



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Virtual Meeting)**

Chaired by Mayor Pro Tem Chris Williams

Members: Williams, Hudson, Jefferson, and Johnson

June 9, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.

3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room #302

As part of the city of High Point's COVID-19 mitigation efforts, in-person attendance was not allowed at this meeting. Instead, the meeting was live-streamed, and the public was provided a link to listen to the meeting as it was being live-streamed.

www.HighPointNC.gov/VirtualPublicMeeting

CALL TO ORDER (Virtual Roll Call)

Chairman Chris Williams called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Following a virtual roll call, the following attendance by Committee Members was duly noted.

Physically

Present (3): Chairman Chris Williams, Committee Member Cyril Jefferson, and Committee Member Tyrone Johnson

Absent (1): Committee Member Wesley Hudson

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Interim City Manager; Greg Ferguson, Assistant City Manager; Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Staff Participating Remotely:

JoAnne, Carlyle, City Attorney; Michelle McNair, Community Resource Manager; Thanena Wilson, Assistant Director of Community Development & Housing

The following documents associated with the presentations, are hereby attached as a permanent part of these proceedings:

- 1. High Point Schools Partnership PowerPoint Presentation*
- 2. Power Point Presentation- Special Allocation from the CARES Act- Substantial Amendment to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan and the 2020-24 Consolidated Plan Process*

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS

2020-186 Discussion-High Point Schools Partnership

Information will be presented to the Committee from the High Point Schools Partnership for discussion by the Community Development Committee.

Matt Thiel advised that he and Joe Blosser serve as co-chairs for the High Point Schools Partnership (HPSP).

Mr. Thiel spoke about the extraordinary times we are living in today and when the City Council was elected in 2014 with a slate of council members who were elected on the idea of complete revitalization in High Point, which has been successfully on-going for six years right up until the time of the Coronavirus pandemic. He spoke to the momentum that started to build after the 2017 election for downtown redevelopment and how he was not hearing anything about development of our High Point Schools. He stated he is a firm believer that the community cannot reach its full potential of revitalization of downtown development, business development, and community development without the best possible High Point schools and this is the reason the High Point Schools Partnership group was formed. Mr. Thiel spoke about how they started having events in 2019 and the unbelievable impacts these events have had in creating more awareness of our schools in the community and creating more business partnerships between the community leaders and our schools.

Mr. Thiel acknowledged the \$7 million hole in the city's budget and explained the reasoning behind their request is simple in that the community and elected leaders have to look at COVID-19 not as a stopping point, but a change in direction, and stressed the importance of Council including things in the budget that continue the development of the downtown and the whole community. He noted that while the schools do fall under the auspice of Guilford County and High Point schools only receive roughly 20% or \$100 million of their \$500 million budget.

The High Point Schools Partnership is requesting \$30,000 from the City of High Point in this year's budget cycle. This funding would support a part-time position (20 hours a week) that would:

- *Develop and support business partnerships for the six pilot schools that have already been identified and have principals ready to get to work.*
- *Aid in the organization and connection of other High Point businesses and civic groups to High Point schools.*
- *Develop an education and public relations campaign for local realtors to ensure they have the knowledge, relationships, and first-hand experiences to promote our schools. This includes school tours, principal presentations, adding content to realtor newsletters, and having realtors active on the HPSP committees and Ambassadors.*
- *Oversee updates to the Schools in High Point website.*
- *Coordinate with the city's media relations staff to ensure regular, high quality, positive stories about our schools are featured in the local media and city communications.*

He proceeded to review the PowerPoint Presentation for High Point Schools Partnership.

Mr. Thiel felt this would be a great way for the City Council to lead more and have more leverage in our schools, work together in partnership with the Guilford County School Board, the Superintendent, Principals, with the goal to have the best schools in High Point, which is a significant part of reaching our potential in terms of revitalization.

Mr. Thiel then reviewed the benefits that HPSP would offer for the funding and noted with a favorable first year, the HPSP could expand its partnership with the city in the second year to include:

- Staff support and coordination of the existing mentorship initiative.*
- Greater coordination of after-school programs to ensure best practices and close gaps in service.*

At the conclusion of the presentation, Chairman Williams asked if there were any questions from the Committee Members.

Committee Member Jefferson commented that although it is very clear that our county provides oversight and funding for our schools, but pointed out the status of our schools and how well they do impacts the City of High Point in a significant way. He mentioned the city's Vision Statement which is "to create the most livable, safe and prosperous community in America" and spoke to how the \$30,000 request is worth considering because everyone cares about our schools and this could help increase the economic development potential of the city because companies certainly consider things like transportation, education, etc..... He hoped further discussion could take place in the budget process with hopes to get outside agency funding back in the budget. He stated from the overwhelming, positive messages he has heard in the community, the community likes the positive things that the Partnership is doing.

Mr. Thiel likened this to a small investment and an enormous amount of leverage and spoke to how, in their two short years of operation, High Point schools are getting more attention, more funding, and more support from Guilford County Schools because of the advocacy work they are doing.

A brief discussion followed regarding the possibility of doing another short presentation for the rest of City Council. It was noted that the presentation was uploaded into OneDrive so the rest of Council could access it and review it. Chairman Williams asked if it might be possible for HPSP to shorten the presentation it to about 3 minutes for the June 15th City Council Meeting. Mr. Thiel asked if the Community Development Committee would be making a recommendation at this meeting.

Following a straw vote, the Committee gave it a favorable recommendation.

2020-187

Presentation-Substantial Amendment to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan

Staff is will provide a presentation on the Substantial Amendment to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan

Mike McNair provided a brief background of the CARES Act, which was passed on March 27th, and advised that the receipt of the funding from the CARES Act would require substantial amendments to the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan and the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. In

addition to the required substantial amendments to the Annual Action Plan and the Consolidated Plan, an amendment is also required for the Citizen Participation Plan which involves public input. The documents and all related information can be found on the City of High Point's website on the Community Development Department's webpage.

Mr. McNair explained that the public service cap was eliminated which made all of the money available for public service grants for COVID-19 related requests and must be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the virus. The projects eligible for this funding would typically be emergency assistance, homelessness, economic disruption, etc.... The funds must be expended by September 30, 2021. Regarding the emergency assistance payments, Mr. McNair advised that HUD would not allow income payments to be made to individuals and explained this would have to be an internal payment to an agency, who would then work with the individual. Randy McCaslin, Interim City Manager, pointed out the city already provides \$200,000 annually in emergency assistance funding for utility bill assistance which involves four or five agencies taking in the applications from individuals.

Mr. McNair explained the details have changed in the budget somewhat due to the United Way declining to enter into the \$100,000 contract with the city to be the fiscal agent for administration of these funds. He advised they opted out due to the complexity of the government relations and they felt this would over-tax their staff. As a result, the \$100,000 was added back into the total which was reported to be around \$552,706.

Mr. McCaslin asked if staff anticipates any additional funding. Mr. McNair advised that an additional \$2 billion was set aside that would be for risk-based areas and assuming that our area is in the Top 15 in the country, we may be eligible for some of that funding as well. This funding may become available in the Fall.

Mr. McNair reported that Council has already awarded a contract to Open Door Ministries in the amount of \$28,800. The Citizens Advisory Council has already reviewed the applications received thus far and have made recommendations for public service grants in the amount of \$139,000 be awarded to the various agencies within the community that submitted requests for funding. He noted that approximately \$200,000 was set aside for eligible activities for those requests received that would not technically be a public service, but could be deemed an eligible activity.

Committee Member Jefferson inquired as to what the \$200,000 would be used for. Mr. McNair explained the thought process in setting the \$200,000 aside was to hear from the community, then react to it and respond accordingly if the request fits within the guidelines.

Chairman Williams asked if the various food pantries throughout the community would be eligible for some of this funding because of people being out of work and the impacts of the COVID-19 situation. Mr. McNair replied that they would and it would be a response to economic disruption related to the virus.

Mr. McNair informed the Committee that the Citizens Advisory Council has already recommended grants be awarded to three agencies and the review process for that would take place at the Citizens Advisory Council Meeting scheduled for Thursday, June 11th.

Mr. McCaslin asked if any of the Citizens Advisory Council's recommendations would require Council approval prior to the funds being expended. Mr. McNair replied that it would not

because the contracts would not be over the \$90,000 threshold, but expressed that he wanted to give the Community Development Committee an opportunity to review the recommendations, endorse the recommendations, then they would move forward.

He advised that staff is actually seeking a recommendation from the Committee regarding the required substantial amendments related to receipt of the additional funding. He pointed out a public hearing will be held before the City Council on June 15th at 5:30 pm. on the substantial amendments.

A motion was made by Council Member Jefferson, seconded by Council Member Johnson, that this matter be forwarded to the City Council with a favorable recommendation for approval. Following a roll call vote by Chairman Williams, the motion carried by the following 3-0 unanimous vote:

Aye (3): Chairman Williams, Committee Member Jefferson, and Committee Member Johnson

Absent (1): Committee Member Hudson

2020-188 Discussion and Review-CAC Funding Recommendation for CDBG-CV Applications

Staff will review the CAC Funding Recommendations for CDBG-CV Applications

Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing reiterated that the City Council has already approved a budget amendment on May 4th that would allow staff to move forward with contracts for the agencies that have been awarded public service grants. He pointed out that Open Door Ministries received the first award and they would provide staff and operational supplies to set up a temporary shelter at St. Mary's so they can achieve the social distancing requirements.

He further advised that the RFP indicated the Citizens Advisory Council would be reviewing applications on a continuous basis; they would be reviewing the applications that have been received; and are meeting on a weekly basis as needed for these reviews. He provided an overview of the applications that have been received that the Citizens Advisory Council has reviewed and are recommending award of public service grants.

- 1. Open Door Ministries (\$8,260.04 has been expended during the month of April of the \$28,800.00 originally awarded).*
- 2. Housing Consultants Group (\$50,000)*
- 3. West End Ministries (\$50,000)*
- 4. Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club (\$39,000)*

A motion was made by Council Member Jefferson, seconded by Council Member Johnson, that these funding recommendations be forwarded to the City Council with a favorable recommendation for approval. Following a roll call vote by Chairman Williams, the motion carried by the following 3-0 unanimous vote:

Aye (3): Chairman Williams, Committee Member Jefferson, and Committee Member Johnson

Absent (1): Committee Member Hudson

2020-189 Update-2020-2024 Consolidated Plan Process

Staff will provide an update on the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan Process.

Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing, advised that staff has informed HUD that the 2020-2024 Annual Action Plan would be submitted to them no later than August 16th due to delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed schedule for the 2020 Annual Action Plan and the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan is as follows:

*June 10th..... Run ad for 30-day review and comment period
 June 15th - July 14th.....30-day review and comment period
 June 25thReview with CAC
 July 5th.....Run ad for public hearing before City Council
 July 14th.....Presentation to Community Development Committee
 July 20th.....Presentation/public hearing before Council
 July 21st - July 24th.....Finalize plan
 August 3rd.....Request for Council approval
 August 10th.....Annual action Plan submitted to HUD*

Staff asked the Committee if they would like to have a follow-up meeting to review the Citizens Advisory Council's recommendations regarding funding for the public service grants. Committee Member Jefferson did not feel it was necessary unless any issues arise with the recommendations. Chairman Williams agreed if any issues arise, then it might be a good idea to bring it before the Committee. City Attorney Carlyle agreed that this would be acceptable as long as the public service contracts fall below the threshold that would require Council approval.

The Committee provided a "thumbs-up" for staff to move forward with the award of the public service grants that have been reviewed and recommended for funding.

Other Business

City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle advised that she has been in contact with Asheville's attorney as they have been providing some places for the homeless to actually live while social distancing, and their attorney mentioned that they are expecting reimbursements through FEMA. She expressed that she was not sure if it is from the same pot of money for the additional funding from HUD for response to the COVID-19 pandemic or not. Mr. McNair advised that he has heard that there is some FEMA money available, but it is not being funneled through the cities.

City Attorney Carlyle advised that she would reach out to get additional information on the sources of funding that Asheville is anticipating.

Governor's Executive Order #145

City Attorney Carlyle advised that Governor Roy Cooper did execute Executive Order 145 today, and as part of the executive order, he commissioned a NC Task Force for Racial Equality and Criminal Justice. As part of this, the Governor will be appointing no more than 25 members to include police chiefs, criminal justice people, elected officials, and hopefully would include some local officials as well.

Reduction in Law Enforcement Using Deadly Force

Ms. Carlyle also reported that the State will start collecting data across the board from all law enforcement agencies throughout the state in an attempt to develop lessons for training, transparency, etc.....She advised that although Executive Order 145 does not specifically address personnel records being more open for law enforcement officers and their actions, there has been a lot of talk about this statewide. However, if a law enforcement officer were to witness an incident that was deemed to be in excessive use of force, they would have a responsibility to report it.

What's Being Done in Other Places?

Committee Member Jefferson advised an idea that was stumbled upon by Resilience High Point has been the concept of hand-washing or sanitation stations to assist in a public domain where the public can have access to these mechanisms that may not have access to a restroom, etc.... He acknowledged that Patrick Harman, Resilience High Point, was invited to participate in the discussion of this matter and asked him to talk briefly about some samples of what might be taking place in other areas throughout the state regarding hand-washing stations and port-a-johns.

Mr. Harman stated there are a number of cities throughout the country that have implemented the sanitation station idea to deal with COVID-19 because of the issues with hygiene that is associated with it. He stated in their research, they have found there are a number of cities around the country that have implemented sanitation stations in response to COVID-19 because hygiene is always an issue. In their research, they discovered two cities in North Carolina that have such facilities: Charlotte and Asheville, and a number of cities in California as well.

He mentioned the community-based efforts and spoke to how Resilience High Point has talked about how the CDBG-CV funding could possibly fill the gap. He spoke to the difficulties associated with servicing sanitizing stations and port-a-johns and noted that he has not actually done a budget, but felt the cost would be minimal.

Chairman Williams inquired as to the number of hand-washing stations that Asheville has and Mr. Harman replied that he believed they have six hand-washing stations and some portable restrooms as well. City Attorney Carlyle asked if the stations are located on private or public property. Mr. Harman replied that he believes it to be both private and public.

Chairman Williams admitted he had heartburn over port-a-johns in public places. Committee Member Jefferson replied that this was discussed in the Resilience High Point's meeting and many felt it might be a good idea to avoid port-a-johns and preferred a private partnership so it would not be sitting on a public space. City Attorney Carlyle explained if someone is invited to come on public property for any reason, the city's liability insurance provider would need to be aware and a determination would need to be made to ensure that the city would be covered. She also advised that there could be issues if these are located on private property due to maintenance concerns.

Mr. McCaslin asked if there is a specific proposal from Resilience High Point. Committee Member Jefferson replied that no proposals have been drafted and explained it was based on conversations they have had in trying to figure out what needs to be proposed and what the

restraints/limitations are and he hopes that the city could partner with Resilience High Point and other community organizations to make this happen.

As a matter of simplification, Chairman Williams suggested they do some research and get and submit a list of locations, public/private. Mr. Harman agreed they could identify some locations for the hand-washing stations. Chairman Williams felt this would help expedite things.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Christopher Williams, Chairman

Attest:

Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk