



Youth and Family Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Lawton City Hall First Floor Conference Room (Banquet Hall)
212 SW 9th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chairman Rick Lowe. Upon roll call vote, a quorum was determined to be present.

Members Present: Rick Lowe, Mary Ann Hankins, Willie Smith, Dianne Owens, Bob Weger

Members Absent: Jeff Elbert (excused), Brenda Myers (excused), Lisa Shaw (excused), Davison Virgil (excused)

Also Present: Christine James, City of Lawton Internal Auditor; Tammy Branstetter, Sr Deputy City Clerk

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

Chairman Lowe said there are no guests present, but Councilman Bob Weger is a newly appointed Committee member.

Councilman Weger introduced himself to the Committee.

III. Business

- A. Consider 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 provided background information on this item. A copy of the request for funding from Harvest Plenty House of Prayer in the amount of \$43,970.00 for summer 2024 youth programs may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Chairman Lowe noted that the application period for summer 2024 youth programs was January 22nd – February 9th, 2024.

James noted that the application period for FY 24-25 grant funding will be March 4th – March 22nd, 2024. She said she will remind Caitlin Gaitlin, Communications & Marketing, to advertise for this upcoming grant application period.

Chairman Lowe noted that the grant application for Lawton Public Schools Makerspace Summer Camp

has already been approved, and the grant is accounted for in the Committee's budget.

Smith asked how much funding the Committee may award for summer 2024 programs.

James said the Committee may spend as much as they wish because a budget amendment for 2024 summer programs has not yet been taken to Council. She explained that the budget amendment passed by Council a few weeks ago was to balance out the account. She said she will be taking budget amendments to Council in the future for funding of summer 2024 programs as well as funding of FY 2024-2025 programs. James said the pot of money started out at \$6 million, and the Committee has been slowly using these funds. James said she has allocated \$150,000 for 2024 summer programs based on what the Committee spent on summer programs last year. The Committee may change this dollar amount if they wish, so long as a budget amendment for the requested funding amount is taken before Council and approved. James said she developed a yearly budget by taking the starting amount of \$6 million, subtracting all grants that have been approved by the Committee and City Council, subtracting \$150,000 for a projected 2024 summer program funding amount and then dividing the remaining balance by 11 years, which is the duration of the CIP. James noted that it is important to spread the funding over the remaining 11 years of the CIP so that the Committee doesn't overspend in one fiscal year, then have to cut back on grant approval the following year to make up for it.

Chairman Lowe noted that most of the summer programs applying for grants with the Committee span over two fiscal years because their programs run in June and July. He said these entities will have to start getting used to buying needed materials ahead of time. Chairman Lowe said staff is still unsure how salaries will be handled for those programs that span from June to July. Because of this, Chairman Lowe suggests that going forward all entities approved for YFAC funding meet with James so she can explain the reimbursement process and answer any questions they may have about the application period(s).

James noted that organizations applying for YFAC funding will need to be forward thinking enough to ensure they apply for a grant during the appropriate grant application periods. For example, if an organization is needing funding for both June of this fiscal year (FY 23-24) as well as funding for May and June of next fiscal year (FY 24-25), they should have applied during the application period for summer 2024 youth programs (January 22nd – February 9th, 2024) and be forward thinking enough to apply again during application period for FY 24-25 grant funding (March 4th – March 22nd, 2024).

Owens said this process needs to be thoroughly explained to organizations, so they know what to do.

Hankins said it needs to be determined if an organization can receive funding for more than one fiscal year. She noted that typically the goal is to help organizations become self-sufficient so they can operate on their own in the future.

Chairman Lowe said he does not believe there are any existing rules or regulations regarding organizations receiving funding for multiple fiscal years, but he does think the Committee needs to convey to organizations that the goal is to help them become self-sufficient.

James said the YFAC funding agreement states that annual funding is not a guarantee. James said this is also the reason why the grant application form asks where else an organization is receiving money from.

Smith said he is concerned the Committee may be setting a standard that they will not be able to sustain by repetitively approving funding for any one organization. He noted that grant funding requests tend to get higher with each passing year.

Hankins said she would hate to see a great organization struggle to stay open because they're ineligible to apply for future grants because they've received funding in previous fiscal years. She noted that the MIGHT program is a great program that has received YFAC grant funding more than once.

James said the Committee could build this into the scoring matrix by awarding additional points to organizations who are actively seeking additional outside funding. She said it could also be built into the application by requesting organizations that have received funding in previous fiscal years to explain what they've done to move towards the goal of become self-sufficient.

Owens asked if there has ever been an organization that has not used all their grant funding.

Chairman Lowe said Cameron University's summer program did not use all their grant funding, and they returned it to the City of Lawton.

James said all organizations that have received YFAC funding have an annual report that is due this summer. She said all organizations are to be submitting both a monthly progress report, as well as an annual report. Unfortunately, most organizations have failed to submit their reports in the past. This is requirement that should be enforced going forward so that the Committee can use these reports when determining future YFAC grant eligibility.

Chairman Lowe said the Harvest Plenty House of Prayer is requesting funding for their summer program - "Chisholm Trail Summer Camp: Riding into STEM". He said this is a six-week program that operates Monday-Friday from 8:00AM – 4:00PM. They have 240 hours of service, and they offered this program last year. YFAC did not fund this program last year, but Chairman Lowe noted that participants were charged \$200 last year, and that last year was a shorter program.

Smith noted that all organizations charge for participation.

Chairman Lowe said Committee members will be able to gather more information regarding Harvest Plenty House of Prayer's summer program by scheduling a site visit.

Smith noted that the bulk of funding they're asking for is to cover salaries.

James said a good question to ask these organizations is "what is the cost per child?". She asked how this organization covered salaries last year.

Chairman Lowe said they did not pay their staff an hourly rate last year, but rather a stipend.

Smith noted that many organizations use volunteers for their staff and do not have to pay them a salary.

Owens said the Committee does not have to award the full amount of the funding requested.

Smith said there are two different STEM summer programs being offered – the one offered by Harvest Plenty House of Prayer (HPHOP), and one offered by MIGHT. He noted that HPHOP pays their staff, while MIGHT seeks volunteers to run their program. He is concerned that this will cause a conflict between the two entities.

Chairman Lowe noted that Lawton Public Schools also offers a STEM camp, and they pay their staff. Chairman Lowe noted that teachers working the LPS STEM camp are Oklahoma state certified. He said the teachers used by HPHOP will also be certified, with an emphasis on reading. This could be one

reason why they pay their staff.

Owens said she feels the Committee should award HPHOP grant funding, but for less than what they're requesting.

Chairman Lowe said if the Committee would like to entertain this funding request, the next step would be to schedule a site visit.

Hankins asked that page numbers be added to future agenda packets to make it easier to look through during meetings.

Branstetter said she will add page numbers going forward.

Chairman Lowe noted that the site visit should be done before the next Committee meeting, which will be March 19th, 2024.

Smith asked why site visits are conducted rather than having a representative from the applicant's organization attend a YFAC meeting to discuss their request.

Chairman Lowe said site visits are done so the Committee may observe where the program will be taking place. He noted that there is a scoring rubric that will be used during the site visit.

Owens asked if the Committee needs to do a site visit for MIGHT again this year, seeing as how a site visit has been done with them in the past.

James said she recommends doing a site visit for each incoming application, as to provide consistency. Once a site visit has been conducted, the Committee can decide the amount of funding they want to approve. James said she will then take the funding request approved by the Committee to City Council for final approval, along with a budget amendment to allocate for the funds.

Chairman Lowe asked if there are any posting requirements for the site visits.

James said there are no posting requirements if a quorum will not be present. She suggests a subcommittee of four members (a quorum is 5) do the site visits and report their findings to the Committee at the next meeting.

Chairman Lowe asked for volunteers to do site visits.

Weger said he would like to participate in the site visits.

Owens said she can help with site visits.

Chairman Lowe said these site visits need to be done before March 19th.

Smith volunteered to do site visits.

Hankins volunteered to do site visits.

Smith said he does not have to go on the site visit if Chairman Lowe needs to go.

James said Weger, Hankins, Owens, and Chairman Lowe will conduct the site visit for HPHOP.

Smith asked that Committee members ask HPHOP if any of this funding will go towards paying registration fees for the kids.

Chairman Lowe suggested the site visit be done on Tuesday, March 5th.

Owens asked if this could be done in the afternoon.

Chairman Lowe said the site visit will be scheduled for 3:00PM on Tuesday, March 5th.

Branstetter said she will reach out to HPHOP to ensure they will be available.

No action was taken on this item.

- B.** Consider and discuss a request for funding from MIGHT CDRC in the amount of \$75,000.00 for summer 2024 youth programs within the City of Lawton and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Chairman Lowe provided background information on this item. A copy of the request for funding from MIGHT CDRC in the amount of \$75,000.00 for summer 2024 youth programs may be obtained from the City Clerk's Office upon request.

Smith emphasized that MIGHT has nothing listed under their budget for salaries. This is because the program is run by volunteers.

James noted that MIGHT is receiving funding from outside organizations, so it's possible they are using those funds to pay salaries.

Chairman Lowe noted that the funding request indicated on the application is different than the amount indicated on their itemized operating budget.

Hankins asked if the same group conducting the site visit for HPHOP will also be conducting the site visit for MIGHT.

Smith volunteered to do the site visit.

Hankins said she can step down on this site visit because she is familiar with the organization.

Owens said she is also familiar with this organization, and she does not feel the need to participate in this site visit.

Chairman Lowe said he will participate in the site visit, along with Smith and Weger. He asked Smith and Weger when they'd like to schedule the site visit.

Weger suggested they do the site visit on March 5th, either before or after the HPHOP site visit.

Chairman Lowe said the site visit for MIGHT will be scheduled for 5:00PM on Tuesday March 5th.

James noted that MIGHT's current contract runs through May, and the \$75,000 they are requesting can only be used in June.

Branstetter said she will reach out to MIGHT to ensure they will be available.

Chairman Lowe provided Committee members with a copy of United Way's scoring rubric. He asked that Committee members review the scoring rubric and make changes as they deem fit.

James noted that the Committee may want to vote on the final version of the scoring rubric.

No action was taken on this item.

IV. Audience Participation

None.

V. Adjourn

Motion by Smith, Second by Hankins, to adjourn the February 20, 2024 meeting. **AYE:** Weger, Lowe, Hankins, Owens, Smith. **NAY:** None. **OBSTAIN:** Lowe. ***Motion Passed.***

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

The Youth and Family Affairs Committee encourages participation by all City of Lawton citizens. If participation at any public meeting is not possible due to a disability, notification to the City Clerk at (580) 581-3305 at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is encouraged to make the necessary accommodations. The 48-hour time period may be waived if an interpreter for the deaf (signing) is not the necessary accommodation.