HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Monday, May 5, 2014
7:30 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Council Chambers

Members Present: Alderman Braithwaite, Alderman Burrus, Alderman Grover, Alderman Holmes, Alderman Tendam

Members Absent: Alderman Fiske

Staff Present: Wally Bobkiewicz, Commander Diane Davis, Christina Farrarer, Sarah Flax, Henry Ford, Joseph McRae, Melissa Parker, Karen Hawk, Evonda Thomas-Smith, Audrey Thompkins

Presiding Member: Alderman Burrus

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM
   With a quorum present, Madam Chair Burrus called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 31 AND APRIL 3, 2014
   Alderman Braithwaite moved approval. Alderman Holmes seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the March 31, 2014 and April 3, 2014 minutes and it was approved 5-0.

Citizen Comments

Nickolas Stamatelopoulos (non–agenda item) asked why the City he loves is being sued for civil rights issues and he expressed concern that the taxpayers are going to pay for it. He believes there is a disconnect between the community and the police department. He brought up a complaint that he has brought to Chief Richard Eddington.

Alderman Burrus stated that his complaint will be on the June Human Services agenda.

Mr. Stamatelopoulos said he wasn’t aware that his complaint would be on the next agenda and that he has not been provided all of the information he has requested about the complaint.

Alderman Burrus stated that she did not inform him of that he would be on the June agenda but that Commander Diane Davis did.

Commander Davis stated that the complaint has been reviewed by her, two other commanders, the Chief of Police, Mayor, and she believed the City Manager. She shared that all of the police reports and videos have been provided to Mr. Stamatelopoulos and he was advised his complaint would be on the June agenda.
III. TOWNSHIP OF EVANSTON
HHT1 Township Monthly Bills

Alderman Holmes moved approval. Alderman Braithwaite seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Township Bills and it was approved 5-0.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
HH1 Expanded Senior Services

Christina Ferrara, Assistant Director of Community Services, presented on the expanded senior services. She stated that there are numerous programs available and their goal right now is to do some intense marketing in order for others to know what was going on. She reviewed:

- Services provided
- Demographics of seniors
- Boards, commissions and committees for senior services
- Public and private partnerships
- Grants
- “Age Friendly Evanston”

Alderman Braithwaite invited Ms. Ferrara to come to the west end and west village meeting groups.

Alderman Burrus asked what other boards the age friendly group is working with.

Mr. Ferrara answered that she did not know how many were living Commission on Aging, Mental Health Board and Human Relations.

Alderman Grover restated that 356 grandparents were solely responsible for raising their grandchildren and asked how many children that amounted to.

Ms. Ferrara replied that 1,000 children were being raised by their grandparents.

Alderman Burrus asked if 80% of the seniors were living in their own home, do we know how many of them are living alone. What are the biggest risks and challenges with that population?

Ms. Ferrara indicated that she would have to get the information about how many seniors were living alone. She stated that the risks and challenges were that many were living independently who shouldn’t be and they aren’t reaching out for the support services they need. They are trying to encourage to age in the community instead of aging in the home which is not always possible.

Alderman Burrus asked when that happens do we have a list of relatives to reach out and if not what is being done.

Ms. Ferrara stated that they work with a lot of other non-profit agencies that have case workers that have worked with them or involved for whatever reason.

Alderman Burrus asked what would be the best way for people to access services.

Ms. Ferrara replied that the top two ways would be going to the Levy Center or calling 311.

Alderman Braithwaite asked for an update on the handyman program.

Ms. Ferrara said it has been going terrific and they were fortunate to receive the CDBG funding and a new contractor is being used. There is currently no waitlist.

Alderman Braithwaite asked if there was a good home healthcare agency.

Mr. Ferrara answered that they do not recommend but there is a resource guide available and information can also be found at the library online.

Approved 6.2.14

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Alderman Grover asked how well the seniors are accessing 311.

Ms. Ferrara responded that she thinks they are using it very well once they have gotten beyond the apprehension at first.

Alderman Grover asked if 311 was providing data about the services people are requesting.

Ms. Ferrara stated that they are usually sent straight to her department.

Alderman Tendam shared that he is a big proponent of File of L.I.F.E. (Lifesaving information for Emergencies) and asked for Ms. Ferrara to explain more about the program.

Ms. Ferrara explained that they put their medical information, prescriptions, allergies, emergency contacts, and the power of attorney on one document. The front side is in English and back is in Spanish. The information is placed in a plastic pouch and then placed in the freezer. The EMS have been trained to look for information there first. It is given out in the welcome packet, at each of the centers, and at the library.

**HH2 Presentation from Evanston Health Advisory Council Tobacco 21**

Evonda Thomas, Health Director, introduced Dr. Timothy Sanborn, who presented on Tobacco 21 which was provided in the packet. Tobacco 21, which raises the legal age to sell cigarettes to age 21, was started in Needham, MA outside of Boston in 2005. The decline of high school students smoking were triple that of neighboring towns. ETHS data was provided which showed there has been a decrease in smoking but when looking at the grades the 11th and 12th graders are smoking more. The Evanston Health Advisory Council (EHAC) voted 9-0 to strongly recommend Tobacco 21 laws.

Alderman Grover asked who was on the Evanston Health Advisory Council.

Ms. Thomas-Smith responded that it was composed of 25 members from both hospitals, both school district’s health office, Larry Suffredin’s office and faith-based organizations who meet on a bi-monthly bases. They are appointed by the Health Director.

Alderman Grover could foresee push back from the civil libertarian objection from taking away one more thing that people from ages of 18 to 21 cannot purchase even though the data was compelling that it could curve long-term tobacco use.

Dr. Sanborn stated that has they have seen with other health policies that limiting the age to 21 could have a significant impact.

**V. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**HH3 Review of April Police Complaints**

Alderman Holmes moved approval. Alderman Braithwaite seconded. A voice vote was taken and the April Police Complaints were approved 5-0.

**HH4 Lease Renewal for Evanston Children’s Choir**

Alderman Holmes moved approval. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken and the Lease Renewal for the Evanston Children’s Choir was approved 5-0.

**HH5 Amending and Revising City Code Title 5, Chapter 1, “Property Maintenance Code”**
Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that this was cleaning up a code that was outdated. Community and Economic Development updated the International Property Maintenance Code which is what is being enforced. This will ensure that the City is in alignment with a code that is already being enforced.

Alderman Grover moved approval. Alderman Braithwaite seconded. A voice vote was taken and Amending and Revising City Code Title 5, Chapter 1, “Property Maintenance Code” was approved 5-0.

**HH6 Mental Health Board Funding and Funding priorities**

Wally Bobkiewicz, City Manager, stated that the City Council has been providing funds for the Mental Health Board social services grants for some time. In fiscal year 2013 including the monies from the Township the total amount was $748,000. It is an appropriate topic to look at if the amount makes sense and if the process makes sense. He indicated that he brought challenges to the board in January 2013 and was able to hear their responses to those challenges in March 2013. The first challenge was reforming how the board allocates funds focusing on some key areas rather than maintenance funding that they currently provide agencies and requesting an annual funding level from the City Council in the spring prior to their review of applications. It would be looking at the dollar amount at the beginning of the cycle rather than the end of the cycle. His recommended actions would be for the council and this committee to consider a funding level for fiscal year 2015 of an amount not to exceed $809,286, which is a 3% increase. Since the Township will be gone this would all be coming out of the general fund. He also requested for the council to direct the board to revise its allocation procedures beginning in 2016.

Alderman Burrus asked if the $748,000 included money from CDBG.

Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that it does not.

Alderman Burrus asked what the other additional pieces are that the City funds from other buckets of money that goes to social service agencies. We have silos and are not as impactful in a way that we could be and to know all the different funding for social services is an opportunity to have a holistic approach to help people.

Mr. Bobkiewicz answered that the line share would come from CDBG and Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Administrator, stated that it amounted to approximately $300,000 to social services.

Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that there are multiple departments that touch these areas which would amount to over a million dollars.

Alderman Holmes indicated that it would be the amount to what the Township was providing.

Alderman Burrus specified for the next meeting in June it would be helpful to have it in black and white to see the different buckets of funding and how many people are being funded out of CDBG that are also funded by the Mental Health Board which may also be funded by another source in order to get a bigger picture. That information would be helpful for deliberation.

Alderman Holmes shared that they also need to understand that CDBG gets a little confusing if they apply for public facilities which wouldn’t have anything to do with the services they provide. It would be important to understand the difference of how the funding flows. The picture has to be real clear on how we are looking at that.

Alderman Grover stated that some other data that might be helpful is in 2014 we adopted as a City goal services for at-risk families. We felt like this was a priority. She would like to see this from the agencies’ perspective too and additional data points would be what percentage of the allocation accounts for what percentage of the agency’s budget. There are some cases where the funding is a
significant amount of their budget and in times of state funding drying up or being late she would like to have a good picture of how important the funding is that comes through our services.

Alderman Holmes included that she would like to know how that funding is leverage because sometimes that helps to get additional money. There a lot of pieces that comes into this.

Mr. Bobkiewicz added that another key piece regardless of how the format may change is dealing with it earlier in the budget process. It is important to set some other parameters so the committee isn’t looking at it after the budget has already been produced.

Alderman Burrus asked if in addition to what we are spending is it possible to see what other grant giving agencies are giving toward social services.

Alderman Grover responded that she believes that a lot of that information is collected in the reporting process from the agencies.

Sandy Johnson, Vice Chair of the Mental Health Board, presented further on the memo and information provided in the packet. The Mental Health Board has nine members that meet at least monthly and do a lot of work behind the scenes. She mentioned that they ask as part of the application what grants are received and some agencies don’t like listing them but that is considered as part of the deliberations. It would be helpful to have that information with the allocation process. They are currently serving 15 agencies ranging from $6,500 to $100,000. She stated she would like to see them return to the unified budget hearings. It would save time and people know the different funding sources. This certainly could not occur this year because applications were due on Friday and they had received 15 applications. The Mental Health Board is willing to work with the committee in any way that they can and looking at moving forward. She expressed that they firmly believe that supporting the vital services from early childhood to senior care fosters healthy families and neighborhoods.

Alderman Grover provided some historical context. She said the Mental Health Board was formed in the 1960s but it was in 2002 that the Health Director suggested that the Human Services Committee consolidate with the Mental Health Board. It was at that point that the Mental Health Board took on more than mental health but to include a much larger variety of human services. It is called the Mental Health Board but it is really Human Services Board.

Alderman Burrus asked the budget allocation and recommendation coming from the committee to council do we need specific language for that.

Mr. Bobkiewicz responded that they first need to agree that it makes sense to separate the issues. If committee agrees to make the allocation now then he asked for that to be moved to the Council. The other issues would remain in committee.

Alderman Grover moved for the recommendation for fiscal year 2015 funding allocation of the Mental Health Board of $809,286 which represents last year’s allocation with a 3% increase.

Alderman Holmes seconded.

Alderman Holmes asked in terms of next steps, what would be the process to begin those kinds of conversations.

Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that it is something that the committee could give a charge to the Mental Health Board and City staff that continues to look at the human services piece. The dissolution of the Township has caused the City to look at that. He stated that he was sure that Ms. Thomas-Smith could provide a narrative on some historical funding.

Citizen Comments
Jim Hunick, Executive Director of the Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault, which is a rape crisis center. He shared that Mental Health Board funding was not maintenance funding for the agency and it was what made it possible for them to grow their staff and leverage additional funding. They are helping them to expand their services which are transformational.

Seth Green, Executive Director for Y.O.U., echoed what was just said. Even though the funding represents 3% of Y.O.U.’s budget it is absolutely a foundational 3% because it is stable, shows local support when they go after federal grants, and they use it to cover a constantly changing funding stream. Without the money, last year they would not have been able to serve Chute School.

Cass Wolfe, Executive Director for the Infant Welfare Society of Evanston, stated that they receive funding for their teen parenting program at $72,000 of their $2.4 million budget. She expressed concern that if the funding went forward with using the money toward fewer agencies, the fear would be that they would get a larger pot of money and it might be seen as time to move on to something else. A program like theirs couldn’t function if the money was pulled.

Chris Baer, Director of Programs for the Childcare Network of Evanston, talked more about programs at their agency. The first was scholarships, once a parent earns more than $29,000 the family is no longer eligible for the state’s childcare subsidy and their scholarships provide for other family expenses. The second program was Learning Together which provides on-site services for children with social, emotional and behavior issues. Without this program, parents struggle to find outside care.

Andrea Densham, Executive Director for the Childcare Network of Evanston, stated this is an important dialogue for us to have. The challenges they are having at the federal level with budgeting and timely payments. This is a great opportunity to best leverage the resources of the City has been allocating and how the services are delivered. What they do most successfully is we fill in a gap for those living just above the poverty level.

Mary Rose, from the Metropolitan Family Services, stated that all the social service agencies work together and they all need each other. None of them can do it all. MFS is a really large agency but locally they are on the smaller side. They have to prove that we have local support to justify our office.

Kate Mahoney, Executive Director for Peer Services, has been there for 30 years providing addiction prevention and treatment. She stated she is grateful for a community that works with people in need. The values of Evanston are about caring about people and provide for people who may be cast aside.

A voice vote was taken and approved 5-0.

HH7 Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Alderman Grover moved approval. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken and it was approved 5-0.

VI. COMMUNICATION

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Alderman Tendam moved to adjourn. Alderman Grover seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Parker
Administrative Secretary