

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session**

City Hall Complex
San Antonio, Texas 78205

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg
Mario Bravo, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Ana Sandoval, Dist. 7 | Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8
John Courage, Dist. 9 | Clayton Perry, Dist. 10

Thursday, January 26, 2023

1:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

The City Council convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 1:21 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sitre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Council Members present:

PRESENT: 11 – Nirenberg, Bravo, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, Perry

ABSENT: None

ITEMS

1. Post Solicitation briefing on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) recommended awards for Mental Health Services, Non-Profit Social Services (Phase II), Senior Services, and Youth Services competitive solicitation. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Melody Woosley, Director, Human Services & Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude Jacob, Director, San Antonio Metropolitan Health]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced the Item, described the process and timeline for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant programs and introduced Jessica Dovalina, Assistant

Director of the Department of Human Services.

Dovalina began her presentation by outlining the purpose of the \$40 million on the total recommended grants which was to benefit non-profits, older adults, youth and provide mental health services. Dovalina described the competitive solicitation process and timeline including development of priorities by various City Council Committees, outreach and engagement, technical assistance, evaluation/scoring of proposals and implementation plan. Dovalina listed the targeted COVID-19 impact areas that were expected to be addressed through the grants.

Jessie Higgins, Chief Mental Health Officer, provided an overview of the Mental Health Grants valued at \$14.25 million for youth, \$2.5 million for older adults, and \$2.56 million for homeless services. Higgins reviewed the goals of the program, recommended services and anticipated community impact. Higgins stated that \$3,749,741 remained unallocated and recommended future solicitations for all but \$1 million which needed more community input.

City Attorney Andy Segovia reminded the City Council that even though the Item was a briefing, Councilmembers should not advocate for agencies for which they had conflicts of interest during the discussion.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked Federal government partners for providing the ARPA funding.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested a map of the location of the agencies overlaid onto the equity map to ensure that those most impacted by COVID-19 received the most services.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda commented that no one was spared from being impacted by COVID-19 and she supported the plan to prioritize children, youth aging out of foster care and those with special needs. Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested clarification on some of the rejected proposals. Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez reported that capital projects were not eligible under this grant program.

Councilmember Perry requested clarification on the remaining funds and whether funding could be moved to another category such as small business and further clarification on the entire ARPA Budget. Deputy City Manager Villagomez responded to the question noting that the City Council could move unallocated funds. Councilmember Perry asked about the metrics that would be required under the contracts. Dovalina listed equitable outcomes as the main goal of the funding.

Councilmember Castillo supported the recommendations noting that many seniors in her council district lacked access to food and youth needed assistance as well as homeless populations. Councilmember Castillo requested clarification on the mental health services that would be provided to youth and recommended more funding for the San Antonio Youth Commission.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted that some of the agencies not being recommended for funding were located in Council District 2 and wanted to ensure that his residents were served. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez suggested that some of the non-profits in his council district were disadvantaged because they were smaller and requested a zip code map of the services.

Councilmember Pelaez thanked staff for their work and commented that the agencies serviced all of the city so he was not concerned with their location but was expecting a significant investment in domestic violence services. Councilmember Pelaez noted that many of the recommended agencies were large and did not necessarily need the funding awards and were the same players that were traditionally funded. City Manager Walsh responded that the City Council set the outcomes and scopes that were included in the solicitation and there were more needs than money available.

Councilmember Viagran recognized that the City Council provided specific direction to the staff which was followed. However, she noted that the City Council needed to address the issue of domestic violence and violence against women and members of the LGBTQ community. Councilmember Viagran recommended that the remaining funding be dedicated to domestic violence and to address zip codes that had been underserved.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia agreed that domestic violence needed more funding and recommended cross referencing overlapping proposals. Dovalina stated that collaborations were encouraged but not duplication. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked how a Goodwill employment program would fit within the category and requested further clarification on some of the mental health programs.

Councilmember Bravo commented that the point in time homeless count has remained steady and noted that while COVID presented a challenge, San Antonio was doing better than other large cities. Councilmember Bravo suggested that more permanent supportive housing was needed to improve outcomes for the homeless and stressed that this was the best time to support homeless programs and an excellent use of ARPA funds.

Councilmember Sandoval commented that \$4 million for non-profit social services were removed from the Small Business Pillar early on in order to ensure that the non-profits were not competing with for-profit businesses. She also noted that \$1.5 million was set aside for immigrant services from the non-profit social services. Councilmember Sandoval stated that staff developed the programs based on the direction and framework provided by City Council and she supported the recommendation.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda supported the staff recommendations noting that the Council Committees had set the framework and staff developed the solicitation under the parameters established. However, Councilmember Cabello Havrda pointed out that capital improvements were listed in the RFP as being eligible so she recommended revisiting the eligibility of those proposals.

Mayor Nirenberg commented that services for homeless populations extended beyond the point-in-time count to prevention measures as well. Mayor Nirenberg agreed that there were many discussions about the framework and staff developed a good program but, there was just not enough money to fund everything including domestic violence and mental health which needed to be addressed at higher levels of government as well as at the local level.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez lamented that some agencies got funded outside the process and suggested they might not have gotten as much money had they gone through the process.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concern that the Eastside would not get the services that were needed. City Manager Walsh explained that the Equity Atlas was used to prioritize services and through contracting staff, would ensure underserved areas would not be left out. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested a map of services which City Manager Walsh stated he would provide.

Councilmember Castillo commented that community centers benefitted beyond the council districts so there needed to be a focus on the greater good for the city as a whole.

No action was required for Item 1.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session held.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 PM.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

**Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk**