

MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION (NICC)

Community Meeting Center, Council Chamber  
11300 Stanford Avenue

Monday, April 3, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONER BLACKMUN  
COMMISSIONER BRIETIGAM  
COMMISSIONER CRAWFORD  
COMMISSIONER MCINTOSH  
COMMISSIONER PHAM  
COMMISSIONER RAMIREZ  
COMMISSIONER SERRANO

Absent: McIntosh, Pham

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Wilson, Neighborhood Improvement Manager; Nida Watkins, Project Manager; Nate Robbins, Sr. Program Specialist; Jimmy Nguyen, Program Specialist; Judith Moore, Recording Secretary.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Chair Ramirez.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC: None.

MINUTES: It was moved by Commissioner Brietigam and seconded by Commissioner Blackmun, to receive and file the Minutes from the March 6, 2017 Meeting. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote, with Commissioners McIntosh and Pham absent, as follows:

Ayes: (5) Blackmun, Brietigam, Crawford, Ramirez, Serrano  
Noes: (0) None  
Absent: (2) McIntosh, Pham

MATTERS FROM STAFF:

PUBLIC HEARING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017-18 ACTION PLAN: The staff report dated April 3, 2017 was introduced.

Staff explained that the \$1.4 million carried forward for 2017-18 was an accumulation of HOME funds and that staff was currently working with a developer on a proposed acquisition/rehab affordable housing project to which the City would enter into an affordable housing and loan agreement; that funds were granted out to non-profit service providers who would carry out programming and report back

accomplishments to the City; that the Action Plan also included 'capital projects' undertaken by the City such as street improvements; that federal laws were overlaid on the developer to comply with the requirements detailed in the affordable housing agreement; that the standard for a low-income threshold was standard for the County and adjusted for family size; that Project No. 23 -ESG17 Street Outreach had funds of \$25,000 to provide services to the homeless, \$15,000 of which was proposed for City Net, whose goal was to connect individuals in homeless encampments with services and service providers such as for mental health services; that the Police Department had a homeless liaison officer, however, the Action Plan was an allocation of federal funds; and that this was the third year of a five-year Consolidated Plan.

Chair Ramirez opened the public hearing.

Mr. Matt Bates of City Net, the non-profit collaborative providing homeless services in Orange County, commented that an ESG grant (Emergency Services Grant) was applied for with Garden Grove for street outreach services; that the goal was to end homelessness by connecting homeless with housing, not necessarily providing managed care; that the Department of Education counted homeless individuals that included people in motels, overcrowded apartments, and living in cars, however, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) counted street level people; and that City Net contracted with the cities of Santa Ana, Anaheim, Buena Park, La Habra, Stanton and Westminster, along with the Courtyard in Santa Ana, the county's first year- round emergency shelter.

Mr. Bates also stated that homeless moved across borders; that collaborative efforts link City Net with services, housing, and mental and physical health providers; that the goal was to remove barriers to achieve more long term housing; that prioritized cases included the homeless who tend to use more police and hospital services; that City Net partnered with law enforcement to provide security for staff teams and provide access into non-public areas such as drainage canals or storm tunnels; that officers were typically first responders 24/7, however, officers were not social workers, thus City Net was a resource; that the frequency of police liaison assistance depended on project scopes; and that Anaheim had 900 street level homeless.

Mr. Bates added that the goal of City Net staff was to establish rapport with the homeless. Visible changes included a network of staffs who focused on chronic cases that absorb resources, an outreach effort combined with enforcement, and compassionate responses without enabling behaviors by providing for all of the homeless needs; that law enforcement also needed to protect other City residents, who wanted to use parks with their families, and not face people who used the restrooms and did illegal activities; that Proposition 47 and AB109 increased the volume of homeless and changed the nature of the population which likely caused the homeless numbers to increase; and that a gap existed in Orange County wages versus the cost of housing, and because of this economic factor, there were new homeless.

Ms. Andrea Garcia commented that Mercy House had been fighting homelessness for over 27 years in Orange County by providing short-term financial assistance for families to stay in their housing, along with long-term permanent housing, specifically for people who have been homeless for approximately a year and have a disability. She added that the application was in support of emergency shelter services (\$10,000 for 70 people) and the homeless prevention program (\$7,500 for 5 households) in Orange County, which provided nightly shelter to single men and women who live on the streets; that the services included a bed, a meal, a shower, hygiene facilities, donations, and access to partnered service providers for housing, employment, medical, and law services; that the Kramer emergency shelter would be added to the program to expand services; that the homeless prevention program would ensure that Garden Grove rental residents could remain in their homes preventing costly evictions; that the program office operated out of Santa Ana; and that catastrophic events often caused homelessness to occur.

Chair Ramirez closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Brietigam asked for clarification on the \$400,000 Program Administration cost. Staff responded that the funds were primarily for staff salaries to administrate the program, and consultants for wage and labor compliance, contract management, and commodities.

Commissioner Blackmun asked for clarification on the new programs. Staff relayed that CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds paid off a 1997 Section 108 loan in excess of \$1 million; that the funds could now be used for new programs such as Public Works street projects, and a small business loan program (\$100,000). Also, the Neighborhood Improvement Committee (NIC), comprised of City department staff, was tasked with focusing on reversing a declining neighborhood, this year Palma Vista, with \$100,000 allocated for the potential upgrade of streets, sidewalks, curb and gutter, or providing office space for social services, or a loan program for apartment owners to improve buildings. Staff added that using federal funds for street improvements helped to alleviate the general fund in order to provide other City services.

Commissioner Blackmun asked if developers could set aside fees for homeless funding. Staff responded that the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) allocation for the homeless was \$175,000 and the Action Plan indicated how the funds would be used, such as for street outreach, shelter operations, homeless prevention, rapid rehousing, and that the City proposed funding those service providers.

Commissioner Crawford commented that many areas were affected by the homeless, and until these issues were resolved, other areas would suffer. Staff added that the City tried to fund a 'breadth' of services, and looked at the cost of benefit and cost per person.

Commissioner Brietigam asked for clarification of the \$1,000 for Harbor Boulevard Improvements for property acquisitions. Staff explained that years ago, HUD funds were used to purchase Harbor Boulevard properties; that CDBG and Redevelopment funds would be used to acquire property for a large hotel site; that Redevelopment

then went away and currently, the City did not have resources to acquire property at that location, however, HUD rules required that the \$1,000 remain in the Action Plan until there was a resolution; that the HUD allocation was \$1.9 million, with the recommendations on how to spend the funds indicated in the Action Plan; that the \$1,000 listed for the Harbor Boulevard Improvements (Item 7) and for the Fire Station (Item 8) would remain in the Action Plan as place holders.

Commissioner Blackmun asked for clarification on the \$10,000 for the Community Gardens (Item 15). Staff responded that the allocation was for new fencing and improvements.

It was moved by Commissioner Blackmun and seconded by Commissioner Crawford, to accept staff's recommendation to transmit the Fiscal Year 2017-18 Action Plan and citizen comments to City Council. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote as follows:

Ayes: (5) Blackmun, Brietigam, Crawford, Ramirez, Serrano  
Noes: (0) None  
Absent: (2) McIntosh, Pham

MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS: Commissioner Crawford reminded staff to forward PDF copies of the Parking Request for Proposal (RFP) to the Commissioners.

Chair Ramirez commented that he had a great time at the Open Streets event.

Commissioner Serrano asked for more information on the homeless liaison officer from the Police Department. Staff responded that the officer was assigned normal patrol, and as time permitted, he addressed homeless issues. Serrano then expressed that perhaps a portion of gang suppression funding could be allocated for officer partnerships assisting with the homeless. Staff pointed out that CDBG funding was limited to a maximum of 15% for public services, which included gang and homeless prevention; that if more funds were allocated to the homeless, other programs would need to be cut, such as the Senior Center, Gang Unit, or Meals on Wheels. Also, the Police Department provided staff with a scope of budget, and so far, the police had not asked for additional funding for the homeless issue. Staff explained that for additional funding, a program would need to be drafted, which indicated a funding target, the outcome, and a budget allocation and that this request would be transmitted to Chief Elgin of the Police Department.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Ramirez adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m. to the next Regular Meeting of the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Commission to be held on Monday, June 5, 2017, at 6:30 p.m., at the Community Meeting Center Council Chamber, 11300 Stanford Avenue.

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Judith Moore, RECORDING SECRETARY