three funding categories. The presentation also defined case management and safety net services metrics and information captured in application and report summaries provided by staff.

There was discussion about the goal of support services, to provide rapid access to counseling at no cost to participants, and how the community engagement process was also used to identify mental health as a needed service. There was further review of how holistic case management services work to help participants obtain additional community support services. Members also discussed safety net services; Chair Olds Frey requested staff provide a more robust analysis of performance measures for both categories. There was discussion about ways to present agency performance information. Staff presented templates that could be used for reporting information about case management and safety net services.

Draft

There was additional discussion about use of different review processes including the ZoomGrants score tool or a rubric, formation of working groups to review applications, and the ability to review applications across multiple meetings. Members talked about the importance of having a shared framework when reviewing services, potential inclusion of analysis from third party rating systems, and ways for members to share experience and areas of expertise to better analyze applications. Councilmember Burns spoke to the importance of incentivising strong outcomes, standardized reporting to best capture long-term community impact, and supporting agencies that may lack capacity to comply with recordkeeping requirements. Members also discussed ways to transparently evaluate services while avoiding misrepresenting or misinterpreting outcomes. Councilmember Burns spoke to the importance of standardized criteria and accurate communication of expectations.

Chair Olds Frey requested a working group to review criteria; many members expressed interest in participating and the Committee agreed to carry the discussion to the April agenda so that all could participate. Chair Olds Frey talked about the importance of defining priorities and standards to provide transparency to applicants; she suggested a one-page summary to help facilitate discussion, and encouraged members to send review suggestions to staff. Councilmember Burns also encouraged members to provide more feedback to staff. Staff agreed to send review information, including application and score questions, to the Committee for review. Councilmember Burns requested staff provide information about best practices and explore review tools used by other communities. Staff provided additional information about the timeframe for establishing the review process and measures for the two categories prior to the next application cycle. Members confirmed that metrics would be discussed at the April meeting which will be held virtually. Staff noted that the May meeting would be in person.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Wingader
Senior Grants and Compliance Specialist



Memorandum

To: Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Jessica Wingader, Social Services Grants & Compliance Specialist
CC: Sarah Flax, Community Development Director, Marion Johnson,
Housing & Grants Supervisor
Subject: Best Practices and Assessment Measures
Date: April 13, 2023

Recommended Action:

This memo will summarize best practices in provision of social work case management services, the general criteria used to assess provision of case management and safety net service, and criteria specific to each category. Incorporated into the overview, staff also describes how this information was captured and presented in prior years and suggests ways of restructuring reports and as a starting point to the applications evaluation process discussion.

Funding Source:

n/a

CARP:

Vulnerable Populations

Committee Action:

For Discussion

Summary:

Best Practices - Case Management Services

Case management services address the needs of vulnerable populations including people/households experiencing homelessness or domestic violence, seniors working to age in place, disconnected or opportunity youth, and those working to recover from substance misuse. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) defined ten [standards for social work case management](#) approved by the NASW Board in 1992. These standards have been recognized as best practice by the largest providers of services to and research about vulnerable populations including the American Association of Retired Persons ([AARP](#)), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#)), the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and [U.S. Department of Labor](#). Other municipalities that fund case management providers may have nuanced ways of assessing services, but little deviation when reviewing

the provision of case management services. The bullet points below summarize the NASW case management requirements; these requirements are also captured in ZoomGrants applications and score questions:

- Case managers should carry case loads that are reasonable and allow them to plan and provide client-specific services and interventions
- Participants should be involved in all phases of service, specifically the creation of the service plan and goal completion
- Case managers should have knowledge of community resources and supports,
- Case managers should have the ability to coordinate and document delivery of direct services
- Case managers should have the ability to measure effectiveness of services and offer additional interventions as needed until the participant achieves self-sufficiency/completes service plan

More information about criteria gathered and the methods used to measure successful outcomes is provided in the Assessment of Case Management Services section below.

General Criteria and Past Evaluation Measures

In prior application cycles, using the ZoomGrants score feature and in report summaries, staff provided the following information regardless of category:

- Number of residents vs total population served
- Target population served and types of supports provided
- Capacity and demand including waitlists, timeliness of service provision, and number of participants enrolled and exited over the program/funding period
- Financial information including current and prior year request/award, award proportion of program budget, and audit information
- Compliance with programmatic and financial reporting requirements

To give Committee members a complete understanding of the way the information above has been historically captured for both categories, staff provided Attachments A & B. Attachment A includes the ZoomGrants description, application questions, Committee score questions and Administrative score questions, for case management and safety net, to show how information is captured and scored in ZoomGrants. The ZoomGrants application questions that correlate with each score question are identified in parentheses. Attachment B is an updated application/report summary sheet template based on documents provided in the past.

To assist with the evaluation process, staff grouped the information captured and reported under the key performance indicators (KPIs) listed below:

- Services to Target Populations
- Best Practices (case management)/Services Provided (safety net)
- Cost Reasonableness & Budget
- Administrative Review (Staff)
 - Administration
 - Program Reporting
 - Performance

- Cost Reasonableness

Current key performance indicators documented through the application process, included in the ZoomGrants score questions, and reflected in staff summaries are indicated in the attachments. The criteria used to assess applications and performance under both categories is based on the equity goals established for funding external partners which were reviewed and approved by the Rules Committee and City Council. Information gathered in past allocation cycles shows how applicants align with the equity goals and considerable deviation would require Council approval.

The criteria specific to each category (Best Practices for case management and Services Provided for safety net) are defined in the memo sections below. The Public Services Evaluation form provided for both categories (Attachment C), also lists ZoomGrants score questions under specific performance indicators.

Assessment of Case Management Services

The case management application and score questions focus on capturing the following:

- Service to target populations, outreach/engagement efforts, and demand for services
- Staff capacity, caseloads, and approved service delivery methods
- Staff diversity and professional development
- Creation of client-centered service plans, engagement, and recordkeeping
- Provision of referrals and documentation of services needed to reach stability

The information specific to case management detailed in the Best Practices KPI in the Public Services Evaluation form and the Template Report Summary form include the number of service plans created and completed, referral information and connections to other agency-specific or community-based services, as well as any changes to key program staff or budgets.

Assessment of Safety Net Services

The safety net application and score questions focus on capturing the following:

- Description of services provided and how services stabilize households
- Capacity to meet demand, consistency of services and service delivery
- Network of community partners, referral systems (if applicable) and provision of additional supports
- Estimated number of participants served and description of target population
- Estimated quantity of services provided in type of service, amount or hours

The information specific to these services is represented under the Safety Net Services KPI and identified in attachments B and C. There is an additional KPI unique to safety net services titled "Performance" which indicates an applicant's ability to connect participants to additional services, collaborate with other service providers, and achieve goals.

The equity goal of safety net services is to invest in residents negatively impacted by institutionally racist practices and historically marginalized populations and support vulnerable populations recovering from the pandemic. There is an overlap between those groups and the services needed. Services included: support for people/households experiencing

homelessness, provision of food, support for youth, seniors, and people working through substance misuse. Staff continues to evaluate community needs using the information provided by case management partners in applications and quarterly reports.

A key part of the allocation process for safety net services would include more specifically defining priorities, to focus funding when financial resources are not matching with agency requests. The Committee could choose to hold a future discussion to further define priorities for safety net services.

Finally, while the existing application evaluation process has been updated to align to core KPIs, the weight of each category is the same. The Committee may choose to discuss how each criteria or KPI should weigh in the evaluation process to best align with the intent of the program. Careful consideration and testing should be given to weighing decisions and the potential unintended consequences associated with them.

Attachments:

[Attachment A. ZoomGrants Application and Score Information](#)

[Attachment B. Template Report Summary](#)

[Attachment C. Public Services Evaluation](#)

Case Management Application Description

CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES address the needs of at-risk residents, primarily lower income individuals and families. Case management services provide a single point of accountability for coordination of services and are comprehensive to address the complex needs of the populations served. Case management includes the documentation of services and progress, regular meetings with participants, and connections to additional supports to ensure self-sufficiency and wellness. Guidelines for case management services eligible for funding:

- Develop client-centered service plans in partnership with the client that have specific, measurable outcomes with strategies and timeframes to achieve them, and document provision of needed support services.
- Include regular meetings between clients and case managers on a defined schedule to monitor progress. Meeting frequency is anticipated to vary based on stability of client/household. Frequent meetings and based on the client's progress become less frequent "check in" meetings that ensure continued support, with quarterly or bi-annual reviews and modifications of service plans as needed.
- Connect clients to needed support services, and access federal, state, local and private benefits for which they are eligible such as Medicaid, SNAP, WIC, SSI/SSDI, and TANF. Case managers help clients gather documentation and complete applications. Referrals/connections to support services, including those funded with MHB/CDBG, are documented and tracked in participant case files.
- Have written policies and procedures for case plans including defining goals, setting timeframes and deadlines to meet objectives, and documenting referrals/support services, with caseload averages of ≤ 25 clients. Progress notes or case notes are maintained and included in participant files and document frequency of meetings, types and duration of services and outcomes achieved.
- Enroll at least 30% of total participants as new Evanston clients during a 12-month period, and Evanston clients comprise at least 80% of total clients.

To be eligible for funding, a program must meet the CDBG National Objective of benefiting primarily low- and moderate-income persons (family income does not exceed 80% of the area median income). This may be established in two ways: 1) Limited Clientele - income data are collected from all program participants and 51% or more are income eligible or 2) Presumed Eligible includes abused children, battered spouses or homeless. Priorities for funding include case management programs that work with populations identified as high needs in the most recent Action Plan: low- and moderate-income Evanston residents, particularly historically underserved people, including people of color, ability to take referrals from City staff and other community partners, and deliver services efficiently and effectively. Applications will be evaluated based on the ability to provide robust case management services to at-risk populations. All applications will be reviewed using an equity lens.

Case Management Application Questions

1. How do individuals or households with complex needs get enrolled in your case management services? Are participants referred by other entities (school social workers, police departments, other social service agencies)? If so, what percentage of new clients are referrals and what are main referral sources?
2. Describe how agency/staff engage underrepresented populations and how City funds would improve equity of service delivery and/or expand capacity to underserved populations.
3. Are you turning people who are eligible away? If so, how many and why? Does the agency maintain a wait list, and if so, approximately how many people are on it?
4. Does demand fluctuate throughout the year? If so, please explain.
5. Who participates in or benefits from the case management relationship? Describe participants in terms of age, gender, race/ethnicity, family status, income level and other relevant or defining characteristics (describe household unit - individuals or families). Include any eligibility requirements.
6. Complete the chart below with the unduplicated total of people expected to receive case management services in 2021, number who are low/moderate income, and the number who are Evanston residents. Provide the number of clients served in 2020. (*Federal regulations do not allow CDBG funds to replace existing program funding. Programs funded in 2020 must show an increase in people served if applying for an increase in CDBG funding*).

Unduplicated people to be served in 2021
Unduplicated Evanston residents to be served in 2021
Unduplicated low/moderate income people to be served in 2021
Unduplicated people served in 2020
Unduplicated Evanston residents served in 2020
Unduplicated low/moderate income people served in 2020
Unduplicated low/moderate income Evanston residents served in 2020

-
7. How many Evanston case management participants were enrolled as of January 1, 2021? How many new Evanston participants do you expect to enroll by December 31, 2021?

8. Provide case management staff demographics including gender, race/ethnicity and tenure in role, qualifications and experience, including licensing and accreditation. Will new staff be hired and is this dependent on City funding?
9. What is the average caseload per case manager? How many case managers are on staff/how many participants are they responsible for?
10. Describe any recognized methods case managers use when working with participants (i.e. trauma informed care, strengths based assessments, motivational interviewing, participant informed goal setting, etc.)
11. Does the agency provide training or opportunities for professional development? Is staff development offered internally or through external providers? How often are training opportunities provided? Is there a minimum level of training required? If so, please describe.
12. Describe components of case management including the frequency/duration of meetings and enrollment for the average client. How is client engagement measured? What happens to participants who choose not to engage?
13. Describe the process for creating a service plan with participants. Are participants asked to provide any documents at intake? Or any documents required as part of the service plan?
14. Describe a service plan a participant would create with their case manager (indicate common components such as budgeting, individual and professional goals, etc.). What are the typical outcomes of case management plans? How is progress toward achievement of goals tracked and success measured?
15. How often are service plans reviewed and revised? How are progress notes documented and how often?
16. Describe a typical client's pattern of engagement with their case manager/service plan, including frequency/duration of meetings and ongoing monitoring. Is there an "average progression" within the case management relationship?
17. Describe the process for documenting and maintaining case records. Include uploaded sample form for documenting case notes (screen shots allowed) under the "Documents" tab.
18. When does a client graduate from or complete case management services? Include any "check-in" or follow up with those clients.
19. List the services that participants most often need to achieve service plan goals and become self-sufficient. What are the barriers to receiving those services?

20. Describe the referral process, including how it is tracked. What services are generally accessed through referrals and how are participants connected to needed services?
21. Does the agency have service agreements, MOUs, and/or partnership agreements with other organizations? Describe the nature and purpose of agreements.
22. Provide a summary of the organization's history in Evanston and mission (including organizational structure, size and functions of the board); note any significant changes in the last year. (*Under the "Documents" tab, attach the current Strategic Plan and a list of current Board members; add Board demographics including approximate age range, race/ethnicity*).
23. Describe your agency's capacity to document provision of services, including policies and procedures for managing finances and procurement. (*Include experience with federal record keeping, eligible uses of funds, procurement and other requirements per the Omni Circular, 2 CFR, Chapters I & II, Part 200, et al (see Resources Library)*).
24. Describe how your agency gets feedback from clients/participants and how that information is incorporated to improve services and service delivery.
25. Provide staff demographics including gender, race/ethnicity and range of tenure in role. How many staff members of color are in leadership/decision-making positions? If less than 25%, describe how the agency is engaging people of color in decisions?

Case Management Scoring Questions

(Correlating Application questions identified in parentheses)

1. Enrollment process draws from referral network that is expansive enough to reach target population (Q1) with complex needs (Q5).
2. City funding would expand capacity to serve new Evanston clients/underserved populations and improve equity of service delivery (Q2 and Q3).
3. Program serves targeted Evanston demographics, e.g. lowest income (30% and 50% AMI) and BIPOC residents. Description of population served is clear; Agency will be able to provide services to new Evanston residents (Q5).
4. Program addresses City equity goal as demonstrated by a strategy to expand services to residents who experience barriers to receiving services/those who are underrepresented (Q2).
5. Program budget is appropriate for total number of clients served; City funds requested are justified based on the number of Evanston residents served; benefits to clients are significant and long term (Q6 & 7).
6. Case management practices, including reasonable caseload and client engagement, staff training, and methodology (use of trauma informed care, strengths-based assessment, etc.), are well defined and incorporate best practices (Q9, 10, 11 & 12).
7. Application demonstrates that Service Plans have specific goals/measures/assessments and are client centered; service plans are comprehensive and adequately document outcomes and indicators (Q13, 14, &15).
8. Referral process is robust and well documented; service agreements, partnership agreements, and/or MOUs are documented (Q20 & 21).
9. Agency committed to equity, diversity and inclusion (Q8, Q25, and staff/board composition, uploaded statement in Documents tab). Application demonstrates that people of color are included in decision-making.
10. Agency has a system for receiving client feedback (Q24).
11. Program budget is complete, costs are reasonable and adequate based on program description.
12. Other sources of funding are identified, secured or there is reasonable likelihood they will be secured; program will be implemented if funded at less than the full request.

Case Management Administrative Scoring Questions

1. Program achieves a CDBG National Objective and meets City equity goal.
2. Program complies with CDBG and City regulations, goals & objectives
3. Organization demonstrates knowledge and capacity to manage federal/public funds
4. Required organizational information and policies have been provided or are on file
5. If funded in prior years, services have been provided as proposed; Evanston residents met indicators and achieved outcomes.
6. If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner
7. Any monitoring and/or audit findings/concerns have been addressed/corrected
8. Program has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility for funding.
9. Cost of program and amount of funds requested are justified based on the number of eligible Evanston residents served and overall impact; City investment will provide significant and long-term impact.

Safety Net Description

SAFETY NET SERVICES address needs of an immediate crisis. These services alone are not meant to ensure people thrive, but to protect individuals/households from additional harm. As part of reaction to and recovery from COVID-19, the City anticipates greater need for Safety Net Services. Guidelines for programs eligible for funding as safety net services:

- Enable individuals/households to cope with a specific, limited-time hardship or unaddressed need to prevent further destabilization, or triage individuals/ households in crisis and serve as a gateway into more comprehensive services, including case management.
- Provide rapid access to free services or services provided on a sliding scale for new Evanston participants with a focus on low/moderate income people with greatest need and fewest resources.
- Result in a measurable improvement to the wellbeing of the participant by addressing a basic need.
- Can be defined using the “but for” rule. Examples: but for home-delivered meals, a low-income person living alone with limited mobility from an accident would be without healthy food.
- Include, but are not limited to: food, domestic violence services, emergency shelter, street outreach and drop in services for the homeless. Examples of other services that could fall under safety net include: benefits enrollment services, legal services, and employment services. (A safety net service provider may also accept direct referrals of clients in case management but would not be eligible for funding as Support Services and paid on a fee for service basis.)

To be eligible for funding, a Safety Net service must meet the CDBG National Objective of benefiting primarily low- and moderate-income persons (51% or more have family income \leq 80% of the area median income). This may be established in two ways: 1) Limited Clientele - participants' incomes are documented and meet eligibility or 2) Presumed Eligible - includes abused children, battered spouses or homeless. Priorities for funding include safety net services provided to populations and are identified as high need in the most recent Action Plan: low- and moderate-income Evanston residents, particularly historically underserved people, including people of color. Applications will be evaluated based on the ability to provide immediate, free services to at-risk, underserved residents. All applications will be reviewed using an equity lens.

Safety Net Application Questions

1. Describe your service, including the need(s) addressed. Be specific about the activities/services provided, days/times of services and frequency/duration for the average client.
2. How does the service stabilize participants dealing with an emergency or crisis, or prevent further destabilization? How long does the average participant receive services?
3. Is this service alone enough to resolve the issue?
4. Do beneficiaries of the safety net service have additional, unmet needs?
5. How will your agency establish income eligibility for this service?
6. Does your agency identify and target people who face barriers to accessing services? (Examples include undocumented residents/ESL households) Describe populations that face barriers to accessing services; how would City funds would improve equity of service delivery and/or expand capacity to those populations?
7. How will you track expanded participation in services and its impact on these populations? What data are collected and used to analyze services and measure success?
8. How would an award expand the service to Evanston residents, specifically those who face barriers to receiving services? How would capacity to serve more participants improve?
9. Describe the fee structure for services, whether services are free or available on a sliding scale.
10. Describe the number, demographics including gender, race/ethnicity and tenure in role, qualifications and experience of staff providing this service. Will new staff be hired and is this dependent on City funding?
11. What policies/procedures, including supervisory, are in place to ensure services are provided consistently and that goals/outcomes are achieved?
12. Who participates in or benefits from the services provided? (*Describe participants by age, gender, race/ethnicity, family status, income level and other relevant or defining characteristics. Include any eligibility requirements.*)

13. Complete the chart below with the unduplicated total of people expected to receive services in 2021, number who are low/moderate income, and the number who are Evanston residents. (*Programs funded in 2020 must show an increase in people served. Federal regulations do not allow CDBG funds to replace existing program funding*)

Unduplicated people to be served in 2021
Unduplicated Evanston residents to be served in 2021
Unduplicated low/moderate income people to be served in 2021
Unduplicated people served in 2020
Unduplicated Evanston residents served in 2020
Unduplicated low/moderate income people served in 2020
Unduplicated low/moderate income Evanston residents served in 2020

-
14. Are you turning people who are eligible away? If so, how many and why? Does the agency maintain a wait list, and if so, approximately how many people are on it?
15. Does demand fluctuate throughout the year? If so, please explain.
16. How do potentially eligible participants find out about your agency's service?
17. Do other agencies/entities refer people for this service? If so, describe the process including common referral sources and the ratio of participants referred versus those who find your service independently.
18. Did the agency receive funding from the City of Evanston for this service in the prior year?
19. If "Yes" to the question above, how would your capacity to serve existing or new Evanston residents be affected if funds were not received or reduced in the upcoming year?
20. What portion of participants served have additional needs that are not resolved by the safety net service? (*List additional services participants most commonly need to achieve self-sufficiency*)
21. Does your agency offer any of these additional services? Is the service for which you are seeking funding an entry point into these deeper services? If so, describe the services. What number or percent of people receiving this service are enrolled? How many are Evanston residents?

22. Are there barriers to people accessing deeper services including program fees, insurance requirements, or location of services, etc.? Describe briefly.
23. If your agency does not provide the additional services, describe how you help participants access them and how you track the referrals.
24. What other agencies provide similar services, how do you collaborate with them in order to avoid duplication of services, and what successes and challenges have you experienced? What sets your services apart from others? *(Include agencies that serve Evanston residents but are not located in Evanston)*
25. Provide a summary of the organization's history in Evanston and mission (including organizational structure, size and functions of the board); note any significant changes in the last year. *(Under the "Documents" tab, attach the current Strategic Plan and a list of current Board members; add Board demographics including approximate age range, race/ethnicity)*
26. Describe your agency's capacity to document provision of services, including policies and procedures for managing finances and procurement. *(Include experience with federal record keeping, eligible uses of funds, procurement and other requirements per the Omni Circular, 2 CFR, Chapters I & II, Part 200, et al (see Resources Library)*
27. Describe how your agency gets feedback from clients/participants and how that information is incorporated to improve services and service delivery.
28. Provide staff demographics including gender, race/ethnicity and range of tenure in role. How many staff members of color are in leadership/decision-making positions? If less than 25%, describe how the agency is engaging people of color in decisions?
29. Where (address/location) are services provided and how do participants get to the location or facility?

Safety Net Scoring Questions

(Correlating Application questions identified in parentheses)

1. Services are clearly described and measurable; connection between services and stabilization of households is evident (Q1 & 2).
2. Services target Evanston demographics, e.g. lowest income (30% and 50% AMI) and BIPOC residents (Q10 & 12). Description of population served is clear (Q6 & 12).
3. Agency will be able to provide services to new Evanston residents and track increased participation (Q7, 8 & 13).
4. Residents in need can find out about this service (Q16); additionally, agency receives and tracks referrals from a robust referral network (Q17).
5. Location and hours of operation described clearly and designed to address the need(s) identified; policies and procedures ensure that consistent services are provided to address needs (Q1, 11 & 29).
6. Application documents unmet need/inability to meet current demand for services; if funded in 2020, loss of City funding would diminish service to existing or new Evanston households (Q14, 18, & 19).
7. Agency is able to connect those in need of deeper services to additional programs within the agency or to other service/program providers (Q20, 21, 22 & 23).
8. Agency has a track record of delivering services in collaboration with other agencies to avoid duplication of services (Q24).
9. Agency has a system for receiving client feedback (Q27).
10. Organization has the experience and capacity, including qualified staff, to deliver services and achieve goals (Q25 & 26).
11. Agency is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion (Q10 & 28 and staff and board composition uploaded statement/documents under Documents tab).
12. The number of Evanston residents served is reasonable based on cost to provide services (Q13); cost of services and amount of City funds requested are justified based on the number of eligible Evanston residents served and needs addressed.
13. Budget is complete, costs are reasonable and adequate based on description of services.
14. Other sources of funding are identified, secured or there is reasonable likelihood they will be secured; services will be provided if funded at less than the full request.

Safety Net Administrative Scoring Questions

1. Services achieve a CDBG National Objective and align with City goal(s); Agency complies with CDBG and City regulations, goals & objectives
2. Agency demonstrates knowledge and capacity to manage federal/public funds.
3. Required organizational information and policies have been provided or are on file.
4. If funded in prior years, services/programs have been implemented substantially as proposed and goals and outcomes achieved.
5. Application identifies an unmet need that is addressed by the services provided (for renewal requests, discontinuation of funding would create an unmet need).
6. If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner.
7. Any monitoring and/or audit findings/concerns have been addressed/corrected.
8. Agency has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility.
9. Cost of services and amount of City funds requested are justified based on the number of eligible Evanston residents served and overall impact; City investment will provide significant impact to target population.

CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES - Summary					
APPLICATION SUMMARY					
Agency Request Prior Year Award	Residents Served (include demographics - Target Population)	Projected & Past Year Service Plans (Best Practices)	Projected Referrals (Best Practices)	Budget (Cost)	Financials (Cost)
Agency A Prior Year Award: \$XX,XXX Current Request:	Projected for New Year Evanston as % of Total Population			Program Budget Agency Budget Award Allocation	Audit Findings
Narrative: Administrative review info. Anything else SSC would like to highlight					
PAST PERFORMANCE SUMMARY					
Agency & Award	Residents Served (Target Pop)	Client Contacts & Service Plans (Best Practices)	Referrals (Best Practices)	Number of Service Plans Completed/Exited Participants	Reporting/ Compliance (Administrative)
Agency A Award: \$XX,XXX	Total: XXX Projected: New in 2023: XX Evanston as % of Total Currently in services: XX	Contacts: X,XXX New Service Plans: XX	Referrals: XXX Services Received: XX	SP completed in report period: Participants exited in report period: SP completed since Jan. 1: Participants exited since Jan 1.:	
Narrative	Information about most challenging referrals, ways to assess community needs - mental health provider program updates, etc.				

SAFETY NET SERVICES - Summary					
APPLICATION SUMMARY					
Agency Request Prior Year Award	Residents Served (Target Pop)	Projected & Past Year Service Hours/ Numbers Served (Safety Net Services)	Accessibility of Services (Safety Net Services)	Budget (Cost)	Financials (Cost)
Agency A Prior Year Award: \$XX,XXX Current Request:	Projected for New Year Evanston as % of Total Population		Free/Sliding scale, geographic location, advertising	Program Budget Agency Budget Award Allocation	Audit Findings
Narrative: Can include more detailed information about populations served, staff demographics, allocation of potential award and prior year performance if applicable.					
PAST PERFORMANCE SUMMARY					
Agency & Award	Residents Served (Target Pop)	Service Hours/ Numbers Served (Safety Net Services)	Service Types (Safety Net Services)	Reporting/ Compliance (Admin)	
Agency A Award: \$XX,XXX	Total: XXX Projected: New in 2023: XX Evanston as % of Total Currently in services: XX				
Narrative	Can include additional demographics, demand for services, additional participant needs if applicable, any changes to service delivery or program, and any challenges to service provision and/or reporting.				

Case Management Services Evaluation		
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUESTIONS/CRITERIA <i>(Based on ZoomGrants Score Questions)</i>	DESCRIPTION
Services to Target Population	1. Enrollment process draws from referral network that is expansive enough to reach target population with complex needs. 2. City funding would expand capacity to serve new Evanston clients/underserved populations and improve equity of service delivery. 3. Program serves targeted Evanston demographics, e.g. lowest income (30% and 50% AMI) and BIPOC residents. Description of population served is clear; Agency will be able to provide services to new Evanston residents. 4. Program addresses City equity goal as demonstrated by a strategy to expand services to residents who experience barriers to receiving services/those who are underrepresented.	Services move individual/households from instability to self-sufficiency; additionally, agency is able to enroll new residents during a 12-month period. Case management links targeted populations to supports that mitigate hardships due to COVID-19 and/or historically racist practices. Case management supports populations negatively impacted by historically racist practices and help households/individuals thrive in the community
Best Practices - Case Management	6. Case management practices, including reasonable caseload and client engagement, staff training, and methodology (use of trauma informed care, strengths-based assessment, etc.), are well defined and incorporate best practices. 7. Application demonstrates that Service Plans have specific goals/measures/assessments and are client centered; service plans are comprehensive and adequately document outcomes and indicators. 8. Referral process is robust and well documented; service agreements, partnership agreements, and/or MOUs are documented. 9. Agency committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. Application demonstrates that people of color are included in decision-making. 10. Agency has a system for receiving client feedback.	Case managers create client-centered service plans, meet at least monthly with participants, and follow best practices. Participants are connected to needed support services that are documented in participant file. Agency also has written policies & procedures, employs diverse staff, and solicits/ incorporates participant feedback into program structure.
Cost Reasonableness & Budget	5. Program budget is appropriate for total number of clients served; City funds requested are justified based on the number of Evanston residents served; benefits to clients are significant and long term. 11. Program budget is complete, costs are reasonable and adequate based on program description. 12. Other sources of funding are identified, secured or there is reasonable likelihood they will be secured; program will be implemented if funded at less than the full request.	Amount of request is proportional to the agency/program funds restricted to services and reasonable based on the anticipated number of residents served. Cost per Evanston resident served is reasonable based on industry standards. The amount of budget dedicated to Evanston residents is proportionate and City funds would increase capacity to serve residents. Agency is able to enroll new residents during a 12-month period.
Administrative Review		
Administration	3. Organization demonstrates knowledge and capacity to manage federal/public funds. 4. Required organizational information and policies have been provided or are on file. 7. Any monitoring and/or audit findings/concerns have been addressed/corrected.	
Program Reporting	6. If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner. 8. Program has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility for funding.	
Performance	Based on reports and includes review of new participants, participants served, and participants successfully exited - this includes total participants and Evanston residents as a measure of service success/effectiveness.	
Cost Reasonableness	9. Cost of program and amount of funds requested are justified based on the number of eligible Evanston residents served and the overall impact; City investment will provide significant and long-term impact.	
Eligibility		
Basic Eligibility	1. Program achieves a CDBG National Objective and meets City equity goal. 2. Program complies with CDBG and City regulations, goals & objectives. 5. If funded in prior years,	Yes/No

Safety Net Services Evaluation		
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	QUESTIONS/CRITERIA <i>(Numbers indicate ZoomGrants Score Questions)</i>	DESCRIPTION
Target Population	2. Services target Evanston demographics, low/mod income and BIPOC residents. Description of population served is clear. 3. Agency will be able to provide services to new Evanston residents and track increased participation. 4. Residents in need can find out about this service; additionally, agency receives referrals from community partners 9. Agency has a system for receiving client feedback.	Services address recovery from the pandemic and/or invests in BIPOC populations. Services improve outcomes for people historically marginalized, underserved, or harmed by institutionalized racist practices. Agency works with community partners and demonstrates effective outreach efforts to serve eligible participants.
Safety Net Service	1. Services are clearly described and measurable; connection between services and stabilization of households is evident. 5. Location and hours of operation described clearly and designed to address the needs identified; policies and procedures ensure consistent services are provided to address needs. 6. Application documents unmet need/inability to meet current demand for services. Loss of City funds would diminish services to current/existing participants.	Service(s) enable households to cope with a specific, limited-time hardship or provides support to address a crisis or prevent further destabilization. Services result in a measurable improvement to the wellbeing of participants by addressing a basic need.
Cost Reasonableness & Budget	12. The number of Evanston residents served is reasonable based on cost to provide services; cost of services and amount of City funds requested are justified based on the number of residents served and needs addressed. 13. Budget is complete, costs are reasonable and adequate based on description of services. 14. Other sources of funding are identified, secured or there is reasonable likelihood they will be secured; services will be provided if funded at less than the full request.	Award request/allocation is realistic based on the anticipated services/service hours provided and number of eligible individuals enrolled. Amount of support is proportional to the agency/program funds restricted to services. Funds would provide additional services to residents or increase capacity to serve residents.
Performance	7. Agency is able to connect those in need of deeper services to additional programs within the agency or to other service/program providers. 8. Agency has a track record of delivering services in collaboration with other agencies to avoid duplication of services. 10. Organization has the experience and capacity, including qualified staff, to deliver services and achieve goals. 11. Agency is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion.	There is a need for services as evidenced by wait lists and services provided address basic need, prevent destabilization, address time-sensitive crisis. Rapid access to free or sliding scale services for residents with a focus on low/moderate income households with greatest needs and fewest resources.
Administrative Review		
Administration	3. Required organizational information and policies have been provided or are on file. 7. Any monitoring and/or audit findings/concerns have been addressed/corrected. 8. Agency has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility. 9. Cost of services and amount of City funds requested are justified based on the number of eligible residents served and overall impact; City investment will provide significant impact to target population.	Organization demonstrates knowledge and capacity to manage federal/public funds. Required organizational information and policies have been provided or are on file. Any monitoring and/or audit findings or concerns have been addressed/corrected.
Program Reporting	4. If funded in prior years, services/programs have been implemented substantially as proposed and goals and outcomes achieved. 6. If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner.	If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner. If funded in prior years, services have been provided as proposed; Evanston residents met indicators and achieved outcomes. Program has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility for funding.
Performance	Based on reports and includes review of new participants, participants served, and participants successfully exited - this includes total participants and Evanston residents. This measure will also include a review of safety net services provided in terms of hours or amount of provisions, number and types of services.	If funded in prior years, reports and documentation have been provided in a timely manner. If funded in prior years, services have been provided as proposed; Evanston residents met indicators and achieved outcomes. Program has a clearly identified method of documenting participants' eligibility for funding.
Cost Reasonableness	Based on submitted budget, agency budget and financial documents; also based on past performance and numbers served and projected compared to program costs.	Cost per Evanston resident served is reasonable, the amount of budget dedicated to Evanston residents is proportionate and City funds would increase capacity to serve residents. Award request/allocation is realistic based on the anticipated number of eligible individuals; amount of support is proportional to the agency/program funds restricted to services.
Eligibility		

Basic Eligibility	1. Services achieve a CDBG National Objective and align with City goals; agency complies with CDBG and City regulations, goals & objectives. 2. Agency demonstrates knowledge and capacity to manage federal/public funds. 5. Application identifies an unmet need that is addressed by the services provided (for renewal requests, discontinuation of funding would create an unmet need).	Yes/No
-------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------



Memorandum

To: Members of the Social Services Committee
From: Jessica Wingader, Social Services Grants & Compliance Specialist
CC: Sarah Flax, Community Development Director, Marion Johnson,
Housing & Grants Supervisor
Subject: Assessment of Third Party Ranking Organizations
Date: April 13, 2023

Recommended Action:

This memo will summarize the largest third party charity rating organizations, outline how agencies are measured, and offer an assessment of rating strengths and gaps.

Funding Source:

N/A

CARP:

Vulnerable Populations

Committee Action:

For Discussion

Summary:

Third Party Charity Rating Organizations

Charity Navigator

Charity Navigator is the largest and oldest system; it offers a free 4-star rating based on formulas that use data from IRS tax filings. The system also evaluates agency spending on programs and administrative expenses, fundraising costs and fundraising efficiency. Charity Navigator is curated for donors and primarily focuses on agency financial management practices, leadership, and self-assessment to gauge agency culture and commitment to community. The four rating categories include:

- Impact & Results
- Accountability & Finance
- Culture & Community
- Leadership & Adaptability

Registered Agencies & Rating Categories		Unregistered Agencies
Books & Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance ● Culture & Community 	Housing Authority of Cook County
Childcare Network of Evanston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance ● Culture & Community 	Infant Welfare Society
Connections for the Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Impact & Results ● Accountability & Finance ● Leadership & Adaptability 	James B. Moran Center
Family Focus/Chicago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance 	Family Focus - Our Place (Evanston location/branch)
Impact Behavioral Health Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance 	Meals on Wheels
Interfaith Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance 	PEER Services
North Shore Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance ● Culture & Community ● Leadership & Adaptability 	
Youth & Opportunity United	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accountability & Finance 	
YWCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Culture & Community 	

CharityWatch

System reviews audited financial statements, tax forms, annual reports, state filings and other documents using a grading system (A+ - F) and provides two variations of scores based on the system's financial review. The first is "stand alone" and the second removes outliers, like a large endowment. The system also reviews the percent of total expenses for programs and related contributions or how much the agency spends on fundraising compared to the amount of funds solicited. Reports include Program Percentage, Cost to Raise, and Years of Available Assets. There is a fee to receive reports and evaluations of smaller nonprofits are not available; most Evanston funded agencies are not represented.

GuideStar

This system verifies nonprofit status and agencies' eligibility to receive tax deductible grants; it also provides a summary of mission and breakdown of revenue versus expenses including sources. The system is able to create forecasts and assessments using accumulated financial data by charting funding sources, assets and liabilities, liquidity, and other operations over a period of time. The system is limited to the financial information available, some agencies have decades of information, others may have several years. The system also provides information about officers, directors, trustees and key employees. The system offers four ranks (bronze through platinum) and there is a membership fee of \$4,300, to access agency specific reports.

GreatNonprofits

The system's goal is to promote agencies by providing a platform for anecdotal reviews and accolades. Program participants, volunteers, board members, donors & supporters post information about agencies and rate them (1-5 stars); it is unclear if posts are verified or substantiated. Agencies can earn a Top-Rated badge by having at least ten positive stories posted within a defined campaign period (e.g. 10+ posts over a three month period) and by maintaining an average rating of 3.5+ stars.

Conclusion

Organizations that assess City-funded nonprofits rate those agencies as a whole; none provide program-level information about outcomes or finances. Additionally, it is unclear if agencies not represented have the capacity, ability, or qualifications necessary to register or sign up with any of the organizations identified; it is also challenging to approximate the administrative burden involved. Additionally, staff notes the following challenges specific to each rating organization:

<i>Charity Navigator</i>	Not all agencies are represented; agencies that are represented are not rated under the same categories
<i>CharityWatch</i>	System does not have information about City-funded agencies
<i>GuideStar</i>	System requires an annual membership fee with no guarantee that City-funded agencies will be included or reviewed
<i>GreatNonprofits</i>	Information gathered is anecdotal and appears to advantage larger agencies with more staff or greater capacity to market services and rally online supporters

Staff believes that the Committee would find greater benefit from a more program or services specific review of agencies. If the Committee would like to further explore using a third party rating organization, staff suggests further discussion to identify next steps.