

**HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING
OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE
March 4, 2008**

Councilwoman Robinson, Chairman, called the meeting of the Health, Human Services and Housing Opportunities Committee to order, with Councilmen Rico, Gaines, Berz, Bennett, Page, Benson, and Franklin present. City Attorney Randall Nelson and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Sandra Gober, Beverly Johnson, Jeff Claxton, Donna Kelley, Richard Beeland, Daisy Madison, Sandy Williams, Joe Shaw, Dan Johnson, and Mayor Littlefield.

Chairman Robinson called the meeting to order and called on Beverly Johnson.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Ms. Johnson went over **Resolution (a)** on tonight's agenda that approves the acceptance and distribution of Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Community Development Block Grant, Home Investment Partnership Act, and Emergency Shelter Grant funding totaling \$4,133,730.00. She stated that she had shared this information with the Council through a packet of funding requests; that the actual application is in excess of \$10 million dollars. She mentioned a decrease in funding from HUD. She noted that this had all been reviewed by the Allocation Committee and had their recommendation, and she was asking for the Council's approval.

On motion of Councilman Franklin, seconded by Councilwoman Bennett, approval of this Resolution by the entire Council was recommended.

Councilwoman Bennett stated that once she had looked at the applications, she noticed one for SETHRA, which seemed that it might be double-dipping to her in getting this additional funding.

Ms. Johnson explained that in the case of SETHRA, this was for the cost of a driver; that they offer a transportation service to people in need of getting medical services and looking for employment—that this just funds the cost of a driver.

Councilwoman Bennett questioned if this is not what they did administratively. Mayor Littlefield stated that they were on a contract.

Councilwoman Bennett still questioned why the City was funding this?

Ms. Johnson explained that SETHRA was increasing the number of people they served; that this would be for an additional 450 people per year.

Councilman Page stated that he did not understand this either; that both Medicaid and CARTA pick up people for medical services, and he wanted to know how this is different?

Ms. Johnson responded that they had several agencies asking for funding for this and rather than funding each one, this would go to SETHRA and not to each individual agency; that it made better sense to fund from this end as opposed to different agencies.

Mayor Littlefield added that it was cheaper than buying a van for all these different agencies; that this was the most cost effective.

Ms. Johnson verified that rather than buying a vehicle for each agency we will just fund a driver.

Councilman Page verified that this had nothing to do with the homeless.

Councilwoman Bennett asked if we funded SETHRA in the past?

Councilman Rico stated that we just funded different agencies that were doing the same thing.

Mayor Littlefield stated that agencies actually duplicated services for vehicles and it made more sense to fund an agency that was doing this in a central way; that the Farmers' Market is something actually paying us, which is good synergism.

Ms. Johnson noted that we funded one of the other agencies and bought them a van and then they asked for money for repairs and insurance, and it became repetitious; that we decided no more vans, and we will fund the driver.

Chairman Robinson mentioned the "Room-in-the-Inn" kids who can live here but can stay in their old schools if their moms become homeless; that SETHRA would take them back to their schools. Ms. Johnson agreed that this was one of the benefits.

Councilman Benson stated that he thought this was the most cost-effective way—taking advantage of SETHRA's efficiency.

Councilman Page stated that he would support this but questioned how this was in regards to Interfaith Hospitality, who now transfer the homeless? Mayor Littlefield responded that this helps keep people in their homes.

Councilwoman Bennett agreed that a combined effort makes sense—when you pull these services together; however she added that it was important to tell the story of how partnerships are encompassed.

Chairman Robinson mentioned the misconception that the entire Farmer’s Market was going for \$1.00 to SETHRA.

At this point, Councilwoman Gaines stated that she would like to make a statement concerning CNE; that she had received many phone calls stating that she planned to vote tonight against CNE—that many of these calls came from Highland Park. She stated that she would like to say that “no”, this was not her position; that she had been “in” with CNE since its inception. She added that the incomes in her community ranged from \$15,000 to \$16,000 and that her concern was second mortgages; that her other concern was that in building homes in District 9, they would like for consistency to be preserved and for the homes to be in keeping with the character of their community; that there were recently five to eight new homes that were sub-standard and unacceptable and could be deemed as shot-gun homes; that she would like to share this with her constituents—that they had a turnover with people losing their homes. She stated that she had met with Ms. Williams before and the outcome was positive; that for the record, her position with CNE has always been a positive one, and she thanked Ms. Williams.

Ms. Johnson also went over **Resolution ©** on tonight’s agenda that authorizes the appointment of Dwain Redden as a special unarmed policeman for the Department of Neighborhood Services and Community Development. **On motion of Councilwoman Bennett, seconded by Councilman Franklin, this Resolution will be recommended for approval by the entire Council.**

HODGES-MACE BENEFITS GROUP AGREEMENT

Jeff Carmack was present to go over **Resolution (i)** on tonight’s agenda that authorizes an agreement with Hodges-Mace Benefits Group for employee benefit enrollment and communication services, including voluntary benefits. Mr. Carmack noted that they sent out RFP’s for volunteer benefits for open enrollment; that they had eight responses and we had been using the same vendor for 11 years. He stated that this company would get booklets to all employees showing their benefits—that this benefit that they provided was at no cost to the City; that employees were in control of voluntary benefits, and it was a very controlled list.

ANIMAL SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Ms. Donna Kelley was present to go over what she considered a “work in progress”. She stated that on the 11th of March, Animal Services Dept. would be pulled out of service and the employees will give over their benefits with the City. She stated that on the 11th of March there would be a vocational counselor present to work with these employees in re-training them, which could go on for a period of two years, and they could be replaced in some capacity back into the City. She reiterated that this would occur next Tuesday.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.