



# CITY OF PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL FINAL MINUTES

Special Meeting  
December 23, 2020

The City Council of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in Virtual Teleconference at 5:02 P.M.

Participating Remotely: Cormack, DuBois, Filseth, Fine, Kniss, Kou, Tanaka

Absent:

## Oral Communications

Rebecca Eisenberg supported opening Foothills Park to everyone and suggested the Council consider a business tax on the largest Palo Alto businesses.

## Action Items

1. Authorize and Approve a Substantial Amendment to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Annual Action Plan; Adopt Resolution 9934 Entitled, "Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Approving the Use of Community Development Block Grant and Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Funds for Fiscal Year 2020-2021"; and Approve an Amendment to the FY 2021 Operating Budget in the CDBG Fund.

Jonathan Lait, Director of Planning and Development, reported the City was an entitlement city and received funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Funding was used to improve conditions for low- and very-low-income persons. The City was required to develop a five-year Consolidated Plan and an Annual Action Plan. The City was allowed to revise the Annual Action Plan through a Minor Amendment or a Substantial Amendment. Alta Housing returned \$149,950 from the fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 annual grant. The City received its second allocation of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding totaling \$451,504. Staff conducted outreach with nonprofit entities and received a \$354,550 request from Ravenswood Family Health Network to fund a mobile medical clinic and a \$54,332 request from LifeMoves to fund increased operational costs. Staff proposed an allowed administrative fee of \$149,282. The City chose not to take an administrative fee from the first CARES Act allocation. Staff planned to issue another Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in January 2021 for the remaining CDBG funds of \$43,290. With

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Council approval, Staff was going to submit the appropriate paperwork in January and anticipated executing grant agreements in February or March 2021.

Ed Shikada, City Manager, appreciated Supervisor Simitian notifying the City of community needs and the benefit of timely action.

William Ross suggested the Council allocate the remaining funds to the Palo Alto Fire Department to enhance medical staffing.

Rebecca Eisenberg wanted a better explanation for Alta Housing returning the funds, opposed the City taking an administrative fee, and urged the Council to apply for State funding.

Ashley Peil, Ravenswood Family Health Network, advised that Ravenswood Family Health intended to use the mobile clinic to vaccinate vulnerable community members in the near term and to provide medical and dental services in the long term.

Luisa Buada, Ravenswood Family Health Network Chief Executive Officer, related that Ravenswood staff planned to continue COVID-19 testing and to prepare for vaccinations until the mobile clinic was ready. She was working with Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) to obtain the remaining funds for the purchase.

Council Member Kniss asked if the mobile clinic was going to remain in Palo Alto.

Ms. Buada indicated the mobile clinic was going to be used in Palo Alto and parked in a secure location owned by Ravenswood Family Health Network.

Council Member Kniss inquired regarding the patients that the mobile clinic was intended to serve.

Ms. Buada explained that Ravenswood Family Health Network was scheduled to provide vaccinations throughout the community when the vaccine was available.

Council Member Kniss inquired regarding the interaction between the mobile clinic and the Mayview site.

Ms. Buada reported the Mayview site provided in-person medical care. Patients were going to obtain COVID-19 tests at the mobile clinic parked at the Mayview site.

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Joe Simitian, Santa Clara County Supervisor, clarified that Ravenswood Family Health Network purchased and was operating the three Mayview clinics. Healthcare for low-income people in the North County had been historically challenging.

Vice Mayor DuBois requested the plan for vaccinating senior citizens.

Supervisor Simitian deferred a response to the Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

Vice Mayor DuBois asked if there was a way to help LifeMoves so that the full amount of its request was deemed eligible for funding.

Mr. Lait advised that Staff planned to contact them with the January 2021 NOFA.

Vice Mayor DuBois requested the reason for denying the full amount.

Mr. Lait indicated hazard pay was not allowed under the program guidelines.

Vice Mayor DuBois suggested reducing the administrative fee in order to provide more funding to community organizations.

Council Member Cormack noted the mobile clinic was going to serve approximately 480 people who lived in Palo Alto and 480 people who worked in Palo Alto.

**MOTION:** Council Member Cormack moved, seconded by Council Member Kniss to:

- A. Authorize staff to submit a Substantial Amendment to the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan to HUD by February 2021;
- B. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and Fiscal Year 2020-2021 CDBG-CV3 application for funds and any other necessary documents concerning the applications, and to otherwise bind the City with respect to the applications and commitment of funds;
- C. Adopt a Resolution allocating Community Development Block Grant funding as recommended in the above actions and as described in Staff Report Number 11700; and
- D. Approve an amendment to the FY 2021 Operating Budget in the CDBG Fund, by a 2/3 vote, to:

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- i. Increase the revenue estimate for CDBG Grants by \$451,504; and
- ii. Increase the expenditure appropriations by \$451,504.

Council Member Cormack appreciated the opportunity to fund services for people who needed them.

Council Member Kniss believed people needed to understand that Mayview Clinics were going to reopen. Dental care was important for school-age children.

Council Member Tanaka inquired whether sufficient notice was provided for the meeting.

Molly Stump, City Attorney, replied yes.

Council Member Tanaka asked if the Fire Department was allowed to request the remaining funds.

Mr. Lait advised that the Fire Department may be eligible for some funding. However, the Fire Department had not submitted an application for the Council to consider and act on. Staff intended to address the possibility with the Fire Department for the January NOFA.

Council Member Tanaka requested the methodology for allocating the funding to the City.

Erum Maqbool, CDBG Staff Specialist, reported the amount of CARES Act funding was determined by a formula that considered low-income populations and COVID-19 cases.

Council Member Tanaka asked if the City was required to award grants or lose the funding.

Ms. Maqbool indicated the City was required to spend 80 percent of funds by April 2023 or return unspent funds.

Council Member Tanaka inquired regarding the amount of services provided by the mobile clinic in Palo Alto and in other cities.

Ms. Buada related that plans were to use the mobile clinic in Palo Alto during the pandemic and in the North County later. Later, the mobile clinic was going to serve Palo Alto two days a week.

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Council Member Tanaka requested the percentage of the purchase price funded by this allocation.

Ms. Buada explained that the total cost of the mobile clinic was slightly more than \$500,000, and PAMF was providing the remaining funds.

Mr. Shikada expected the mobile clinic to go where it was needed.

Council Member Tanaka hoped the City's allocation was going to be used for low-income residents of Palo Alto.

Mayor Fine remarked that the City was in a position to help its neighbors.

Supervisor Simitian noted the Mayview Clinic location in Palo Alto was closed for remodeling. With the mobile clinic, Ravenswood Family Health Network was able to respond to healthcare needs in Palo Alto. The Public Health Department's plan for vaccinations did not list a clinic in Palo Alto or the North County. The mobile clinic was vital to providing vaccinations in the North County.

Ms. Buada added that the annual cost of operating the mobile clinic two days per week was almost \$300,000.

Council Member Kou was encouraged by the prospect of providing COVID-19 tests and vaccinations to the City's homeless population. She supported Staff assisting LifeMoves with finding a way to qualify for the remaining funds. She inquired whether the City had to take the full administrative fee.

Mr. Lait explained that the administrative fee covered six years of the City administering the CDBG program and funds. Approximately \$60,000 was payment for a consultant's services. The Council was able to earmark the City's portion of the administrative fee or allocate it to the next round of funding.

Council Member Kou commented that the Fire Department responded to many calls for homeless people who may or may not have COVID-19.

## **MOTION PASSED: 7-0**

Council Member Kniss thanked Supervisor Simitian for calling the community's needs to the City's attention when medical care for low-income people in the North County was challenging.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:01 P.M.