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MINUTES

Stimulus Advisory Board

Meeting #2

May 15, 2021

Videoconference Meeting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iIkU0k_Mdg

10:04 a.m. – 11:37 a.m.

Members Present:

- Rodney Boyd
- Patrick Brown
- Ed Bryant
- Lisa Cagle – Facilitator
- Kimberly-Ann Collins
- David Dwight
- Dara Eskridge
- Vanessa Foster-Cooksey
- Cristina Garmendia
- Dr. Megan Green
- Grace Kyung
- Molly Metzger
- Sandra Moore
- Arrey Obenson
- Chris Prener
- Jason Purnell
- Wally Siewert
- Paul Sorenson
- Blake Strode
- Richard von Glahn
- Rebecca Weaver
- Aimee Wehmeier

Staff Present:

- Jared Boyd
- Nancy Cross
- Nahuel Fefer
- Bev Fitsimmons
- LaTaunia Kenner

Elected Officials:

- Mayor Tishaura Jones – Present
- Comptroller Darlene Green
- President Lewis Reed

Absent

- Brandon Comer
- Erica Henderson
- Tom Shepard
- Mike Talbo
- Niasha West

Recorder: Madisen Janssen

- I. Opening of Meeting (10:04 A.M.)
- II. Opening Remarks by Mayor Jones
 - a. The administration is currently focused on direct relief – meeting the critical needs of people quickly. The direct relief will be folded into the budget. This is the fastest way to get funds to families.
 - b. Priorities: Vaccines, rental assistance, City unemployment insurance, & youth jobs and programming.
- III. Roll call – Lisa Cagle is the facilitator
 - a. Elected officials and staff members from the Mayors office were present, but not included in roll call.
- IV. Approval of the minutes for the meeting on May 1, 2021
 - a. No discussion
 - b. Vanessa Cooksey moved, Wally Siewert second. Lisa Cagle abstained because she was not at the May 1st meeting. Minutes were approved.
- V. **Working Group Update #1 – Management and Oversight**, Presented by Rodney Boyd
 - a. Most staff heavy group of all the advisory groups. In an effort to get direct relief funds out as soon as possible, they advise that they fold those funds into the budget, and not as a separate board bill. Funds will then be available early July.
 - b. We have received Treasury guidelines.
 - c. Advising an RFP process for an independent auditor.
 - d. Looking to have an implement project manager – someone responsible for implementation. Look at an RFP for this position.
 - e. Rodney Boyd is recommending that the Management and Oversight group is so staff heavy that they should fold themselves primarily into a staff working group.

- f. Nahuel Fefer – They City will be convening an internal implementation team and that team will provide an update at the top of future stimulus advisory meetings.
- g. **Questions/Discussion**
 - i. Molly Metzger – In regard to folding the funds into the budget process, there are multiple funds under ARPA, will the smaller buckets of funds be folded into the budget process too?
 - 1. Rodney Boyd – The most important thing right now is the \$50M direct relief amount.
 - 2. Nahuel Fefer – They will explore all options for smaller buckets of funding.
 - ii. Wally Siewert – Assuming there will still be a role for an advisory board to have oversight over implementation, wants to leave space for that.
 - 1. Nahuel Fefer – There may be a need for a new working group moving forward.

VI. Working Group Update #2: Data and Evaluation, Presented by Cristina Garmendia, Chris Prener, and Paul Sorenson

- a. A formal report will be sent to the whole board and will go on the City website for the public to read.
- b. Initial outreach – first survey – Target Population Analysis:
 - i. Unhoused: 47
 - ii. Children/Youth: 43
 - iii. Small business: 28
 - iv. Public transit users: 25
 - v. Families: 21
 - vi. North St. Louisans: 17
 - vii. Homeowners: 14
- c. Direct Relief Questionnaire: May 4-14, 2021 (Survey is still open)
 - i. 2,425 responses by May 14, 2021, 7:00 PM
 - ii. This was a digital survey – bias towards younger, whiter, wealthier residents.
- d. Survey respondents
 - i. Mostly people who lived in the City (79.38%)
 - ii. Heavy response rates for individuals age 30-49.
- e. Preliminary direct relief priorities (top 3)
 - i. Meeting Critical Health Needs

- ii. Rental, Mortgage, & Utility Assistance
- iii. Support for the Unhoused
- f. The survey is not the only source of information available. Their team also analyzed 211 Requests and Mutual Aid Requests to inform direct relief needs.
 - i. Rental, mortgage, and utility assistance and wrap around support for the unhoused rise to the top of this data.
- g. **Questions/Discussion:**
 - i. Ed Bryant in the chat, read by Lisa Cagle– using focus population instead of target population
 - ii. Sandra Moore – Acknowledging that the priorities seem to be holding up across those things that we already know have a deep adverse impact on distressed communities of color. The priorities identified here are the priorities people need.

VII. Working Group Update #3: Direct Relief, Presented by Ed Bryant

- a. Direct relief categories are based on the data team and the recommendations they made for direct relief funds.
 - i. Public Health – vaccines is a big one
 - ii. Housing and Utility Assistance
 - 1. Molly Metzger – majority of \$12M is direct payments to tenants and landlords.
 - 2. Nahuel Fefer – City is opening a new round of rental assistance next week, but this is not what we’re talking about now. What we’re talking about here will begin on July 1st.
 - 3. Paul Sorenson – Question: ERAP funds versus Direct Relief – how is the Mayor’s office differentiating these?
 - a. Nahuel Fefer: ARPA funds are more flexible, we can use them on canvassing, etc. Case management is an area of need and we can use ARPA funds for this, which ERAP can’t be used for.
 - iii. Support for the Unhoused
 - 1. ARPA funds have more flexibility so there are areas of opportunity
 - iv. Bridging the Digital Divide
 - 1. Expanding access to devices (SLPL Partnership) and expanding access to Wi-Fi.
 - 2. Sandra Moore: This is the fast response to get people connected right now. Long-term there will need to be more infrastructure discussions.

- v. Youth Jobs and Programming
 - 1. Summer programming
 - 2. Jason Purnell – We are facing a behavioral health crisis for children and youth in our region. We should keep this in mind.
 - 3. Molly Metzger – There are so many funding streams through ARPA, and SLPS will be getting money through ARPA.
 - 4. Jared Boyd – Amplify what Molly said, there are buckets of money above the \$500M the City is set to receive.
 - 5. Molly Metzger – Would like a working group to really look into the different finding streams.
 - 6. Sandra Moore – This is part of the thinking behind getting an implementation team/manager that Rodney Boyd was talking about earlier.
- vi. Economic Relief
 - 1. Nahuel Fefer – There are small businesses and restaurant funding opportunities, so that might not be emphasized in direct relief.

b. Questions/Discussion:

- i. What are the next steps?
 - 1. Megan Green – Take priorities, get another level of feedback in order to make some final recommendations. Make sure resources are going to areas where other funding streams are not available.
 - 2. Arrey Obenson – The next steps should be engagement with local partners. Working with existing programs would be the fastest way to provide immediate relief.
 - 3. Cristina Garmendia – Initiative mapping/partners mapping. Next step is the “how.”
 - 4. Patrick Brown – For Nahuel, have you considered the level of granularity needed for including this in the budget?
 - a. Nahuel – initially they were looking at BB#49 as the model, but it will change with it now being folded into the budget.

VIII. Working Group Update #4: Process and Planning, Presented by Wally Siewert

- a. Recommendations for how the group should move forward for internal operations
- b. Process recommendations for the full Stimulus Advisory Board:

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- i. The board should internally designate board co-chairs – there was a form shared in the chat for those interested in co-chair position.
 - ii. Decision making processes has been informal and consensus based, but there should be a backup plan for vote calling when a consensus cannot be reached.
 - iii. The Board should internally designate a facilitator, separate from the co-chair, to move the conversations during meetings.
 - iv. Clarity on timeline, which includes educating the public on the timeline
 - v. Communications strategy be developed ASAP
- c. Recommendations for working groups:
- i. Maintain decision making based on consensus, but have a plan for voting if necessary
 - ii. Designate a chair of each working group
 - iii. Communication between working groups – working group liaisons designated more formally
 - iv. Invite community members to working groups.
- d. Wally Siewert will be sharing a document with these recommendations to the full advisory board.
- e. The shift from board bill to folding into the budget means that there is more time – one suggestion is to shift the next Stimulus Advisory Board to a full community input meeting. This meeting would include an educational piece about the City’s budget process, but the majority of the 90 minutes would be to hear public testimony.
- f. Lisa Cagle: Going forward the working groups will make very clear what their recommendations are when they present to the full board, as well as the Mayor and her staff.
- g. Cristina Garmendia – Question in chat, read by Lisa Cagle – how long is the co-chair term and does the SAB have an end date?

IX. Open Discussion:

- a. Nahuel Fefer: When will the direct relief framework will be proposed? Should the framework be done before so that the public has something to respond to, or after so that it is built with feedback from public in mind?
 - i. Wally Siewert: We would use the buckets of funding we have already come up with for the framework.
- b. Christina Garmendia: Did the Federal Treasury guidelines mention something that we haven’t considered yet? They should look into this.

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X. Next steps:

- a. Really pressing next step is the timeline.
- b. Next meeting will be May 29th, agenda will be determined beforehand.

XI. Adjourn (11:37 A.M.)

Questions from the Zoom Q&A:

Anonymous Attendee - Is it possible to ask churches and centers of faith to add wifi access points, as well? Might be better/added coverage.

Lisa Potts - Dr. Echol's is leading a Clergy Advisory Board - we have churches representing all walks of faith. They are very much in need of having WiFi - so it would be a win/win if they were equipped with broadband access.

Hi I am a resident leader in north city. Can we get these slides so we can share with our neighborhood association meetings - would like to see if we can increase north city responses.

Lisa Potts

West End Resident

Anonymous Attendee - To Jason's point about the behavioral health crisis, has there been consideration given to stand-up mental health access points across the city that can connect people to resources long-term?

T.Irons-El - in relation to small business assistance in neighborhoods of people of color some loans should be non collateralized, some of our businesses don't have the ability to collateralize the loans due to the discriminatory appraisal gaps

Anonymous Attendee - Dr. Stacy Gee Hollis did her doctorate on Critical Race Theory and the Digital Divide. She may be a great asset to add as she's now Dean of the HSSU School of Business.

Anonymous Attendee - How many hours a week are y'all having to spend on this? Can we at least send snacks or something?