Human Services Committee
Minutes of February 2, 2010
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center
Council Chambers 7:00 P.M.

PRESIDING OFFICIAL
Delores Holmes

ALDERMAN PRESENT:
Jane Grover, Mark Tendam, Judy Fiske,

ALDERMAN ABSENT:
Lionel Jean-Baptiste

A Quorum was present

STAFF PRESENT:
Evonda Thomas, Bob Dorneker, Sol Anderson, Doug Gaynor, Richard Eddington,

OTHERS PRESENT:
Bonnie Wilson, Rosemary Jean-Paul

CALL TO ORDER
Ald. Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Approval of the minutes of January 5, 2010 meeting
*Ald. Grover moved to approve as amended, Ald. Tendam seconded; Approved 4-0

Ald. Grover made the following corrections; on page 4, Linda Lina Hoffman and omit Paul Seldon from paragraph 10, page 4. Mr. Seldon is the Executive Director for Connections for the Homeless and not a member of the Mental Health Board.

Ald. Fiske corrected a misspelling of her name Fisk Fiske.

MONTHLY TOWNSHIP BILLS
*Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded; Approved 4-0.

Ald. Grover requested a breakdown of the Township’s budget to evaluate administrative expensive vs. direct service

Ald. Holmes requested an update of pending legal fees; the law dept. will assist with compiling and completing the request.

Ald. Fiske asked who compiles the bills; Rosemary Jean-Paul, Director of the Township stated the reports are generated by staff.
RESOLUTION 10-R-10 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO RENEWAL OF RESIDENT ARTIST LEASES FOR SPACES AT THE NOYES CULTURAL ARTS CENTER
*Ald. Fiske moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded; Approved 4-0

Ald. Fiske asked if the rent for the artist leases were increased this year; Mr. Gaynor, Director of Parks, Forestry, Recreation and Facility Management replied the rents were increased by three percent, which was done in-house. Three percent was formulated based on what was done last year, the economy and after discussion with some of the tenants. Also, the center has not lost any tenants due to the increase.

Ald. Grover had the following suggestions for revising the present lease agreement:

- A clearer definition of the third lease year which begins March 1, 2010
- Define the Lessor.
- Section 8. LESSEE NOT TO MISUSE; SUBLET, ASSIGN. Section c. is redundant.
- Section 8.d. “This Lease shall constitute the entire understanding of the parties hereto, superseding any and all prior agreements, whether written or oral”; this section should be moved to the miscellaneous section
- Section 10 NON-RENEWAL: The first sentence in the paragraph is unclear; does it refer back to paragraph 1.b.
- Section 11 Community Service: Lessee hereby covenants and agrees to perform during the term of this lease the Cultural Community Service Community Service activity set forth in Appendix B. Community Service is as approved in advance by Lessee Evanston Arts Council and calculated at 15%....
- There were also font and grammar issues throughout the lease that require corrections.
- Leases should be reviewed for the art studio and larger spaces.

Betty Sue Ester (citizen comments) asked if a resident could rent the facility if the event is not art related. Mr. Gaynor replied the Noyes Cultural Art Center is rented out primarily to art related events/organizations. The Ecology and other centers are available for rental for all events.

UPDATE OF CITIZEN REVIEW OF POLICE COMPLAINTS
Ald. Grover moved approval, Ald. Tendam seconded; Approved 4-0

FERAL CAT HOARDING IN EVANSTON
Ald. Fiske requested this item be placed on the agenda to get an update of the feral cat colony on Grant St.

Chief of Police Richard Eddington reported the cat colony was brought to the attention of the Evanston Police Department (EPD) after the resident who was
feeding the cats passed away. The EPD plan is to capture and evaluate the cats for adoption, which is an extremely difficult process for feral cats. He read the comments posted in reply to the City’s press release regarding the cats and the one reoccurring suggestion was Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). A colony of that size requires a citizen volunteer to help feed the cats once TNR is completed. The veterinarian that is used by the EPD quoted $100.00 to neuter/spay, microchip and ear clip each cat.

The number of cats is undetermined at this time; however, from the report given by the neighbors it is reported that there are A LOT of cats involved, Chief Eddington stated. He further stated it is difficult to get referrals for feral cats and he has asked other agencies for contacts in the Chicago area. He has also asked for success stories involving feral cats in other communities for reference on how to deal with the cats but has not been successful in his attempt.

Ald. Fiske offered to provide food for the cats as long as it’s needed. Ald. Fiske has experience with feral cats and has captured and socialized several feral cats.

Megan Lewis of the CARE organization became involved after the passing of the resident; CARE was asked to provide cages to house the cats after they were captured. They realized the intent of the City was to wait 48 hours for a resident who had a missing cat to see if any of the captured cats belonged to them; those unclaimed would then be euthanized. CARE was told they could not TNR the cats because the cats could not return to Evanston. CARE could not do anything if the cats were relocated outside of Evanston.

Chief Eddington reported approximately twenty cats have been euthanized to date.

Ald. Tendam asked for clarification of “socialized” when referring to cats. Ms. Lewis stated feral cats are terrified of humans, cages, and of being trapped. They avoid human contact that is how they survive; they go the other way when they see a human.

Ms. Lewis clarified that euthanizing the cats will not solve the expansion of the colony because the space left by a euthanized cat is filled by other cats. The best way to contain the colony is to TNR which stops reproduction and enlargement of the colony.

Ald. Grover stated the cats were becoming a nuisance to the neighbors and they are badly behaved. She hopes that they would not be returned to the neighborhood after they are captured but relocated outside of the community.

Jenny Schlueter, Development Director of Tree House Humane Society, has received emails from residents who are upset about what is being done with the cats. Tree House has offered to spade, neuter, microchip, vaccinate, de-worm,
de-flee and ear-clip the cats at no charge to the City of Evanston. They have requested a meeting with the Mayor, City Manager and the Animal Control Warden to discuss an action plan that is humane but has not been successful.

Ms Schlueter stated two family members of the deceased resident contacted Tree House because they would like a humane solution for the cats.

Ald. Grover stated it would be good to hear from the residents if they wanted to live with the cats in their neighborhood. She also stated that the residents are glad something is being done and she requested that Ms. Schlueter call Ms. Thomas, Director of Health and Human Services with the outcome of the meeting planned on February 3rd with the family of the deceased resident.

Ald. Holmes suggested a neighborhood meeting of the 7th ward with Ald. Grover.

Ald. Fiske asked the Chief if they could suspend further capturing of the cats until a strategy is in place.

It was concluded that there were no legal issue that would prevent agencies who wish to help to access the property with the relative’s approval.

Ald. Tendam referred to the hoarding ordinance proposed in 2009; he could not connect this instance of hoarding with the previous cat issues which was a mental health issue. He would like to discuss whether the ordinance* covers this issue and if the ordinance would need revision. He also asked if any of the cats are sick and spreading disease among themselves.

*note the proposed hoarding ordinance was not passed; a hoarding team was implemented instead.

Elissa Fineman an Evanston resident has a petition asking City officials to meet with Tree House. They have found a humane society in Indiana that will take all of the feral cats.

Sarah von Frind (citizen comments) further stated the humane society in Indiana has a heated barn and is willing to take all the cats.

Madelyn Ducre (citizen comments) mentioned a resident who has cats and raccoon issues. Ald. Holmes suggested calling animal control for assistance.

REPORT FROM THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE
Evonda Thomas, Director of Health and Human Services summarized the report of the Youth Engagement. The YE has taken an intern Vanessa Lee from Northwestern University Chicago Field Studies Civic Engagement Program. Due to the increase of STD/STI the Youth Engagement would like to initiate a health fair to target abstinence and peer to peer healthy sexual behaviors. There is a
20% increase of teen pregnancies in Evanston and 25% sexual transmitted infections and sexual transmitted disease in the community. It is attributed to limited access for treatment, and partner notification, and limited access to specialty care in the Evanston community. The Health Department clinics were an access point for treatment which was confidential for community and students. The ETHS clinic is great; however, not all the students make use of the clinic and it is limited to the ETHS student population only. Partners who are not students cannot access the school base clinic. The increase is a national trend; it is not only in the Evanston community. This is the first time there has been an increase in teen pregnancy rates in Evanston in eleven years.

Betty Sue Ester (citizen comments) had several questions regarding the proposed Truancy Ordinance

- 2007-2009 what is the total number of truancy for District 65 and 202?
- Why assess a $100.00 fine?
- Where will the student be held once the police pick them up?
- If the parents/guardian doesn’t have the money for the fine what happens then?
- None of the questions in various letters were answered
- The police needs a social worker to care for the student when they are picked up.
- Why involve the police in the process?
- The group putting together the ordinance did not address the various school PTA, why was that?

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8.33p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicola Whyte
Department of Health and Human Services