



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

ECONOMICS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: November 10, 2015
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Location: Holliday Conference Room, 620 SE Madison St.

Committee members present: Deputy Mayor Karen Hiller (Chair), Councilmember Brendan Jensen. Councilmember Jonathan Schumm was absent.

City staff present: Sasha Stiles, Corrie Wright, and Rachelle Vega-Retana, Neighborhood Relations.

Community Resources Council (CRC) present: G.R. Laughlin, CEO/Executive Director; Mary Thomas, Development & Operations Director.

1. Deputy Mayor Hiller called the meeting to order.
2. The August 21, 2015 meeting minutes were approved.
3. 2016 Wrap up
 - a. CRC Resubmission of outcomes and outputs
Neighborhood Relations staff reviewed CRC's resubmission of their outcomes and outputs, and scored them at a zero out of fifteen points. Chairperson Hiller expressed her dismay and disappointment. Councilmember Jensen commented that both the City and CRC need to make improvements to their processes and he appreciated the work CRC put into their resubmission.
 - b. Any other issues
Rachelle Vega-Retana commented on the training that was provided to agencies, which gave them the opportunity to ask questions regarding the application process. Cindy Roseburg with United Way gave the presentation; approximately 80% of the agencies attended. The training lasted approximately 90 minutes and appeared to go well. Ms. Roseburg gave the agencies her contact information and encouraged them to contact her if they have questions.

Corrie Wright commented that when agencies submit their contract, they will have the opportunity to adjust their outcomes and outputs.

Sasha Stiles stated that she believed the unallocated funds were returned to the General Fund; she will double check and report back at the next

meeting.

Councilmember Jensen gave recommendations on improving the ECD funding process for upcoming years. Asking agencies for outcomes can be an unreasonable request for those agencies that may not see an immediate outcome. Going forward he would like to see the following questions asked: 1) What is the role of government in this process? 2) Are there non-profits that do this work now that are more focused on getting money from us rather than doing their own fundraising? It's often better for a non-profit to do their work with private donors rather than with government injecting cash, mostly because we have substantial reporting requirements to our taxpayers, which can be difficult when we may not see the outcomes for years. Councilmember Jensen suggested that instead of the agencies identifying their outcomes, the City should provide the outcomes that they expect the agencies to meet.

Corrie Wright stated that it would make sense for the contracted services agencies to use the RFP process. She asked how they would measure their success and ensure that they have met the requirements set. Mary Thomas stated that RFP's have a specific scope of work which would be equivalent to the output/outcome requirements in this process. Corrie offered to put together some outcomes for the contracted services and present them at the next meeting.

Councilmember Jensen asked why mental health and neighborhoods are combined. Corrie Wright stated that Neighborhood Relations staff would research this and bring back their thoughts to the next meeting. Corrie suggested taking clothing off of the list.

The Committee and Neighborhood Relations staff discussed where Councilmember Jensen's two questions would be included in the process.

Chairperson Hiller opened a discussion on the criteria used for scoring. She observed that there had been some weaknesses in outcome measurements tools. Corrie Wright felt the 5-10-15 point descriptions could be worded better.

Councilmember Jensen asked if we need the board diversity criteria. He mentioned that many boards have a difficult time finding diverse board members. Sasha stated that this is a policy decision, and if the committee agrees that it isn't important, then it can be removed. Councilmember Jensen stated that an agency should not be penalized for not having a diverse board if the board is doing a good job running the agency. Chairperson Hiller stated that if it is government money and if diversity is important to government, then it is up to government to decide if diversity is important to them. Chairperson Hiller stated that this can be discussed further at the next meeting.

Chairperson Hiller asked about adding a budget and cost effectiveness item. Corrie expressed her only concern is that it can be subjective and based on the scoring committee's opinions and would make it difficult for the scoring committee to score an agency. Sasha Stiles stated that the scoring committee members are not experts and should not be responsible for determining if an agency is operating within their budget. Chairperson Hiller suggested that the committee might request that an expert in this subject matter be retained to evaluate agencies budgets. Councilmember Jensen commented that he would not add this item because the committee should not be tasked with evaluating budget and cost effectiveness for the agencies.

Corrie Wright will tweak the wording on the scoring sheet and bring her recommended changes to the next meeting. Chairperson Hiller suggested that the wording insert in the application instructions be clearer when explaining how the inputs, outcomes, activities, etc. all tie together. Councilmember Jensen asked if it would be worth it to split outputs and outcomes and score them separately. He would like to add a line under outcomes for agencies to be able to show they are on track for meeting their outcomes for long range (ie. 5-10 year) programs. Sasha Stiles stated that because her staff works very closely with agencies, they would know how they are doing along the way. Councilmember Jensen expressed his concern that there is nothing on the scoring sheet to reflect if an agency is on track, and if Neighborhood Relations staff leaves employment with the City, they would be taking their institutional knowledge with them.

Chairperson Hiller asked to discuss separating who provides training to agencies on outputs and outcomes, from who scores the agencies on. Corrie Wright mentioned that United Way is providing the training and Neighborhood Relations is providing the scoring, to keep the process neutral. Sasha Stiles stated that her staff will continue to have training on the application process and will be available to answer questions, but they won't be involved in helping agencies create their content. Sasha will get more information from other agencies to see if they can provide additional support to the applicants.

Meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Meeting video can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8XqQTz-nhA&feature=youtu.be>