HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
Monday, July 7, 2014
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, Joseph McRae, Erika Storlie, Sarah Flax, Mario Treto, Evonda Thomas-Smith, Indira Perkins, Karen Danczak Lyons, Richard Eddington, Cindy Plante, Jessica Wingader

Presiding Member:  Alderman Burrus

AGENDA

I.   CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM
    Alderman Burrus called the meeting to order at 8:05 pm.

II.  APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2014
    Alderman Braithwaite moved approval. Alderman Fiske seconded approval with a correction. A voice vote was taken to approve the June 2, 2014 minutes and it was approved 6-0.

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION
   Citizen Comments

   Matthew Terry spoke on behalf of Food and Water Watch, a non-profit organization about the abuse of antibiotics and the loss of effectiveness of antibiotics. He cited two reports, one from the World Health Organization and the other from the Center for Disease Control, showing how antibiotics are losing effectiveness. Solutions include supporting legislation that will stop farmers from using antibiotics. Congress should pass the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act and Senate should pass S. 1256: Preventing Antibiotic Resistance Act. In order for Congress to act, we need to hear from community leaders. Commissioner of the Department of Public Health and the Chicago City Council also called on Congress to pass similar resolutions. Evanston council should pass Healthy Farms Healthy Families. 150 Evanston residents signed a petition in favor of this resolution and urging city council to take action. Teams are working across the country to pass resolutions by the end of the summer to send a strong message about the urgency of this issue. Speaker asked that a resolution be introduced next Monday, July 14, 2014.

   Alderman Burrus requested a more formal presentation of the information for the next meeting on August 4, 2014.

   Speaker stated that his supervisor might be able to attend. Alderman Burrus requested contact information and requested that Erika Storlie follow up. She thanked the speaker.
Bonnie Wilson, former Township Assessor of Evanston, wanted to announce that the new Tax Assessment Review Office is located in room 1450 at the Civic Center next to the City Clerk’s office. The phone number is 847-448-8168; people can also call 311 if they are in Evanston. Mitzi Gibbs in the office is doing a superb job helping Evanston taxpayers identify exemptions.

Alderman Burrus asked about the exemptions people should be looking for.

Bonnie Wilson listed the Homeowner Exemption, the Senior Exemption and the Disabled Exemption.

HH8 - Junad Rizki wanted to discuss the non-payment of rent for Next Theater. He questioned the City’s decision to resign a lease with the theater. He suggested that the City outsource debt collection.

HH1 - Mary Rosinski of the Evanston Park and Lakefront Alliance spoke in support of Harley Clarke.

Doria Johnson stated that she was representing citizens concerned about Evanston police stop and frisk policies.

Diane Britton spoke of her concern over the recent youth violence and requested that a committee be formed to address this issue.

Alderman Burrus and Alderman Holmes identified Joe McCrae who is working with the police to address this issue. Alderman Burrus agreed that we all need to be working on and focusing on this issue. She encouraged community members to get involved.

Alderman Holmes stated that the City is serious, but we all need to work together. It will take everyone. This issue effects the whole community and we all need to come together to find a solution.

HH1 - Herb Harms spoke in support of Harley Clarke and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources moving into the space. He expressed concern over the lack of parking at Lighthouse beach and suggested that the garage be converted into 50 more parking spaces.

HH9 - Gerald Adler spoke in support of extending the lease with Next Theater.

Mary Rosinski further announced that the DeJae Coleman Foundation, this July 12th will be hosting an open discussion at the Heartwood Center on the book How Long Will I Cry? Voices of Youth Violence. All are welcome.

HH1 Harley Clarke Update

Wally Bobkiewicz provided an update on discussions with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Improvements to building will cost $5 million dollars and the State is willing to move forward. The work will take place over the next two fiscal years and attorneys are finalizing documents that Council will be able to review in August. The State would take control of the building around January 2015.

Alderman Fiske asked about funding and the City's involvement.

Wally Bobkiewicz replied that the State is exploring different funding sources and that the City is not responsible for providing funding at this time.

Alderman Grover stated that she had been in touch with the many groups involved with the space – all are supportive.

Alderman Fiske requested that the Lakefront Alliance group also be involved in discussions.

Jeff Smith said that he has heard nothing but positive feedback about this project. He believes that all parties are committed to preserving the public nature of the space and public access to amenities. He talked briefly about funding concerns, but stated that the involved parties were looking at ways to make the funding more robust and went on to state that there are funds dedicated specifically to this project. He believes this project symbolizes the great things that Evanston has to offer and will introduce Evanston to a wider audience.

Alderman Burrus called for a motion.
Alderman Braithwaite moved approval. Alderman Holmes seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Harley Clarke Update and it was approved 6-0.

**HH2 Human Services Funding**

Alderman Burrus discussed the City's allocation of funding and how it is meant to align with council goals to aid the many issues the City is working to address in partnership with local nonprofits. She stated that the funding is scattered. The information provided is meant to give a better overview of how funds are distributed. Alderman Burrus hopes for more discussion about funding to ensure that funding distribution aligns with council goals.

Alderman Holmes stated that the overview is similar to the unified budgeting system and provides a good overview of allocations.

Alderman Burrus stated that it would also be important to review the money distributed by the Evanston Community Foundation and the organizations they fund.

Alderman Grover stated that some requests for funds were connected to federal grants that would match allocations. She suggested that there should be a way to indicate which requests were associated with federal funding.

Wally Bobkiewicz asked if the committee would like more information or if the committee is interested in taking next steps.

Alderman Burrus stated that CDBG should be a part of the discussion.

Alderman Braithwaite pointed out that the information provided doesn't include money spent on programming. Alderman Braithwaite stated that he would like to see operational costs versus programmatic costs; Alderman Burrus agreed.

Alderman Grover stated that she would like the agencies that receive funds to be a part of the conversation.

Alderman Holmes stated that City funding for programs is different than money given to nonprofits. This discussion is about money given to nonprofits to provide services that the City doesn't provide. However, if there is overlap in services, then that would be good to know, and she would be open to further conversation if that were the case.

Alderman Braithwaite asked to define the target population and review where the City's funding is having an impact on that defined group.

Alderman Grover defined the population as at risk families.

Wally Bobkiewicz asked if he could communicate the feedback to the Community and Economic Development Committee.

Alderman Burrus called for a more robust, committee-type format to discuss these issues. These groups need to be a part of the conversation to define what we are all trying to accomplish. Alderman Burrus stated that goals should be clearly defined and that the City needs to take a stand, define what we want to change and move forward.

Wally Bobkiewicz suggested a joint committee with Housing and Community Development Act Committee and the Mental Health Board.

Alderman Burrus agreed that a joint meeting would be helpful. All parties involved need to be a part of the conversation.

Alderman Holmes stated that current funding is not meant to address a lot of the current issues. It would be good to look at reallocating funds and communicate any changes to partner agencies.

Alderman Burrus stated that the Committee review the City's vision. Stopping the violence should be the first priority.

Wally Bobkiewicz suggested that staff work on the issues addressed.

**HH3 City of Evanston/EPL Memorandum of Understanding**

Karen Danczak Lyons introduced the purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding. The document reflects that the libraries are still City facilities and the Library will work with the City to maintain the property. The Library is responsible for programming and will reimburse the City for services that the
City provides. The Library runs on funds collected through property taxes and that there is a delay in collecting revenue. The City assists in paying reasonable expenses associated with running the Library until the Library is able to repay the City.

Alderman Braithwaite asked if the City’s Facilities staff would help determine repairs or if the Library board would hire an independent party.

Karen Danczak Lyons replied that the Library hired a consulting company to do a building analysis that was completed at the end of last year. The Library will provide a capital plan when the City’s capital plan is released so the results can be shared. The Main Library and the North Branch both have facilities issues, but the Library will work with the City to ensure that all repairs are completed in a cost effective way.

Alderman Burrus asked how the $250,000 number was derived.

Karen Danczak Lyons stated that more information could be found in the 2014 Budget and she would be happy to provide that information.

Alderman Burrus noted that there was no money allocated for building maintenance or capital improvements and asked if the City would be expected to cover those costs.

Karen Danczak Lyons stated that the Library would work with the City to determine the most efficient way and that the answer was part of larger capital improvement discussions.

Alderman Burrus stated that the Library was responsible for the cost of repairs. She asked if the Library wanted to purchase building. She expressed concern over the lack of clearly defined financial obligations. Alderman Burrus also asked if the property included the adjacent parking lot or just the lot under the building. Alderman Burrus does not want to include the adjacent lot in the Memorandum.

Karen Danczak Lyons replied that the lot has always been described as part of the property and still remains under the purview of the City’s parking.

Alderman Burrus stated that the lot shouldn’t be a part of this Memorandum.

Alderman Holmes stated that she didn’t associate the adjacent lot with the Library.

Alderman Burrus asked to include a definition of the parking lots in the Memorandum.

Alderman Fiske agreed with Alderman Burrus.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated there would be further discussion around the delineation of the property, but that the focus should be on maintenance and that any costs associated with maintenance would be the responsibility of the Library Fund. The Library is looking at ways to raise revenue. It might not be cost effective to have the Library issue its own debt, instead debt can be allocated to the Library Fund and debt can be paid through revenues that come into the Library Fund. No agreements would transfer property away from the residents of Evanston. If the Library acquires a new parcel than it would be the responsibility of the Library Fund and that all maintenance would also be the responsibility of the Library Fund. Mr. Bobkiewicz asked to hold this in committee until the issue of the surface lot was clarified.

Alderman Burrus asked for itemization of the $250,000.

Alderman Fiske stated that the original document was unwieldy and that staff did a great job streamlining the process. It was a pleasure to serve on the committee.

Alderman Tendam stated that information to support statistics is available and that last year’s budget is key to itemizing the $250,000 – the information is available.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that staff would make changes and provide more information for the August meeting.

V. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

HH4 Human Rights Ordinance

Wally Bobkiewicz provided the history of ordinances which codified beliefs in human rights in fair housing and fair treatment and reviewed the standards used to make Evanston welcoming to all. A police officer was appointed to work specifically with LGBT issues and staff worked to review sections of the City Code that dealt with employment and fair housing to include best practices. Jonathan
Williams-Kinsel worked with the Law Department to draft Ordinance 26O14. This new ordinance lets the nation know how welcoming and accepting Evanston is of diversity and combines things in one section to make sure our language reflects best practices. The new language is clear that the City is not an enforcement organization. Complaints are managed through Cook County or the State of Illinois.

Alderman Tendam commented on Evanston progressive stance. He spoke in favor of the new ordinance and thanked Alderman Wynne, Alderman Rainey and staff.

Alderman Braithwaite also gave thanks to all for the work and leadership and asked about any documented cases of discrimination against transgendered residents.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that none have come forward. The ordinance needed to be changed to include the most up to date language, not because there are issues present.

Alderman Braithwaite asked about national organizations that are looking at polls around quality of life for African Americans.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that staff researched the issue of making Evanston the most livable city for African Americans, but has not been able to identify anything scientific. Staff will continue to look. The information and ranking system staff used came from the Human Rights Campaign.

Alderman Grover asked if the changes to the ordinance included combining sections of the Human Rights Ordinance and updating the language to include two more protected classes.

Mario Treto stated that the ordinance is updated to include gender identity and source of income and codifies something that is already in place.

Alderman Tendam addressed the issue of why Evanston is updating the ordinance by stating that the LGBT community is different, more private than other groups and the discrimination against this group might me more covert, but that all minority groups are protected under this ordinance.

Alderman Burrus stated that she had minor changes to ordinance, but otherwise she supports it.

Wally Bobkiewicz asked that the Committee recommend to the City Council that the ordinance be introduced.

Alderman Tendam moved approval of Ordinance 26O14. Alderman Braithwaite seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Human Rights Ordinance and it was approved 6-0.

**HH5  Lease Renewal for Art Encounter**
Alderman Holmes moved to approve. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Lease Renewal for Art Encounter and it was approved 6-0.

**HH6  Lease Renewal for Actor's Gymnasium**
Alderman Grover moved to approve. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Lease Renewal for Actor's Gymnasium and it was approved 6-0.

**HH7  Lease Renewal for Piven Theater**
Alderman Fiske moved to approve. Alderman Holmes seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the Lease Renewal for Piven Theater and it was approved 6-0.

**HH8  Authorization to Collect Debt for Next Theater/Promissory Note**
Wally Bobkiewicz stated that there have been issues collecting rent from Next Theater, but Next has been a longstanding tenant and an important part of the community. Past agreements between the City and the theater were paid in full. Challenges for the theater started two years ago and the City tried to work with Next. Wally Bobkiewicz thanked Joe McRae and Christina Ferraro for working with the staff and board of Next. However, it may not be possible for the City to work with Next at this time and the solution may include a Promissory Note that states the total debt and gives the theater one more year to operate in Evanston. If the theater is not allowed to operate, the City may not be able to
find another tenant at this time and the theater may remain unoccupied for the season. This would have a negative effect on Next. Giving the theater a year to operate would give the City the opportunity to find another tenant. Next Theater has been a tremendous asset to the community. If the debt were paid than the theater should continue, but if not, The City has a responsibility to the taxpayers to find a viable tenant.

Alderman Fisk stated her reluctance to end the relationship and asked if Next had a representative present. She thanked the City Manager and asked if there was a way to assess other benefits that the community receives because from the theater’s residency.

Wally Bobkiewicz hypothesized that a few thousand participants came for the past season and stated that the theater has been an economic engine, bringing dining and life to that area. To have the theater vacant for the next nine months benefits no one.

Alderman Fiske agreed that it would be unfortunate for a downtown to lose a theater.

Wally Bobkiewicz responded that several leases have been approved, but all theaters are fragile.

Alderman Grover stated her support for the proposal.

Alderman Tendam questioned the absence of Next Theater board representation and also stated his support for the proposal.

Alderman Holmes asked if there had been discussion between City staff and Next board members.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that there was a disconnect between the operations of theater and the governing board.

Alderman Braithwaite stated that he would also like a theater representative to participate in discussions.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that a board representative would present to the Council at a future meeting.

Alderman Braithwaite asked about the Tenants’ Association.

Joseph McRae stated that the Tenants’ Association didn’t have a discussion with staff.

Alderman Braithwaite asked if this was the only theater behind in rent.

Joseph McRae stated that, with the Lease Agreements that have come before the Committee, all issues have been addressed.

Alderman Fiske stated that she would like to invite the board to come and introduce themselves to the community. She asked if there was someone in Economic Development who helps nonprofits raise funds.

Joseph McRae stated that the board was aware of the meeting but unable to attend.

Wally Bobkiewicz stated that there were some legal concerns and that Mr. Farrar is involved, but a representative will be present at the next meeting.

Alderman Burrus asked if the issue should be held or if the Committee should move forward with a vote.

Alderman Holmes moved approval. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve 6-0.

Wally Bobkiewicz clarified that Johanna Nyden on the Economic Development team works with all nonprofit arts organizations to connect them to Evanston businesses for the purposes of financial support.
HH9  Lease Agreement for Next Theater
Alderman Fiske moved approval. Alderman Holmes seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve the 
Lease Agreement for Next Theater 6-0.

HH10  2014 Emergency Solutions Grant Allocation
Sarah Flax stated that the City received a grant from HUD and, as part of the grant, she is required to 
state the dollars allocated on a percentage bases. The Committee already approved the allocations 
and the Council approved as well.

Alderman Gover moved approval. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken to approve 
the 2014 Emergency Solutions Grant Allocation and it was approved 6-0.

HH11  IHDA Abandoned Property Grant
Alderman Burrus asked if any discussion was needed.

Alderman Holmes moved to approve. Alderman Tendam seconded. A voice vote was taken to 
approve the IHDA Abandoned Property Grant and it was approved 6-0.

VI.  COMMUNICATION

HH12  General Assistance Report
Wally Bobkiewicz stated that the team would provide updates several times throughout the year both 
at the Human Services Committee Meetings and at the Administration and Public Works Committee 
Meetings and introduced Evonda Thomas-Smith.

Evonda Thomas-Smith provided updates on general assistance programs, provided packets with more 
information, and introduced Indera Perkins, the new General Assistance Specialist. The report 
provides information on the General Assistance Program and Emergency Assistance Program. Since 
January 2014, there were 188 participants. Partnerships provided wrap services; services were not 
duplicated. 50 clients released or terminated since January. 37 more participants enrolled. Others 
became ineligible. Evonda stated that she met with participants in large group settings and individually 
to remind them of their rights and responsibilities. Participants can be dismissed from the program for 
various reasons; some gained employment or became SSI recipients. Participants benefited from a 
partnership with the YMCA and Evonda thanked Alderman Grover and Alderman Braithwaite for 
making that partnership possible and successful. 180 participants enrolled in County Care Program 
and are receiving services with Eire Family Services. She would like to grow the program through 
continued collaboration with existing partners and increased marketing. She identified a need for 
optometry and dental services and tobacco cessation programs.

Alderman Braithwaite stated that he was looking forward to updates. He asked about the number of 
participants taking advantage of Erie services.

Evonda Thomas-Smith stated that she expects to see a decrease.

Alderman Braithwaite asked about the changes in requirements that make people eligible for general 
assistance.

Evonda Thomas-Smith stated that Indera Perkins would address those concerns.

Alderman Holmes stated that she has heard nothing but good reports from participants so she is not 
sure who has concerns about eligibility.

Alderman Grover offered complements to all parts of services.

Indera Perkins talked about the best practices she has been incorporating into services. She attended 
several trainings; topics included rental assistance and best ways to process medical insurance 
claims. The Coast to coast medical discount program has been reinstituted with Erie. Cost difference 
has been significant and the program reimburses the City for using the program. Since January, 2014, 
the City has been able to save 61% of medical costs and participants receive medication at no cost. 
Participants are required to register with Illinois Department of Employment Security. Indera Perkins 
discussed the process and challenges in enrolling participants. Successes of the program include 
participants receiving previously unclaimed benefits. People with additional questions or concerns can 
contact the office directly.
Alderman Burrus complemented Indera on the great presentation. She further stated that it is great to see the difference that these services have made in people’s lives.

**HH13  Marijuana Arrests/Tickets**

Chief Eddington discussed some of the controlled substance issues that the committee has been addressing. He referenced the proposal stated by Northwestern University student, Marco Pavisic. He worked with the Legal Department to prepare an opinion and summarized the findings. The City does not have the authority under the Illinois Constitution to handle or prosecute controlled substance cases under City ordinance. Chief Eddington further stated that the laws around drug use other than cannabis were governed by the State. The City’s choice to make cannabis possession punishable by compliance tickets has been implemented and will be further addressed by the presentation.

First slide shows trend data for arrests and compliance tickets.

Alderman Grover clarified that the blue line indicated arrests and noted the downward trend.

Chief Eddington stated that when a juvenile receives a ticket, that person’s parent or legal guardian is contacted.

Alderman Braithwaite asked about the amount of fines offenders can receive.

Chief Eddington stated that fines were involved and the amount was determined by a judge.

Second slide showed compliance tickets issued – the number written compared to collection and community service.

Alderman Burrus asked about community service in lieu of fines and how the program is administered.

Alderman Holmes stated that the courts work in partnership with agencies including the Moran Center. A staff member from the Moran Center is present at court to discuss community service options with people.

Alderman Burrus stated that this aligns with council goals.

Chief Eddington stated that the administrative judges had a similar goal in mind for community service and that they use that option whenever it is appropriate.

**HH 14  Quarterly Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program Update**

Sarah Flax provided an update on the Quarterly Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program. The program was approved last summer to address the needs of families who didn’t have stable housing and also have children in (Evanston public) schools. Sarah Flax highlighted the challenges people in this situation faced and stated that TBRA put families in rentals of their choice – close to school and work. Families in the program also receive wrap services from other agencies. All of the participating households are in compliance and quarterly updates will be provided.

Alderman Holmes asked about direct contact with District 65. She stated that she has received complaints from District 65.

Sarah Flax stated that she and Mary Ellen Poole are working with Judith Treadway. One of the challenges is that the school district has two schools in Skokie. At the onset of the program, it was unclear whether children who are Evanston residents, but attending a District 65 school in Skokie, were eligible for services.

Alderman Braithwaite stated that he heard similar concerns and asked if there was someone with Connections for the Homeless who works specifically with District 65.

Sarah Flax stated that caseworkers from Connections work with individuals, schools, and school social workers.

Alderman Braithwaite asked if there was money set aside specifically for District 65 families.

Sarah Flax replied that the TBRA money, as designated by Council, is for Evanston families with children under the age of 18, not just District 65 children.

Alderman Holmes asked about 60203.

Sarah Flax stated that home funds need to be used in geographic jurisdiction. It doesn’t matter if kids are going to school in another area as long as they are living in 60202 or 60201.
Alderman Braithwaite stated that parents used a Skokie address because they didn’t have another address.
Sarah Flax stated that if the kids are in the schools it doesn’t matter.
Alderman Holmes stated that the confusion comes from the three different zip codes in Evanston.
Alderman Burrus stated that the University has its own zip code.
Sarah Flax encouraged people to refer any issues to her or Mary Ellen.
Alderman Braithwaite asked if Connections for the Homeless could confirm the total number of families from District 65 who were placed in homes.
Sarah Flax stated she would confirm the number of families with children in District 65 versus District 202. She also stated that she would provide the total number of families referred, the total applied, and the numbers of families assisted in District 65 and District 202.
Alderman Burrus thanked Sarah for the presentation.

VII. ADJOURNMENT
Alderman Holmes moved for adjournment. Alderman Braithwaite seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Jessica Wingader
Administrative Secretary