Committee members present: Councilmembers Karen Hiller, Sandra Clear (Chair) and Sylvia Ortiz

City staff present: Sasha Haehn, Director of Department of Neighborhood Relations; Corrie Wright, Division Director of Housing Services

Call to Order
Councilmember Clear called the meeting to order.

Approve Minutes from June 1, 2018 meeting
Councilmember Ortiz moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hiller and carried unanimously (3-0-0).

Input from Agencies on Process
Big Brothers Big Sisters – Megan McClelland sent a letter stating that they did not have any feedback regarding changes to the 2020 Social Services application process and are satisfied with the current process.

Let’s Help – Linda Kehres sent a letter thanking the committee for the opportunity to submit comments. Let’s Help is content with the current protocol and would not propose any changes at this time.

Topeka LULAC – Kathy Votaw sent a letter. LULAC proposed changing the Board Member diversity requirement, noting it is difficult enough to get folks to volunteer for non-profit boards and that it is frustrating to be scored on lack of certain races or genders on the Board in the grant process. Ms. Votaw suggested to change the application to simply ask applicants if they have diversity on their Board or if the board represents public, private and low income individuals.

Community Action – Tawny Stottlemeier sent a letter to the committee and staff as well as speaking during the meeting. Ms. Stottlemeier wanted to highlight technical suggestions from her letter that she felt were particularly important. Ms. Stottlemeier thanked City staff and Committee members. First, Ms. Stottlemeier encouraged protocol to be implemented which would allow the Committee members to see the names and
qualifications of selected grant reviewers. Secondly, with regard to the application process, Ms. Stottlemeier appreciated the electronic application form. Ms. Stottlemeier also felt as though the requirement of having at least six (6) partnerships was unnecessarily restrictive and asked the committee to consider establishing a more meaningful method of awarding points for the incorporation of partner organizations. Ms. Stottlemeier referenced the Board Control section of the application and recommended replacing the current requirement of 65% board member participation to a standard of how many meetings quorum percentage was achieved. Ms. Stottlemeier also suggested having a question within the application asking if an applying organization’s Board participates in an annual self-evaluation process, and if the Board does, to list how that process is conducted. Finally, within the Budget part of the application, Ms. Stottlemeier encouraged an additional comment section for budget narrative. Ms. Stottlemeier also reviewed a few myths about social service funding including the myth concerning a large budget, and the thought that if an organization has a large operating budget, they do not need grant money. Ms. Stottlemeier also felt that she did not believe administrative and salary costs should be viewed as evil. Ms. Stottlemeier also felt that training for grant application reviewers would be very helpful. Councilmember Clear noted that some of the suggestions made by Ms. Stottlemeier are done, such as training for the grant reviewers. Councilmember Ortiz commented that the board self-evaluation was a good suggestion. Councilmember Hiller noted that in years past, there had once been a question asking organizations to explain the program review process on the application, and that she would like to see that or something similar brought back.

Positive Connections – Debbie Guiboult spoke to the committee and expressed appreciation for the process, application and scoring system, & electronic database. Ms. Guiboult found the training that was offered a few years ago to be helpful. Noted 3 outcomes for Positive Connections where points were deducted. Suggests weighing outcome and if less than a quarter of percent than provided outcome, committee take that into account. Councilmember Hiller inquired if Ms. Guiboult felt that most applicants understood the outcome. Ms. Guiboult felt as though most applicants understood what the outcome is, however were more uncertain about what estimated number they should be putting onto the application. Councilmember Clear asked Ms. Guiboult to clarify some information regarding the scoring on the outcomes section of the application.

Health Access – Karla Hedquist addressed the committee and thanked committee and staff members for listening to concerns from organizations. Ms. Hedquist appreciates the process as it currently is, and noted particular appreciation for the electronic option. One suggestion was to have the committee members remain in place from start to finish of each grant process cycle for some continuity. Ms. Hedquist also noted difficulty in the diversity make-up of the Board as Health Access Board members are appointed and the organization itself does not have a say in who will be serving. Councilmember Hiller spoke about the continuity issue, and that in the past with the way the election cycle worked, it did not line up with the grant cycle and so continuity was more difficult. However, with 2018 and moving forward, new councilmembers and
the new committees would be formed in January and the grant cycle does not begin to really get underway until February. Councilmember Hiller also noted that having the council terms now be in line with the calendar year, there will be more continuity with the committee and full Governing Body members for the duration of an entire grant cycle. Councilmember Clear discussed acknowledging the topic of continuity with the Governing Body. Ms. Hedquist also suggested the committee holding a mid-year meeting to allow grantees to provide a mid-year update.

Catholic Charities – Dawn Myers suggested an addition of a comment section within the grant application to allow for organizations to explain or defend certain aspects, such as Board diversity, which might give a better understanding for scorers as to what they are reading on the application. Corrie Wright noted that Rachelle (Vega-Retana) takes scores off of the excel spreadsheet; however comments can be provided upon request. Ms. Wright also noted that the score sheet, which is used by the reviewers, is included in each application as well. Councilmember Hiller noted that there is also a mandatory grant training for new organizations.

Boys & Girls Club – Krystal Wiltz thanked the committee and staff for the grant process as it is now and that the mandatory meeting that has since become more of an invitation rather than a mandatory meeting, has been appreciated for organizations who have completed this grant on an annual basis. Ms. Wiltz suggested that further work be done with regard to the requirements of Board diversity. Councilmember Clear inquired with Ms. Wiltz about the diversity requirement from other grants asking if it was something that other grants requested Board diversity. Ms. Wiltz confirmed that Federal grants do. Ms. Wiltz noted that most grant applications also ask about Board participation and attendance.

KCSL – Gail Cozadd spoke to the committee and other organizations in attendance about the ability to present information regarding the diversity of the board. Ms. Cozadd suggested making changes to the way the budget portion is laid out, noting perhaps separate columns for proposed expenditures and City funds, where grant reviewers and the committee could see where each organization was utilizing the funds provided to them. Councilmember Hiller noted that the project budget used to be part of the application. Ms. Cozadd confirmed.

Breakthrough House – Lynn Davis suggested stressing the ability to train. First time grant writers may not know it is available. Ms. Davis previously did not realize that the outcome was unchangeable, so perhaps speak about what a good number for organizations would be in some training. Ms. Davis asked the committee to keep 5% standard deviation in mind when scoring. Councilmember Hiller noted appreciation for hearing that the training offered helped.

Positive Connections – Ms. Guilboult wanted to clarify that she was not questioning the score that Positive Connections received, rather simply that she feels the weighted score should outline goals instead of something set in stone.

El Centro – LaLo Munoz appreciates being able to share feedback.
Community Action – Ms. Stottlemeier would not want to remove questions of diversity as it is important to strive for, however would like to see less punitive scoring when board diversity was not shown.

Midland Care – Karen Weichert noted that the scoring for Midland Care was low, and that there had been some issues in the past year hitting deadlines, due to the staff member who had been applying for the grant leaving. This year it seemed that the application was looked over due to problems from the past year. Councilmember Ortiz inquired with staff if there was currently a process in place where multiple contacts for an organization receive emails regarding this grant process. Corrie Wright stated that she believes there are two but will look it over again.

2020 Calendar Timeline

Corrie Wright provided an overview
- 2020 calendar is similar to 2018 calendar besides very first bullet with August/September dates.
- 5 reviewers. Last year there were 4.

Councilmember Hiller:
- Receiving testimonies in September is great, due to the City’s budget not being adopted until Budget gets submitted
- Recommendations to the Council should be October as the committee’s term is only through end of year. Allowing the committee to make any changes as needed. Councilmember Clear is going to ask the Governing Body if the committee could be scheduled August through July. Councilmember Clear would like to have a discussion with the Governing Body to see if this would be possible as well as wanting to know what other options could be available other than January through December. Councilmember Hiller suggested making a report to the Governing Body in October or November to get wrapped up, then the first committee meeting would be late February/early March with training and overview on how the process goes, etc so that when May begins, the staff and committee members would be on the same page as to any changes. Councilmember Ortiz agreed that training would be helpful, and added that she would like to have committee members have the opportunity to see all scores in case something was overlooked at the staff level.
- Secure calendar dates by April 1. So that any training on organization side can have time to get that done within April.
- Corrie Wright suggested having first meeting in late February.
- Councilmember Clear asked staff to bring back a draft of the calendar suggestions.
Other Items Before Committee
Next meeting the committee will adopt the 2020 calendar, structural changes, and possibly the adoption of 2020 priorities. Councilmember Hiller asked for printed copies of the priorities from 2017 as well as the scoring grid, and the RFP.

Councilmember Clear adjourned the meeting.

Meeting video can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/Kc6ztN0MlzA