HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
Monday, January 5, 2015  
7:30 p.m.  
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Council Chambers

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

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Wally Bobkiewicz, Erika Storlie, Aretha Barnes, Dianne Davis, Evonda Thomas-Smith, Commander James Pickett, Henry Ford, Christina Ferraro, and Jessica Wingader

Presiding Member: Alderman Braithwaite

I. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM
Ald. Braithwaite called the meeting to order at 7:50 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF December 1, 2014
Ald. Burrus moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved 6-0.

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
HH 1 Quarterly Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program Update
Staff recommends members of the Human Services Committee accept the report.

Ald. Braithwaite moved to accept; Ald. Holmes seconded. A voice vote was taken and the report was accepted 6-0.

HH 2 Police Complaints Report
Staff recommends members of the Human Services Committee accept the report.

Ald. Holmes moved to accept the report; Ald. Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken and the report was accepted 6-0.

V. COMMUNICATION
HH 8 Age Friendly Evanston Initiatives Annual Update
Christina Ferraro, Assistant Director of Community Services provided a presentation on Evanston’s age friendly initiatives. Evanston is one of 19 cities working with the World Health Organization to come up with a 3 year action plan to improve quality of life for seniors. The first step is to review eight initiatives that result in high quality of life for seniors. The initiatives include: transportation, outdoor spaces and buildings, community support and health services, communication and information, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, and civic participation and employment. Ms. Ferraro reviewed the timeline for surveys and data collection, focus groups, community partners, and next steps. She closed by highlighting initial findings and feedback on the program thus far.

Ald. Braithwaite moved the report to next month’s agenda

**HH 9 Noyes Tenant Association Update**
Larry Distasi, Noyes Tenant Association Chairperson, provided a presentation on the group’s successes within the past year.

**HH 10 General and Emergency Assistance Update**
Ald. Braithwaite moved to accept the update.

**HH 12 Animal Control Board Report**
Ald. Braithwaite moved to accept the report and recommend it to City Council.

Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that the Animal Control Board completed the RFP and requested that the Committee refer to City Council.

Ald. Fiske stated that the Animal Control Board had a schedule for the RFP and that the issue was time sensitive. She moved to accept the RFP and send it to the January 12, 2015 City Council meeting.

Ald. Burrus seconded the motion to accept all communications. A voice vote was taken and all communications were accepted 6-0.

### IV. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

**HH 3 Status of Public Access Channel 6 and Evanston Community Television**

*Citizen Comments*

*Twelve residents spoke in support of ECTV and public access channel 6.*

Staff recommends that the Committee members receive the report on public access television station (Channel 6)/Evanston Community Television (ECTV) and direct the City Manager to negotiate an amended agreement with ECTV for future uses of the studio and equipment located in the City Service Center.

Mr. Bobkiewicz offered introductory comments to correct any incorrect premises raised by citizen comments. He stated that ECTV is a nonprofit organization and therefore not controlled or operated by the City. The City contracted ECTV to broadcast City meetings and prior to 2010, the City supported public access. The City does get two revenue sources through cable bills including a franchise fee and a Public Education Government access fee (PEG). The franchise fee is a general revenue fee that the City used to balance budget. When the City faced $10 million in debt, rather than laying off over 50 employees, the decision was made in 2009 or 2010 to change the funding stream and reduce the amount
of money that was going to ECTV. Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that no funds were hidden, all of
the information pertaining to these decisions is available to the public, and that City Council
decided how to use the revenue. Over the past few years, ECTV has had difficulty. The
organization has been given many opportunities to grow and that growth has not come to
fruition. The City offered ECTV use of a service center because the previous space the
organization was using cost hundreds per year. The organization has a $1 per year lease
with the City because the City believes in the value of public access television and the City
recognized that the organization was in crises. The organization had a revolving door of
staff and board members and was unable to fulfill contracts with the City and with District
65. Mr. Bobkiewicz cited the financial sheet provided by the organization. The City also
invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in franchise and PEG fees. The City invested in
equipment for ECTV with Districts 65 and 202. The City isn’t trying to get rid of ECTV; the
City has no interest in or ability to do that. However, public access television and the
stewardship of public access television is the responsibility of the Council to protect as
dictated by the franchise agreements. Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that the current balance sheet
is concerning and that the organization may not be viable in the coming years. He
requested direction to negotiate an amended agreement with ECTV for the use of studio
space and the equipment located there. The goal is to make sure the connectivity between
District 65, District 202, the City and the Public Access Channel remains intact so all can
benefit. He closed by stating that the City will work with ECTV and would like to preserve
public broadcasting, but the organization may not be in a position to continue. If ECTV runs
out of money, then public access broadcasting must be preserved. Mr. Bobkiewicz pointed
out that the Cable companies are not required to provide services. He is looking for a
solution that makes sense and protects the equipment.

Ald. Braithwaite reminded all that there was a recommendation from staff to negotiate the
agreement and asked if the issue needed to come back to the Human Services Committee.

Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that if changes were needed then the issue would come back to the
Human Services Committee. He stated that he heard many good things from ECTV
representatives. His goal would be for the City to provide its own broadcast services and
ECTV would be able to refocus its business to become more viable. His hope is that staff
can keep open communications with the organization and report regularly on progress.

Ald. Grover asked if District 65 would also be operating its own cable channel.

Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that it would. He went on to state that District 65 had a similar
contract with ECTV and that District 65 notified ECTV that the contract would be ending at
the end of the last calendar year 2014.

Ald. Grover asked if the contract was terminated because of ECTV’s operations or if it was
an internal decision.

Ms. Storlie replied that the contract was terminated due to performance.

Ald. Grover noted that ECTV is an independent organization and while the City has a seat
on the board, the City doesn’t determine whether or not the organization stays open. She
pointed out that ECTV’s expenses don’t include rent which will help the organization. She
further stated that the mission is good, it provides a valuable service, and the people
involved are good people. She agrees that the organization needs time to prove viability.
Ald. Fiske stated that the organization is moving in a good direction. She agrees with Ald. Grover, but a year is all the time the City should give. She asked if the meeting was being broadcast and asked about the loss of cable coverage.

Mr. Bobkiewicz explained that the meeting was being broadcast and that the reason the TV wasn’t working was due to difficulties with the computer that operated the cameras. He stated that the problem was being resolved.

Ald. Holmes asked about what would happen after a year. She expressed concern that the community could lose ECTV as a resource. She provided some history around the move to the Service Center and the budget issues the organization faced at the time. She stated that the board should be fundraising. She said that the organization always had good ideas, but those ideas never came to fruition. She believes that the new board is good, but the change needs to be continued. She agreed with the idea of a committee if that could help, but she urged the board to take responsibility. She stated that she gets emails and calls all the time from residents about ECTV, but she isn’t seeing the same shows she saw before and there doesn’t seem to be consistency in programming. As an example, she stated that she was interviewed by ECTV, but it didn’t go anywhere and she hasn’t heard anything since. She doesn’t see the community reflected in the programming. She closed by sending a direct message to the board. She stated that she likes ECTV’s ideas, but there isn’t any follow through. The organization provides a valuable tool, but the City isn’t responsible for supporting ECTV.

Ald. Tendam also expressed concerns about fundraising. He stated that the ideas of teaching and bringing youth and community members into the fold are great, but partnerships don’t raise money. Serious fundraising efforts must be made especially if Dist. 65 isn’t renewing its contract. He would like the organization to present fundraising ideas and he asked the organization to present realistic budget numbers.

Ald. Braithwaite stated that he agrees. He thanked the speakers and stated that people agree that the organization is viable. He requested that the City Manager work with the organization’s new Treasurer to prepare a budget and clearly show revenues and collect receivables.

Mr. Bobkiewicz asked if the decision was to keep this issue in Committee

Ald. Braithwaite confirmed.

**HH 4 Harley Clarke Negotiations with IDNR Update**

The City Manager recommend members of the Human Services Committee receive the report, authorize the City Manager to enter into a memorandum of understanding in a form approved by the Corporation Counsel with the Evanston Arts Center providing for permit fee waivers; direct the City Manager to investigate deconstruction of the Harley Clarke Mansion and provide report at the March Human Services Committee meeting.

Alderman Fiske requested an update on the negotiations with IDNR.

Mr. Bobkiewicz read a letter from IDNR stating that the organization was no longer in a position to enter into any agreements regarding the property. The letter further stated that
the new administration would be determining priorities. Mr. Bobkiewicz reviewed the recommended actions. He stated that there are two parts, the first relates to the Evanston Art Center; those items include the extension of the lease, which was approved, the second, which was held in abeyance, was a waiver of City fees that related to the move, and the third was to provide trash and recycling receptacles and to provide $5,000 to assist with moving services. The issue that remained was waiving fees and the Committee requested additional information. He directed the Committee to page 42 of the report which detailed what other city’s do including Niles, Skokie, Wilmette, Lincolnwood, and Glenview. All other cities require permits and do not waive fees for nonprofit organizations. Included in the report are Cook County’s policies which also state that nonprofit organizations are required to pay 100% of the fees associated with moving and no waivers are provided. The Committee also requested information on best practices which was not included in the report. The City Manager apologized for the omission. He asked the Committee to consider the Art Center’s move as a single event because the organization is vacating a City owned building at the City’s request. Mr. Bobkiewicz reiterated that this should not be an event that should set precedence for the way the City would work with nonprofit organizations in future.

Ald. Braithwaite called for public comments.

Ald. Fiske requested discussion around the second item. She asked if staff found any precedence of the City waiving fees.

Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that all of the information found was included in the report. He apologized for the incomplete report.

Ald. Braithwaite requested information on the second component of the action.

Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that the second half focuses on the future of the building. At the time the memorandum was written, the City Manager had not received further communication from IDNR, but IDNR’s position was consistent throughout the negotiations. The building needs significant repairs and City Council has been in discussion for the past three years as to what to do. The City’s most recent position is that the grounds are not for sale, but the building may be for sale. Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that he believes based on IDNR’s response that it will be difficult to find another group that would agree to the City’s terms. Mr. Bobkiewicz urged the Committee to consider other options. A radical option includes deconstruction of the building. If the City is not able to use or sell the building then deconstruction is the last option. Mr. Bobkiewicz stated that he did not have an estimate of the costs, but an estimate could be obtained. He asked the Committee to consider other alternatives as the building would be empty on June 1, 2015. The City Manager closed by requesting direction from the Committee.

Ald. Braithwaite requested that the Committee hold questions until after Citizen Comments.

Citizen Comments
Seven residents spoke about the Harley Clarke mansion and the status of negotiations with IDNR. Overall sentiment was that the City should try to remain in negotiations with the new administration or identify another organization to buy the building and lease the land. Residents urged committee members to solicit advice from other organizations including the Evanston Preservation Commission.
Ald. Grover stated her disappointment over the deal falling through. She remains open to renegotiations and recognizes the three years of deliberation over this building. She further summarized the City’s history of looking for a solution including proposals, an RFP, RFQ, surveys and community meetings. She stated that the only certainty is that as of June 1st it won’t host Evanston Art Center. Demolition or deconstruction is not eminent and there are lots of ideas, but no one has taken on this project and the resources aren’t there. She expressed frustration at the lack of consensus, assistance and resources. She expressed hope that the City could be flexible with IDNR and thought that, with more time, there may be further negotiations. She suggested that this issue move to full council to see if there are other options. She further suggested that the City take the next 6 months to engage residents and interested groups to find other solutions; information is still available online. She suggests that the issue is sent up to full council to see how the community can be engaged with the goal of exploring all possible solutions before deconstruction.

Ald. Fiske suggested that the City continue to negotiate with the new administration and pointed out that the City hasn’t had the opportunity to work with the incoming administration. She stated that an ad hoc subcommittee would be very helpful, but admonished the Preservation commission for not working with the City sooner. She welcomed suggestions from all and support from other organizations and further requested input on the RFP. She commented on Ms. Rosinski’s experience moving buildings and expressed hope for a buyer. She also pointed out that when the City acquired the building it was for the land and the beach. She remains opposed to selling land. She asked that all involved rethink the use of the property, the building and beach, and the lighthouse. She closed by stating that she agrees with Ald. Grover and all community ideas are welcome.

Ald. Holmes reiterated that there has been three years of community input and the responses are all reactionary. The RFP only generated one response, but that there are other organizations with financial resources including Northwestern University. She wondered if the City was willing to see if Northwestern would be interested in purchasing the building. She closed by stating that selling the building to a party interested in keeping it in Evanston would be ideal.

Ald. Fiske requested information on the cost of moving the building; she also stated that she requested information on the cost to deconstruct months ago.

Ald. Holmes pointed out that moving the building would be different than deconstructing it.

Ald. Fiske agreed, but pointed out that the Committee may want information for all options.

Ald. Holmes stated that she appreciates the conversation and asked about contacting the Rauner administration to reopen negotiations.

Ald. Tendam stated that he didn’t have a lot of confidence in new administration and would like to give local groups like the Preservation Commission another chance to share ideas. He expressed interest in continuing conversations with the speakers and reiterated the hope that a use for the building could be found. He mentioned associations with Park Districts and facilities utilized by residents and suggested organizing a task force that can review this issue and get feedback from diverse groups throughout the City. He urged all to consider this topic with a fresh perspective.
Ald. Burrus expressed a dissenting opinion from Ald. Tendam given her long history with the issue. She stated that if people weren’t aware of this issue then they weren’t paying attention. She pointed out that there is no philanthropic funding available and no nonprofit can afford the $6 million fees associated with getting the building up to code or the up to $20 million to customize the space. She stated that groups like Parks for People and Preservation Society haven’t participated in previous conversations, come up with proactive ideas, or have ideas for funding. She further stated that the City couldn’t expect an entity to take an ownership stake in the building with no ownership rights to the land. She agrees with Ald. Fiske that the City is in a stalemate. The City won’t sell the land, residents don’t want to tear down the building, the City doesn’t want a for-profit use for the building, but that would be the only entity with the money to repair it, the City can’t find a nonprofit to occupy unless the City can pay for renovations. She stated that it would be embarrassing for the City to have the building boarded up. She called for a referendum to residents.

**Ald. Grover moved to send the issue to City Council on Monday, January 12, 2015 for consideration; Ald. Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.**

Ald. Braithwaite pointed out that the two items before the Committee included the fees and directing the City manager and staff to collect more information.

Mr. Bobkiewicz suggested that the cost gathering could be an item for City Council to determine whether it would be for deconstruction or demolition. He asked the Committee for a recommendation for fees whether it was zero or some other amount that recognizes that the organization is being asked to leave by the City and not on their terms. Mr. Bobkiewicz suggested $2,500.00 or roughly half of the costs incurred.

Ald. Fiske amended her motion to include the $2,500.00 amount; Ald. Burrus seconded.

Ald. Braithwaite reintroduced the motion to move the discussion to City Council. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 6-0.

Ald. Braithwaite outlined the second part of the motion, the fees.

Ald. Holmes asked for a justification of the amount.

Mr. Bobkiewicz replied that it was because the City ended the lease.

Ald. Braithwaite confirmed the motion and that it was seconded by Ald. Burrus.

A voice vote was taken and the motion passed 5-1 with Ald. Holmes voting against.

**HH 5  Lease Updates for Noyes Tenants Association**

Staff recommends that members of the Human Services Committee recommend City Council approval of Resolution 1-R-15 authorizing the City Manager to adjust tenant lease conditions at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center (NCAC) as of January 1, 2015.
Ald. Holmes moved to accept; Ald. Fiske seconded. The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend Resolution 1-R-15 to City Council.

HH 6 Lease Update for Noyes Cultural Arts Center Tenants
Staff recommends that members of the Human Services Committee recommend City Council approval of Resolution 2-R-15 authorizing the City Manager to enter into twenty (20) renewal agreements for twelve (12) month lease term for the artist leases for spaces at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center (NCAC).

Ald. Fiske moved approval; Ald. Holmes seconded. The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend Resolution 2-R-15 to City Council.

HH 7 Five-month Noyes Studio Lease with Evanston Art Center
Staff recommend that members of the Human Services Committee recommend City Council approval of Resolution 3-R-15 authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement for five-month lease term for the Evanston Arts Center to lease spaces at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center.

Ald. Tendam moved to accept, Ald. Fiske seconded. The Committee voted unanimously 6-0 to recommend Resolution 3-R-15 to City Council.

HH 11 Human Services Funding Summit Update
Ald. Braithwaite stated that the next joint meeting between Human Services Committee, Mental Health Board and Housing and Community Development Act Committee would take place on Tuesday, January 27, 2015.

VI. ADJOURNMENT


Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Wingader
Administrative Secretary