

MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION (NICC)

Community Meeting Center, Council Chamber
11300 Stanford Avenue

Monday, August 5, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: 6:34 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSIONER BLACKMUN
COMMISSIONER CRAWFORD
COMMISSIONER FLANDERS
COMMISSIONER HANSSEN
COMMISSIONER NEWBOLD
COMMISSIONER PHAM
COMMISSIONER SWAIM

Absent: Crawford, Hanssen

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Wilson, Neighborhood Improvement Manager; Nate Robbins, Senior Program Specialist; Timothy Throne, Program Specialist; Judy Moore, Recording Secretary.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Commissioner Flanders, who then requested a moment of silence in honor of the shooting victims of El Paso, Texas.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC: None.

MINUTES: It was moved by Vice Chair Blackmun and seconded by Commissioner Flanders, to receive and file the Minutes, with one amendment, from the May 6, 2019 Meeting. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote with Commissioners Crawford and Hanssen absent as follows:

Ayes: (5) Blackmun, Flanders, Newbold, Pham, Swaim
Noes: (0) None
Absent: (2) Crawford, Hanssen

PUBLIC HEARING – SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2019-20 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN:

The City of Garden Grove annually receives entitlement grants from three U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding sources, including an annual HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) grant and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). On March 26, 2019, the City Council adopted the FY 2019/20 Action Plan, which includes the use of HOME and CDBG funds for the period from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. HUD rules require a substantial

amendment be made to the Action Plan if an activity to be carried out was not included in the originally approved Action Plan. This Substantial Amendment proposes to add two activities to the 19-20 Action Plan, which were not contemplated at the time the original Action Plan was approved. Those activities are the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rental Transition (HEART) Program and the La Bonita Storm Drain Improvements.

During a May 2019 Council Study Session, staff was directed to develop a rental assistance program for homeless households. As a result, staff has created the HEART program, which provides 12-months of rental assistance for individuals or families that meet the following criteria:

- Must meet the HUD definition of “literally homeless”;
- Must have a strong tie to Garden Grove (last housed or worked in Garden Grove, or have children enrolled in a Garden Grove school);
- Must place low on the Vulnerability Index and Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VISPDAT); and
- Must enroll in and participate in a Life Enrichment Program tailored to meet their individual needs to ensure self-sustainability at the conclusion of the 12-month program.

Substantial Amendment Number 1 proposes to include and fund this activity in the 19-20 Action Plan.

The La Bonita Storm Drain Improvements, which are funded in part with \$471,000 in CDBG funds, began construction in FY 2018/19 and were anticipated to be completed during that same program year. Therefore, this activity was not included in the 2019/20 Action Plan. However, this project is not yet completed and must be included in the 19/20 AAP.

Staff is recommending \$500,000 in HOME funds be allocated for the operation of the HEART program. It is envisioned that two service providers will be selected and each will receive \$300,000 to operate HEART. The \$300,000 award consists of \$250,000 in HOME funds for rental assistance payments (including utility allowance and security deposits), as well as \$50,000 in LMIHTF money will be allocated to cover staff costs to administer the Life Enrichment Program. It is expected that this level of funding will enable approximately 20 households (potentially 60 individuals) to transition from homelessness to permanent housing.

The HOME and LMIHTF funds that will be used to fund the HEART Program are available and will not impact any planned project or activity, nor impact the General Fund.

The La Bonita Storm Drain Improvements have already been budgeted and allocated to this activity. Therefore, there will be no impact to the General Fund or to other activities.

Chair Pham opened the public hearing for comment, with no comments, he closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Flanders asked if there was flexibility to add or drop providers. Staff responded that service providers would run at the same time for the 12 month pilot program and the two providers were chosen based on accomplishments.

Commissioner Flanders asked if the pilot program could be indefinite. Staff replied yes, if successful, and funds were allocated.

Commissioner Swaim asked when the program would begin. Staff replied as early as September with approvals.

Vice Chair Blackmun asked about the program's design. Staff explained that the program was a hybrid of the best practices from similar programs in Anaheim and Huntington Beach; individuals as well as families would be assisted; the program was similar to 'rapid rehousing' with 24-hour services if needed; referrals for the program were through the providers and a Special Resource Team; a coordinated entry system is in place to prevent double-dipping; all services were documented; and a requirement was to be enrolled in the life enrichment program.

Commissioner Newbold asked if controls were in place to assist only those who really needed the rental assistance and asked if a lease addendum in regard to no crime, no gang activity, and no drug use was also in place. Staff responded that the life enrichment program would be intense from start to finish and that clients needed to meet income eligibility.

Commissioner Flanders commented that Housing Authority had a list of check points and violators of the lease addendum would be evicted.

Staff responded that the monitoring was up to the standards of Housing Authority.

Commissioner Newbold commented that interviewer's perceptions also needed to be acknowledged and suggested a space be included on the intake form for those comments. Staff responded that the service providers were trained professionals.

Chair Pham asked staff about program retention. Staff stated that one provider had a 95% retention rate for retaining housing and moving forward after the 12 months. Staff then explained that though the pilot program was 12 months long, the agreements were for 12 months of rental assistance regardless of the month a client was signed-on. For example, if a client was signed-on in the tenth month of the 12 month pilot program, the client would still receive rental assistance for 12 months going forward. Staff noted the two service providers were Mercy House and Interval House, and eligibility was on a case by case basis.

Commissioner Swaim asked about the client contribution fee of \$25 for rental assistance. Staff explained that the contribution ensured and increased longevity for self-sustainment; that most clients had some money, however, if the client could not afford the fee, an exception may be made; under the performance measurements, last year, eight clients went through the entry system; and, that rental assistance housing and shelter beds were not permanent housing, however,

rental assistance housing reduced the 'pit count' or number of homeless overall on the streets.

It was moved by Chair Pham and seconded by Commissioner Blackmun, to accept staff's recommendation to:

- Conduct a public hearing and accept public comments regarding proposed Substantial Agreement Number 1; and
- Recommend transmittal of Substantial Amendment Number 1 to City Council.

The motion carried by a 5-0 vote with Commissioners Crawford and Hanssen absent as follows:

Ayes: (5) Blackmun, Flanders, Newbold, Pham, Swaim
Noes: (0) None
Absent: (2) Crawford, Hanssen

MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS: Commissioner Newbold asked for an update on the damaged block wall at Haga Street, off of Chapman Avenue, close to Dale Street. Staff would look into the matter.

Chair Pham thanked Commissioner Flanders for the moment of silence for the people who have passed and suffered from policies affecting them and noted the importance of reflecting on the amount of privilege people have in positions of power, while also being mindful of the 249 shootings in the United States this year. He added that in addition to thoughts and prayers, gun control policies needed to change.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Commission will be held Monday, September 9, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., at the Community Meeting Center, Council Chamber, 11300 Stanford Avenue.

JUDITH MOORE
RECORDING SECRETARY