



Minutes
Youth and Family Affairs Committee
Regular Meeting
June 18 2024, at 5:30 p.m.
Lawton City Hall - Banquet Room
212 SW 9th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:40 PM by Chairman Rick Lowe. Upon roll call vote, a quorum was determined to be present.

Members Present: Rick Lowe, Mary Ann Hankins, Dianne Owens, Bob Weger, Lisa Shaw, Brenda Myers, Reshard Horne

Members Absent: Jeff Elbert (excused), Taron Epps (excused)

Also Present: Stan Booker, City of Lawton Mayor; Christine James, City of Lawton Internal Auditor; Tammy Branstetter, Sr Deputy City Clerk; Kerrie Matthews, Marie Detty; Kimberly Jones, Tulsa Greenwood STEM; Brenda Spencer-Ragland, Embrace Hope Collaboratorium; Kim Johnson, MIGHT; Jeanette Hutchinson, Harvest Plenty House of Prayer; Paula Bowen, Harvest Plenty House of Prayer; Benny Llanos, J.E.S.U.S. Inc

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OKLAHOMA OPEN MEETING ACT, 25 O.S. 301-314

The notice and agenda for this meeting were posted by the City Clerk's Office as required by law.

II. Introduction of Guests

Grant applicants, Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

III. New Business

- A.** Consider approving the minutes of the April 16, 2024 meeting.

Motion by Weger, **Second** by Myers, to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2024 meeting. **AYE:** Myers, Owens, Lowe, Weger, Hankins. **ABSTAIN:** Shaw, Horne. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed.***

- B.** Discuss the assessment and grading criteria for incoming YFAC grant applications, to include allocation amounts to each organization and take action as deemed necessary.

Chairman Lowe said the Committee uses the template created by the United Way to help members navigate through scoring and prioritizing applications.

Chairman Lowe said some of the Committee members have been doing this, but some may not have been. He asked Committee members if they are okay with using this template moving forward or if they would like to create something different.

Myers said she thinks we can use the same template.

Chairman Lowe said no action is needed on this item.

IV. Old Business

Chairman Lowe thanked the applicants for attending the meeting tonight.

Chairman Lowe said he was advised this evening that the amount of money we have to allocate this year is substantially less than what we thought we were going to have – so much so that he cannot in good faith go through each application because he does not believe the money is there to fund them.

Chairman Lowe asked City of Lawton staff to advise the Committee exactly how much money they have to work with.

James said originally, we were taking the balance of the CIP and dividing it by the years we had left. When this all started, we were looking at about \$525,000 to allocate for this next fiscal year. James said through the budgeting process, and with issues surrounding the audit, the funds that were allocated for this next year are only \$262,850 between the 2016 and 2019 CIP. The 2016 CIP is non YFAC money, but it's lumped into the same pot of money under youth programs. If you take out the Summer Arts Institute and the Summer Internship Program that is funded by the 2016 CIP, that leaves an amount of \$212,850 available for YFAC to fund. James said there has also been funding set aside out of this amount for other things, which leaves YFAC with a budget of \$37,850 to allocate.

Shaw asked why the funding went away if it was already earmarked for YFAC.

Mayor Booker said we are in a very unfortunate situation. While there is funding earmarked for YFAC, it's not earmarked for that this year, or any particular year – it's over the life of the program, and it's as funds are available – that's our problem.

Mayor Booker said it's been made known that we're late on the audit, and we're working through that challenge. While this is very unfortunate, it makes money tight. He said we can't stop a road program that we've already got going that's millions of dollars. This is one place that it's unfortunate that the funding just can't be there this year, and it all has to do with a late audit.

Shaw asked why the audit is so late, and she asked if we have a big problem.

Mayor Booker said the audit is not always this late. He said we do have a problem, but changes have been made to address the issue. Mayor Booker said staff still must get caught up – they are working diligently getting reports to Council every meeting about where we stand with the audit. However, borrowing problems will occur until these issues have been resolved.

James noted that the late audit is causing issues in other areas as well – it's not just an issue with YFAC funding.

Shaw asked if the funding status would change when the audit is completed.

Mayor Booker said there is potential that the funding can change, but it would be at least next spring before it could possibly change.

Shaw asked how much YFAC funding was awarded last year.

James said over \$500,000, and the budget last year was only \$300,000.

Shaw said basically the applicants are out of luck.

Mayor Booker emphasized that the City Council does not like this situation.

Weger said Council members have expressed to staff the urgency of getting the audit completed on time.

Myers asked Mayor Booker to discuss the changes that have been made to address the issue.

Mayor Booker said these changes involve personnel, and he cannot discuss personnel issues.

Myers said she doesn't know that any of these programs can run off \$37,000.

Chairman Lowe and Owens noted that this information is new to Committee members.

Shaw asked if there is anything we can do to make the situation better.

Mayor Booker said the City Council has directed the City Manager to get things caught up as fast as possible and to implement processes where this doesn't happen again in the future. Unfortunately, this doesn't do anything to get us past where we are - we are victims of how money flows. When you don't have your audit, it affects your ability to borrow and how much you can borrow. He said it's an ugly situation that nobody wants to be in, to include the Council. Mayor Booker said we want these programs to be able to go on.

Mayor Booker noted that this money is not lost – it can be spent later. The allocation of \$6 million for this Committee is still the allocation – it's just that the money is not flowing this year.

Owens said she wishes the Committee would've known this sooner so they could've notified the applicants sooner.

Shaw said she appreciates Mayor Booker attending the meeting to notify the Committee of this situation.

Chairman Lowe said his recommended action would be to table or deny the FY 2025 applications and solicit new applications when funding becomes available.

Motion by Weger, Second by Myers, to deny all FY 2025 applications (items B-J), and to solicit new applications when the funding becomes available. **AYE:** Horne, Owens, Lowe, Weger, Hankins, Myers, Shaw. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed.***

- A.** Review and discuss a request for funding from Harvest Plenty House of Prayer in the amount of \$43,970.00 for summer 2024 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council.
- B.** Review and discuss a request for funding from Marie Detty Youth and Family Services Center in the amount of \$100,000.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- C.** Review and discuss a request for funding from Embrace Hope Collaboratorium, Inc in the amount of \$97,500.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- D.** Review and discuss a request for funding from The Next Step TLP, Inc in the amount of \$82,200.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and propose a time and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**

- E. Review and discuss a request for funding from Lawton Teamwork Makes the Dream Work/Greenwood S.T.E.M. in the amount of \$64,300.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- F. Review and discuss a request for funding from New Hope C.O.G.I.C. in the amount of \$51,500.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- G. Review and discuss a request for funding from Joshua Empowering Survivors Unique Servants, Inc (J.E.S.U.S.) in the amount of \$48,500.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- H. Review and discuss a request for funding from MIGHT Community Development & Resource Center in the amount of \$75,000.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- I. Review and discuss a request for funding from Teen Court, Inc in the amount of \$65,000.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**
- J. Review and discuss a request for funding from Harvest Plenty House of Prayer in the amount of \$62,240.00 for FYE 2025 youth programs within the City of Lawton and propose a time and make a recommendation to the City Council. – **Denied due to lack of funding**

V. Reports/Comments from Chairman and Committee Members

Owens asked the applicants to take a few moments to share how this is going to affect their program moving forward.

Benny Llanos, J.E.S.U.S. Inc, said he was worried something like this would happen, but they will continue running their program.

Paula Bowen, Harvest Plenty House of Prayer, said this situation is really bad. She said there are kids in her program going into the 4th grade who are reading at a pre-k level. Ms. Bowen said they're trying to help these kids, but this financial situation has tied their hands.

Kimberly Jones, Tulsa Greenwood STEM, said this is going to affect their program tremendously. She said she is still in shock, but she will figure out something to do – she does not want to disappoint the kids. She's worried that the kids will see this as a rejection.

Jeanette Hutchison, Harvest Plenty House of Prayer, noted that her first application was for FY 2024. She asked if there is any available funding that can be allocated for this grant. She noted that their program runs from June 17th to July.

Chairman Lowe said this is item A on the agenda.

- A. Review and discuss a request for funding from Harvest Plenty House of Prayer in the amount of \$43,970.00 for summer 2024 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Chairman Lowe asked staff if there is any remaining funding from FY 2024 that could be used for this grant.

James said there is \$19,860 left in funding for FY 2024.

Brenda Spencer-Ragland, Embrace Hope Collaboratorium, said she's been providing space in her buildings to Onreka, Annie and Kim for a year so that they could offer their program. She said this will continue.

Ms. Jones said she is hoping that the Mayor and staff will look for alternative funding sources other than the CIP if needed so that these programs can continue.

Chairman Lowe said he sees resiliency in all the applicants, and he encourages them to keep the same heart and passion going forward.

VI. Reports/Comments from Staff

Branstetter noted that the Committee has not addressed item A of old business.

Chairman Lowe revisited item A.

- A.** Review and discuss a request for funding from Harvest Plenty House of Prayer in the amount of \$43,970.00 for summer 2024 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Chairman Lowe reminded Committee members that only \$19,860 in funding remains for FY 2024.

Shaw noted that Harvest Plenty House of Prayer is the only applicant on the agenda for FY 2024.

Motion by Myers, **Second** by Owens, to approve the funding request submitted by Harvest Plenty House of Prayer for FY 2024 in the amount of \$19,860.00. **AYE:** Horne, Owens, Lowe, Weger, Hankins, Myers, Shaw. **NAY:** None. ***Motion Passed.***

VII. Audience Participation

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 P.M.