

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY- -MAY 11, 2021- -6:00 P.M.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmember Daysog led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL - Present: Councilmembers Daysog, Herrera Spencer, Knox White, Vella, and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft – 5. [Note: The meeting was conducted via Zoom]

Absent: None.

AGENDA ITEMS

(21-324) Public Hearing to Consider Adoption of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)/HOME Partnership Investment Program (HOME) Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 Action Plan and Authorize the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute Related Documents, Agreements, and Modifications at Funding Levels Approved by Congress.

The Community Development Director gave a Power Point presentation.

Stated that she noticed the statement of work reports appears incomplete; suggested more follow through to capture accurate data regarding services rendered and how funds are expended: Carmen Reid, Alameda.

Expressed thanks for providing funding for mental health services in the schools last year; stated that she hopes the support will continue this year: Katherine Schwartz, Alameda Family Services.

Expressed appreciation for Council's support; stated domestic violence and sexual assault has increased during the pandemic and City support is more important: Erin Scott, Family Violence Law Center.

Expressed thanks to Council and staff for supporting capital improvements and services for the Midway Shelter; stated Building Futures is working hard to update the trailers and decks; announced a virtual event on Saturday: Liz Varela, Building Futures.

Stated funding is critically important; that she hopes Council adopts the funds and puts them to good use: Grover Wehman, Alameda.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer expressed concerned about how much data the City has and how it is being used.

The Community Development Director responded data is collected on use of funds; stated that she would share the information if Councilmember Herrera Spencer would like to see more; the Community Development Program Manager observes a good tracking system, which is dictated by Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) strict protocols.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft inquired whether Councilmember Herrera Spencer had something specific that she wanted to highlight in terms of how funds are being used.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer responded a previous presentation indicated parking spaces at Alameda Point are being half used; stated there are various entities to help support the spaces; she wants to make sure the City is getting the word out about the services that are available to maximize the usage; according to Exhibit 3, the numbers being served in the non-housing public service category are going down; inquired whether it is based on 45 people being served and if that amount of people is less than last year.

The Community Development Director responded it is the reality of having less funding; stated the amount is based on the numbers; the number changed so appropriate allocations were made.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer stated that she would like to know the number served in the prior years; it says 45 for school based health counseling services; she does not know how much the School District receives, but she expects there will be more students requiring mental health services as they return to school; she would like to keep track because the decrease from \$50,000 to \$40,000; any monies that are being reduced under the non-housing public services and the emergency food for low income residents is significant funding; if there is not another option from this funding source, she would like to keep in mind other funding sources as she fully expects greater demand; if the City is anticipating fewer people needing services, she would like to see the numbers from last year to see the difference; she would like staff to come back with a plan about how the City can actually try to help fund all of the needs.

Councilmember Knox White moved approval of the staff recommendation.

Vice Mayor Vella seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Councilmember Herrera Spencer requested an explanation of the \$5,000 increase under administration.

The Community Development Program Manager responded it was a balancing issue; stated the City had allocated funds to all of the projects requesting funds; public services are capped at 15% of the entitlement and 15% of the program income, the remaining \$5,000 could not be allocated to said categories; she allocated the funds to administration knowing if a different project runs over, the funds can always be moved from administration.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer inquired why the \$5,000 could not go into any other categories, to which the Community Development Program Manager responded funds could not go into public services; stated staff could evaluate other categories, including public improvements; stated each of the line items received what was requested; additional funds were allocated for residential rehabilitation; economic development could be increased by \$5,000.

In response to Councilmember Herrera Spencer's inquiry, the Community Development Program Manager stated Alameda Point Collaborative (APC) is the community based

development organization that works with homeless individuals and does job training and placement services; last year, Alameda received a lot of program income and increased all of the public services and economic development accordingly; this year, the funding was decreased.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer requested the motion be amended to include moving the \$5,000 to the economic development category instead of administration.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft stated that she is inclined to stay with the staff recommendation because it provides maximum flexibility; if one of the other areas needs extra funding, part or all of the \$5,000 could be redirected; if it is put into the one category, it remains there not knowing whether the need is there; she would argue for maximum flexibility.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer stated her understanding is that APC requested more money and received a reduction.

The Community Development Program Manager clarified this year is the last year of the public service provider agreements, including APC; last year, APC requested \$100,000; when the City received the increase in program income, additional funds were allocated to APC as well as the public service providers.

Councilmember Daysog stated \$5,000 to economic development is quite reasonable; most of the economic development done through the CDBG program is micro enterprise; it is not much, but it would go pretty far for those using the funds; he supports the suggestion.

Councilmember Knox White stated his understanding of the staff proposal is that as needs are identified down the road, including economic development, the \$5,000 would have the flexibility to be moved into that or other areas; moving it today off the cuff would just be making a decision to move it somewhere that has not necessarily been requested; if the staff recommendation is followed, the City would have the opportunity to moved funds down the road or also move funds into another place that has a greater need for the \$5,000.

The Community Development Program Manager stated the City actually off a \$50,000 loan last week; although behind the amount from last year, the City is gradually inching closer; to put the \$5,000 into economic development would be fine because more funds have been received since the staff report was written.

Councilmember Knox White stated that he is willing to amend the motion to move the \$5,000 to economic development if the seconder of the motion is willing to support it.

Vice Mayor Vella agreed with the amendment.

On the call for the question, the motion carried by the following roll call vote: Councilmembers Daysog: Aye; Herrera Spencer: Aye; Knox White: Aye; Vella: Aye; and Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft: Aye. Ayes: 5.

(21-325) Budget Workshop for Fiscal Years 2021-22 and 2022-23 to Provide Direction that will be Incorporated into Budget Adoption Hearing Materials for City Council Consideration in June 2021.

The Senior Management Analyst gave a Power Point presentation.

The Senior Management Analyst, City Manager and Public Works Director responded to City Council questions.

Stated that he was proud of Council on May 8th and hopes the budget reflects the actions of May 8th: Erin Fraser, Alameda.

Stated that she is disappointed Council did not get the message that the community wants to fund community care, not cops; urged Council to defund the Police by 50%: Debra Mendoza, Alameda.

Proposed that the City explore contracting with Alameda's trained Firefighters and Paramedics, who may be more suitably equipped to handle emergency health situations, in light of the incidents regarding policing and mental health calls: Carmen Reid, Alameda.

Stated that she hopes the Council approves funding for the Shuumi land tax; she is concerned about funding the Police Department at a higher level: Grover Wehman, Alameda.

Expressed concerns about the Crime Analyst position in the Police Department; stated the people on the Subcommittees made it clear an Analyst should not be hired by or report to the Police Department: Melodye Montgomery, Alameda.

Stated that she is concerned about the lack of mental health services available and that Alameda cannot find \$125,000 for additional mental health support students are going to need; urged Council to give Alameda Family Services the funds they are requesting: Beth Kenny, Alameda.

Stated that she supports prioritization of the sustainability and resiliency measures; reminded Council that they need to be resilient, not only to the threats and vulnerabilities related to the pandemic, racial injustice, institutional violence and the housing crisis, but also to immediate threats of climate change: Ruth Abbe, Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda (CASA).

Stated the purchase of the Pacific Union land would fulfill a promise to the people of Alameda; urged Council to approve funding for the 2.8 acres of park land: Jim Sweeney, Alameda.

Stated that he supports climate mitigation and sustainability efforts, which include improving the City's tree protection ordinance; urged Council to resume work on the ordinance: Christopher Buckley, Alameda.

Stated she does not agree with \$4 million in additional funding for the Police Department; the funds should be diverted to some other community health response: Marilyn Rothman, Alameda.

Stated that she is happy the Council will be addressing the highest road safety priorities, including the Active Transportation Plan and the Vision Zero Plan; urged Council to consider Bike Alameda's budget comments: Denyse Trepanier, Bike Walk Alameda.

Expressed excitement to see \$1 million to fund the mental health pilot; stated that is encouraged by funding for the Shuumi land tax; expressed concerns about the Crime Analyst position: Laura Cutrona, Alameda.

The City Manager and Senior Management Analyst responded to City Council questions.

Councilmember Knox White outlined items he supports, including: Shuumi Land Tax, Alameda Family Services mental health support, increased translation funds for multi-lingual outreach and re-allocating parking enforcement positions to Departments other than the Police.

The City Manager and Senior Management Analyst responded to City Council questions.

Councilmember Daysog expressed disappointment about not making an effort to plug in a number for the Pension Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) reserve payments; expressed support for resuming work on the tree protection ordinance; discussed the assigned portion of reserves.

The City Attorney and Senior Management Analyst responded to questions.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer outlined items she supports; requested written information on changes to the City Attorney budget; discussed processing record requests more efficiently; expressed support for funding Alameda Family Services, the Sustainability Fellow and the business façade grant; she would like staff to prioritize the community's needs and spend reserves, including free WiFi; expressed support for the tree ordinance.

The Senior Management Analyst responded to questions.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft outlined support for considering the funding request for the School District mental health, but wants staff to reach out to the District to find out what other funds they may be receiving so as not to duplicate efforts; urged caution spending the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds due to the uncertainty about the impact of COVID on the budget.

Vice Mayor Vella expressed support for the Crime Analyst position; outlined other items she supports, including: the Fellow position, two school based mental health positions at Alameda Family Health Services and getting a sense needs for an additional Alameda Point Fire Station.

The Shuumi Land Tax was discussed.

Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft called a recess at 8:20 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

(21-326) Budget Workshop for Fiscal Years 2021-22 and 2022-23 to Provide Direction on Capital Improvement Program Budget.

The Public Works Director and Supervising Senior Engineer gave a Power Point presentation.

The Public Works Director, City Manager and Supervising Senior Engineer responded to City Council questions.

Urged Council to do a traffic calming project between Park Street and High Street on Otis Drive: Marilyn Rothman, Alameda.

Stated the Urban Forest Plan is so important for the City and needs to be fully funded: Ruth Abbe, CASA.

Stated improvements are needed to the Shoreline Park path on Parcel 4 since it is badly degraded; urged Council to commit to funding: Patricia Lamborn, Alameda.

Stated that he concurs with Ruth Abbe regarding the Urban Forest Plan; discussed ongoing tree maintenance: Christopher Buckley, Alameda.

Expressed support for the Urban Forest Plan and tree maintenance improvements; expressed concern about the expense of painting of the Great Whites: Carmen Reid, Alameda.

The City Manager and Public Works Director responded to City Council questions.

Councilmember Herrera Spencer moved approval of directing staff to come back with funding for particular needs including Pickle Ball and any paving for smooth surfaces to allow skating and bicycle riding.

Councilmember Daysog seconded the motion.

Following discussion, Councilmember Herrera Spencer stated that she is happy to modify her motion to make it broader; she would like to look at allocating more funds to improve the recreational facilities.

Councilmember Daysog seconded the amended motion.

The proposed funding was discussed.

The City Manager stated the general Council direction is to bring back the items on May 20th.

The matter was further discussed.

(21-327) Recommendation to Provide Direction to Staff Regarding the Allocation of an Anticipated \$28.95 Million of Funding from the Federal Government through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021 to Assist with Recovery from the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Not heard.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

(21-328) Erin Fraser, Alameda, stated more time was spent on pickle ball than on public safety and policing.

(21-329) Zac Bowling, Alameda, echoed the previous comments; stated that he would like less pickle ball and more bike lanes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Ezzy Ashcraft adjourned the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Weisiger
City Clerk

The agenda for this meeting was posted in accordance with the Sunshine Ordinance.