



**FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION SUB-
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 8, 2020 - 7:00 AM
West Des Moines Police Station – 250 Mills Civic Parkway
Large Conference Room**

Present: Councilmember Russ Trimble, Councilmember Greg Hudson, City Manager Tom Hadden, Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring, Finance Director Tim Stiles, City Attorney Dick Scieszinski, Budget Analyst Chris Hamlett, Human Resources Director Jane Dodge, Housing Planner Christine Gordon, and Secretary Jennifer Canaday

Guests: Mr. Tyler Klobassa, Tallgrass Theatre Company
Ms. Arlene McAtee, Tallgrass Theatre Company
Ms. Julie Burnette, Des Moines Children's Museum
Mr. Matt Beatty, Iowa Sports Foundation for the Iowa Senior Games
Mr. Daniel Beitelspacher, Iowa Sports Foundation for the Iowa Senior Games
Ms. Melissa O'Neil, Central Iowa Shelter & Services
Mr. Scott Cutler, Junction House
Mr. Tim Rypma, Junction House
Mr. Ryan Wiederstein, WB Realty

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 AM.

1. Hotel/Motel Tax Presentations

Prior to the December 19, 2019, deadline, 15 organizations completed applications for discretionary Hotel/Motel Tax funding for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020. Part of the application process includes a brief presentation by the applicant organization for the F&A committee. Finance Director Stiles noted that these presentations are scheduled to occur over the course of the next three (3) meetings, with this meeting including the first round of presentations. Councilmembers will ultimately recommend funding after all 15 presentations are received and the recommendation will be included in the FY 2020-21 budget, which will be presented to City Council for approval in February.

a. Tallgrass Theatre Company

Mr. Tyler Klobassa and Ms. Arlene McAtee, Tallgrass Theatre Company, 1401 Vine Street, presented their request for funding of \$12,000. The organization had requested \$12,000 the previous year and the City approved \$10,000.

Tallgrass Theatre Company was founded in 2003 and moved to West Des Moines in 2005. Tallgrass provides cultural opportunities for residents of the City and the metro in general. Tallgrass is

completely volunteer-driven and typically produces 3 shows per year. Also, there is a children's program, Seedlings, using West Des Marks and Recreation Valley Junction Activity Center.

The prior year's funds were used for pipe and drape (curtains). Previous years' funding were noted to have been purchased for lighting and sound systems, which will stay with the company as they seek a new permanent venue. Their current contract with West Des Moines Schools for use of the Rex Mathes Elementary School building is not being renewed effective June 2020.

Mr. Klobassa indicated that requested funds for FY 20-21 will be used to purchase risers and chairs for use in temporary venues and eventually in a permanent new location.

Council Member Trimble asked if Tallgrass had located a new home. Ms. McAtee stated that they have not, however Community and Economic Development Director Clyde Evans was working hard to help them relocate. Council Member Hudson questioned whether Tallgrass would return to West Des Moines for a permanent location if they were forced to use temporary venues outside of the City for the upcoming season. Mr. Klobassa and Ms. McAtee affirmed their preference to stay in West Des Moines as they have gained several strategic partners in the city during their 15 years here.

Council Member Trimble asked whether the Theatre Company has other grant fund sources. Ms. McAtee confirmed that they also receive funds through Bravo, MidAmerican Energy, Metro Waste Authority, and Prairie Meadows.

b. Des Moines Children's Museum

Ms. Julie Burtnette, Des Moines Children's Museum, 1551 Valley West Drive #108, West Des Moines, summarized the growth of her program over the past three years, noting that they have progressed from 100% volunteers to employing five part-time and one full-time staff. Memberships have increased to 85 and space needs have increased such that they relocated to a 10,000 sq.ft. area on the lower level. Visitors increased from 15,000 to over 35,000 in the past year.

Ms. Burtnette informed that previous funding from the City has been used for exhibits and facility improvements. \$20,000 in funds are being requested for FY20-21 to be used to expand the exhibits being offered. Salaries for staff are funded elsewhere – they are covered by admission costs and party reservations. Ms. Burtnette noted the excellent cooperative relationship which they have with Valley West Mall and is anticipated the possible use of outdoor space to supplement programming.

Council Member Trimble commended the organization for filling a void at the Mall and in the community.

c. Iowa Sports Foundation (Iowa Senior Games)

Mr. Matt Beatty and Mr. Daniel Beitelspacher, Iowa Sports Foundation (sponsor of the Iowa Senior Games), 1421 S Bell Ave, Suite 104, Ames, presented their request for \$12,000. Iowa Senior Games, targeting individuals over age 50, has been held in West Des Moines for the past 34 years, growing to a point where last year brought over 1,500 athletes, families, volunteers, officials and spectators to West Des Moines. They use several locations throughout West Des Moines to host recreation and entertainment events. They stated that previous funds were used to purchase

participation medals, apparel for officials, volunteers and athletes, medical support, ice, signage, officiating and transportation. The current request for \$12,000 will be used similar expenses as last year, with the addition of marketing to increase participation.

Council Member Trimble questioned whether Iowa Senior Games receives grant funding from other sources. Mr. Beatty affirmed that they receive funds through Hy-Vee, Prairie Meadows, Polk County and Iowa Games. Council Member Trimble asked if Iowa Senior Games was looking to use the RecPlex. Mr. Beatty affirmed that they have a meeting scheduled this week to discuss using it for ice skating.

d. Central Iowa Shelter Services

Ms. Melissa O'Brien, Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS), 1420 Mulberry St, Des Moines, presented their request for \$50,000 to be used in emergency shelter supportive services and job training programs.

Central Iowa Shelter & Services operates the largest homeless shelter in Iowa and is currently the only local program providing services for homeless Veterans. She provided statistics regarding the use of the programs, the increasing numbers of homeless nationally as well as regionally, and their goal to eliminate chronic homelessness. Ms. O'Brien cited examples including elderly income-restricted persons and teenagers struggling to complete high school. CISS seeks to provide one-stop-shop services including shelter, meals, and employment through Mulberry Farm, Kitchen Staff and Janitorial/Kitchen. Future plans include possibly partnering with a mental health outreach from Philadelphia, developing 9 surrounding acres with HUD, and reaching women with children who remain in risky, unhealthy and abusive situations due to lack of affordable options. Ms. O'Brien stated there is a focus group comprised of 17 local entities meeting to address the issues.

Council Member Trimble commended Ms. O'Brien for her nationally recognized work, adding that he serves on the Homeless Coordination Council. He stated that we in the metro area need to combine efforts together to solve this problem and asked if other Cities in the area are contributing to the Shelter. Ms. O'Brien affirmed that they are, noting support levels for the Cities of Clive, Waukee, Norwalk, and anticipated renewal of contract with the City of Urbandale. She also informed that the City of Des Moines increased their support by and has acquired additional land for the construction of affordable housing.

e. WDM Historical Society

Director Stiles informed that the West Des Moines Historical Society has submitted an application for \$50,000 (same amount as the past few years), but he determined it was probably not necessary for them to come in for a presentation since there was a detailed presentation to the committee in November regarding an advance of their funding stream to be used for purchase of property. The application represents their "back-up" plan for facility improvements, depending on the outcome of the property negotiation.

2. City Manager Review Process

Council Member Trimble informed the group that feedback had been received from Council Member Hardman, who offered comments based on her extensive Human Resources experience. She raised two points: the evaluation categories were not specific enough and the group should consider 360-degree review process. Council Member Trimble noted that Council Member Hardman suggested weighting the review and Human Resources Director Jane Dodge responded that Mayor/Council should consider whatever methods they feel necessary in order to provide accurate feedback to the Manager. She noted that Council has traditionally used competitive salary survey as its benchmark rather than a matrix with systematic pay levels. There was a brief discussion regarding including input from all Council Members during the review process and the time span needed to adjust the current process.

Council Member Trimble directed Director Dodge to meet with Council Member Hardman to review her comments and to return to an upcoming committee meeting with recommendations.

3. Woodland Hills URA Low-and-Moderate Income (LMI) Funding Program

Housing Planner Christine Gordon provided an update regarding the dispersion of LMI-set-aside funds created by the Woodland Hills Urban Renewal Area.

During Round One of the Valley Junction Upper Story Housing Improvement Program, \$1M was allocated to projects. She noted that new applications in Round 2 exceed the amount of funding currently allocated to the program. If Council wished to accept all applications, funds could be reduced from other spending areas and it was possible to bridge the deficit until further funds accumulate. The question before the committee at this time is to determine whether funding should be increased for this program at this time – which would require a reduction in another program's budget.

Finance Director Tim Stiles suggested that for simplicity, perhaps the funds could be borrowed from the Woodland Hills Fund itself rather than using the General Fund. Council Member Hudson asked about timing and Director Stiles noted that the original budget was \$1M, however applications require \$1.8M and funds which be received during the tax cycle in FY 2021 and disbursed as projects evolve, which should cash flow appropriately.

Council Member Trimble asked which other projects might be affected. Ms. Gordon responded that the project intended to purchase rental units had encountered unforeseen obstacles and was not being utilized, therefore funds from that project could most easily be reallocated. Council Member Trimble asked if the funds could benefit Metro Home Improvement applicants, and what was needed to qualify for that program. Ms. Gordon responded that there is a wait list of 25 owners who qualify based on income below 80%, home is owner occupied, the owner is current on taxes and mortgage, and agrees to live in the home for five years.

Council Member Hudson questioned whether the TIF fund ends in 2024. Director Stiles clarified that the collection ends at that time, however pooled funds can continue to be dispersed beyond the collection period.

Council Member Trimble stated that he liked the program to buy rental housing and asked if the City could utilize at a later date. Ms. Gordon responded that the City could.

City Manager Hadden questioned whether the TIF funds could be used in lieu of the hotel/motel tax for the CISS program. Ms. Gordon responded that TIF funding was required to be spent in West Des Moines so that was not an option for that organization.

Council Members were supportive of funding all the upper story applications using funds available at the discretion of the Finance Director. A revised plan will be brought forward for the Council at an upcoming meeting for approval.

4. Recommendation for Round 2 of Upper Story Housing Program

Christine Gordon, Housing Planner, informed the committee that there the City has received two applications to fund a total of 24 additional upper story housing units on 5th Street in Valley Junction. Council Member Trimble recommended that future applications include questioning to determine if a project can proceed even if the approved funding does not reach 100% of the requested amount. Ms. Gordon agreed to include that on future applications.

Council Member Trimble asked guests Mr. Cutler, Mr. Rypma and Mr. Wiederstein to summarize their projects. Mr. Wiederstein spoke of replacing the building located at 309/315 5th Street with a 2-story mixed use building. Mr. Rypma informed that he and Mr. Cutler are redeveloping 329 5th Street into a 3-story mixed use building. Mr. Cutler noted that there will be 16 residential spaces in the upper two floors of this building. Council Member Trimble questioned the timeline of the projects. Mr. Rypma responded that construction is planned for 12 months, beginning in April of 2020.

Council Member Trimble questioned the qualifications for residency in these housing projects. Ms. Gordon responded that all of these units are 100% affordable housing.

The Councilmembers supported the projects and encouraged staff to work with the applicants on final details before they can be brought forward to the Council for approval.

5. Staff Updates

There were none.

6. Other Matters

There were none.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Canaday
Recording Secretary