



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM

**Social Services Committee**

Members Present: S. Olds Frey, A. Ngola, K. Rolling, K. Hayes, S. Lackey, R. Philips

Members Absent: Councilmember Reid, Councilmember Burns

Staff Present: M. Johnson, J. Wingader

---

**Call to Order / Declaration of Quorum**

Chair Olds Frey called the meeting to order at 7:09 pm.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 9, 2023**

Mr. Rolling moved approval of the meeting minutes for November 9, 2023, seconded by Ms. Hayes; a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.

**Public Comment**

Anne Brown, Development Director of PEER Services thanked the Committee for their support and invited members to continue prioritizing mental health and substance use disorders.

**Discussion of Funding Priorities**

Staff presented information about City goals, funded program services and participants served since the reallocation process. There was a review of the upcoming grant application timeline. Staff asked members to consider establishing priorities based on community needs. There was discussion about ways to compare services under the Safety Net category and different sources staff use to gather information about community needs; members also talked about other community stakeholders that provide community assessment reports and there was speculation about new or additional agencies that might apply. Members discussed the impact of funding many programs with reduced awards versus fully funding programs that address community needs. Members expressed interest in funding programs that provide benefit enrollment services and that connect participants to stability supports including SNAP, TANF, and other benefits programs.

There was also discussion about emergent needs from ongoing pandemic related hardship and the migrant crisis. Staff talked about other City programs and resources that offered support. There was discussion about different review criteria including ways to compare budgets to understand impacts of City funding, services that address equity goals and meet community needs. There was a request for more information about and a clearer review of program budgets, agency budgets, and other funding sources that contribute to programs requesting City funds. There was discussion about focusing support on programs that meet community needs and provide services to Evanston residents; there was additional discussion about providing support for programs that

wouldn't exist without City funding. Members agreed that programs had to clearly demonstrate outcomes, especially benefits enrollment and connections to additional community support programs. Members discussed the importance of understanding what a loss of services would mean for community members and the value of setting a minimum grant amount.

Ms. Philips talked about the critical need to help low and moderate income residents remain in the community; she questioned how programs help people remain stable and noted the challenges of serving residents due to system barriers. Ms. Philips also talked about the importance of understanding services provided and how those services support Evanston residents. There was discussion about funds used for staffing and how agencies that provide services struggle to also provide needed supplies and additional resources. Chair Olds Frey mentioned the impact of universal basic income programs. Staff discussed programs that provide direct housing subsidies and some of the challenges provided by federal regulations. There was discussion about community benefits and the ongoing challenge of disproportionate displacement of BIPOC residents. Ms. Ngola asked if agencies could provide a more comprehensive report of participants served, including the number of participants not served, and reasons why services were not provided/received. Staff reviewed information captured in reports and agreed to ask agencies to report more accurate program outcomes and budget information.

There was discussion about the upcoming grant cycle; members asked about potential additional applicants and expressed interest in possible new and innovative programs that could meet community needs. There was discussion about information captured in program reports for both categories. Staff confirmed that programs report the number of new participants and exits and agreed to provide more information about retention and follow-up practices, successful exits, barriers participants face receiving services or achieving successful program outcomes. Members restated an interest in more fully documenting the number of participants turned away from services or not served, and requested additional information about services that happen in person or over the phone.

### **Mental Health Provider Program Update**

Staff presented an update on the Mental Health Provider Program including provider partners, services and information about residents served to date. Members requested additional information about individual services provided virtually versus services provided in person.

### **Nomination of Vice Chair**

Chair Olds Frey nominated Amanda Ngola to the Vice Chair position, seconded by Ms. Hayes; with Ms. Ngola's acceptance, members voted 6-0 to approve Ms. Ngola as the Vice Chair of the Social Services Committee.

### **Staff Report**

Staff noted the updated 2024 meeting topics included in the packet.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Wingader  
Senior Grants and Compliance Specialist