



City of San Marcos

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

3:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

This meeting was held using conferencing software due to COVID-19 rules.

I. Call To Order

With a quorum present, the work session of the San Marcos City Council was called to order by Mayor Hughson at 3:02 p.m. Tuesday, February 2, 2021. The meeting was held online.

II. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Mayor Pro Tem Melissa Derrick, Mayor Jane Hughson, Council Member Maxfield Baker, Council Member Saul Gonzales, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Shane Scott, Council Member Alyssa Garza and Council Member Mark Gleason

EXECUTIVE SESSION

3. Executive Session in accordance with Section §551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with Attorney - to receive advice of legal counsel regarding the process for consideration of out of city utility extension requests under Section 86.003 of the San Marcos City Code and state law restrictions on municipal regulation of land uses on development projects initiated prior to annexation.

Mayor Hughson asked Council if they would consider going into Executive Session first and then item 1 and 2. Council concurred.

A motion was made by Council Member Gonzales, seconded by Council Member Gleason, to enter into Executive Session at 3:04 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 7 - Mayor Pro Tem Derrick, Mayor Hughson, Council Member Baker, Council Member Gonzales, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott, Council Member Garza and Council Member Gleason

Against: 0

Executive Session concluded at 4:23 p.m.

1. Receive a staff presentation on CARES Act reimbursements and use of potentially available City funds; and provide direction to staff.

Bert Lumbreras, City Manager, stated last year the City Council approved the use of Coronavirus Relief Funding that was designated to the City from the CARES Act. When those uses were approved, it was discussed that there may be freed up General Fund dollars that could be put toward additional programs to assist residents affected by the COVID pandemic. The expenses for which we requested reimbursement are still under review and audit by the Texas Department of Emergency Management. If all expenses are approved, funds should be expected around the end of March. Staff is presenting this now so the City can move quickly in implementing any potential program. Staff is seeking Council direction on uses of the funds and the process that should be used to distribute them.

Carol Griffith, Housing and Community Development Manager, provided the presentation on the CARES Act reimbursements and the use of potentially available City funds.

Ms. Griffith provided the Non-Budgeted COVID-19 Pandemic Related Expenses:

Public Health Provision: \$475,691 for Personal protective equipment, touchless water access in sinks and fountains, and fencing

Other Reasonably Necessary Expenses: \$1,164 for Administrative Costs

Compliance with Public Health Restrictions: \$367,032 for Phone system, learning management system and \$98,925 for Computers for the San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District

Ms. Griffith provided the Budgeted expenses:

Fire and Police Salaries and Benefits: \$2,671,995 for payroll for public health and safety (City Police and Fire)

Total requested is \$3,614,807, pending approval from the Texas Department of Emergency Management

The city is predicting approximately \$2M - \$2.3M in funding reimbursement. This final number will be known in mid to late March.

The program parameters for these funds include:

- Must have a PUBLIC BENEFIT – these are government funds for the citizens of San Marcos**
- Does not have to meet CARES Act requirements**
- Should not create recurring expenses since these are ONE TIME funds**

Ms. Griffith explained the steps needed to move funds quickly to individuals and what it takes to run a program:

- 1. Decisions - who is eligible (Policies)**
- 2. Decisions - program objectives and measurements**
- 3. Procedures - step by step**
- 4. Marketing materials and process**
- 5. Application intake, review, decisions**
- 6. Program implementation**
- 7. Close out and final reporting**

Staff is seeking Council Direction on the Uses of Funds. Staff is seeking what proportion of the funds should be used for current social service relief programs vs. long term capacity for local San Marcos social service providers. Staff is recommending the following:

PANDEMIC (immediate/emergency relief) 90%: rent/mortgage/utilities/car payments, business expenses, crisis funding

SYSTEMIC (long-term/on-going) 10%: non-profit training, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) software, comprehensive homelessness needs assessment

Council Member Baker suggested 60% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 40% (systemic) for long term. He expressed his concerns with the cost of the comprehensive homelessness needs assessment.

Mayor Pro Tem Derrick would like the City to consider working with the Salvation Army since they have been established longer than the Homelessness Coalition. She would like more information about extending the moratorium on evictions. Mr. Cosentino confirmed the ordinance that requires the eviction notice will be valid through the state of emergency in San Marcos and statewide through the Governor's order. Ms. Derrick stated she would like to extend the Moratorium on evictions through March. Ms. Derrick suggests 60% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 40% (systemic) for long term.

Mr. Lumbreras stated we need to address both the immediate needs and long-term. The comprehensive needs assessment should be considered, and it does not have to be an expensive initiative. This assessment will give a sense of what the needs are, how to best address it, where does the City fit in and where is the capacity we need to build to address this long term.

Chase Stapp, Director of Public Safety, stated the cost of the comprehensive homeless assessment that was completed in Abilene was roughly \$10,000.

Council Member Gleason suggested 80% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term.

Council Member Garza suggested 80% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term because there are many people who need help today. She also asked if there is a prediction when we could get more funding? Or is this the only allotment of money we might receive?

Ms. Griffith stated there are programs that we can look into, but have not heard of any more money at this time.

Council Member Garza would like us to consider those who do not typically apply for direct aid as these are some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott would like to see 80% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term. He expressed concerns with spending a large amount of money on a needs assessment when the money could be used on other items. Council Member Garza stated there is an interest in a partnership to work with the university's School of Social Work to assist with this assessments to lower the cost.

Council Member Gonzales suggested 80% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term.

Mayor Hughson likes the 90% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term. She does agree the HMIS software is needed.

Council Member Baker stated there is a lack of transitional housing and this can't be addressed with a lower percentage of funding. There needs to be more long term strategies.

Council Member Scott stated there will be issues after the pandemic and how can we house the homeless so we really need to look ways to help citizens long term.

Council Member Gleason stated we do not know what the long-term implications may be so he is still okay with the 80%/20%.

Council Member Garza stated nonprofit organizations will assist and will be focusing on the systemic.

Mayor Hughson is good with the 80% (pandemic) for immediate relief and 20% (systemic) for long term which is the consensus from Council.

Ms. Griffith asked what categories Council would like to focus on when these are brought back before Council. These categories of expenditures include the following:

Rent/Mortgage/Utilities/Car Payments

Business Expenses

Crisis Funding through various non-profits

Long-term would include Non-Profit Training, HMIS software, and Comprehensive Homelessness Needs Assessment.

Council Member Gleason would like to focus on rent/mortgage/utilities/car payments as a long term need, but wants to help those in need right now. We have Food Bank and Community Action to assist in a different areas.

Ms.Griffith stated council can directly allocate money to an organization to distribute the funds or there can be an application process to distribute these funds.

Council Garza stated there needs to be some focus on our non-residents as they do not qualify for federal aid. She expressed that immediate, direct aid is important and supports the three categories outlined.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott agrees with the three categories outlined above. Mr. Scott asked if the money is given to the applicant or landlord. Ms. Griffith stated it goes directly into landlord.

Council Member Baker wanted to ensure the city is not paying itself as we have control over the utilities. Other utilites such as internet expense is OK. He also inquired about the possibility of working with a non profit to assist non citizens within the community so they do not have such prohibitive applications.

Council Member Garza stated there are models other cities use for this type of critical response. For example some non citizens may not have formal leases so a framework would need to be put in place to be more equitable when it comes to how we put qualification and restrictions within the application.

Council Member Gonzales supports the three categories outlined above. He does want to see the business expenditures separate from the other.

Council Member Baker would like to ensure businesses that receive funding should follow the Center for Disease Control requirements regarding masks and social distancing. Council agreed.

Ms. Griffith stated she understands Council's priorities and will bring back this item at a future meeting.

2. Receive a Staff presentation on the City of San Marcos Economic Development Policy, and provide direction to Staff.

Bert Lumbreras, City Manager, stated this item will be brought forward at a future meeting because we are out of time today.

Council Member Baker inquired about the Greater San Marcos Partnership contract and wants to ensure the Economic Development presentation is brought forward sooner rather than later.

Mr. Lumbreras stated the GSMP contract does not expire until the end of the Fiscal Year so this presentation will come forward prior to that time.

III. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Council Member Gonzales, seconded by Council Member Gleason, to adjourn the work session meeting of the City Council at 5:33 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 7 - Mayor Pro Tem Derrick, Mayor Hughson, Council Member Baker, Council Member Gonzales, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott, Council Member Garza and Council Member Gleason

Against: 0

Tammy K. Cook, Interim City Clerk

Jane Hughson, Mayor