

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2010

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 22, 2010 at 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Ralston, Lundberg, Wylie (by conference phone), Leezer, Simmons, and Pishioneri. Also present were City Manager Gino Grimaldi, Assistant City Manager Jeff Towery, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa, and members of the staff.

1. Human Services Commission Presentation.

Steve Manela, Manager of the Lane County Human Services Commission (HSC) presented this item. The City of Springfield provided funding from its General Fund to the Human Services Commission to serve Springfield residents in need. With the current economy, more people were in need of these services. Mr. Manela would be providing the Mayor and Council with an update on the Commission and the services they provided.

Mr. Manela introduced Pearl Wolfe, supervisor of the HSC, and Katy Block from the HSC, who were also present.

Mr. Manela said the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the County and cities began about 38 years ago. The HSC had been an example of how the three governments could work together for positive results for the community. He discussed the budget of the HSC and the agencies they supported. In 2009, the HSC supported nearly 73,000 people in the Eugene/Springfield area. He noted the large percentage of Springfield residents that were served. He discussed accountability of those agencies that received grant funding through the HSC and how that was tracked.

Councilor Pishioneri asked about the high school educational piece. He asked what other population the HSC targeted besides youth regarding education.

Mr. Manela said they focused on early intervention, specifically programs that targeted at risk youth. They did have programs that funded employment for adults, which included an educational component.

Councilor Pishioneri said school districts were responsible for students under the age of 22 until they received their diploma or GED. There were many people over the age of 22 that had not yet received their GED and were not ready for the workforce. He asked if there was anything through HSC for those people for the GED test series.

Ms. Wolfe said several of their agencies were working with people on getting training and education if they had not finished high school. There was a financial assistance fund that could support their testing costs, but she would need to confirm that information.

Ms. Block said they did have dedicated dollars for education assistance through the agencies HSC funded.

Councilor Pishioneri asked how people were identified for that assistance.

Ms. Wolfe said how they would be identified would depend on the funding source.

Mr. Manela said when people went to the different organizations funded by the HSC, they got screened, assessed and referred to the appropriate service in the community. In some cases, people got more intensive case management, and in some cases, people were referred to another program. There were times when grants targeted programs, and there were times when the HSC was supporting a broad range of activities that could include things like the educational component.

Ms. Wolfe said she could pull from their Management Information the educational support provided by age and get that information to Councilor Pishioneri. She said they had found they had better success with younger age adults.

Mr. Manela referred to a chart showing the percentage of the population of Springfield residents being served. He noted different programs and the number of Springfield residents being served by each. Over the last few years with the economic downturn, there had been a significant increase in enrollment in programs. The people the HSC worked with had a multitude of needs and complex issues. This required them to think about how the services were provided. He gave an example of the Relief Nursery and Willamette Family Services. All agencies needed to serve diverse services to address the multitude of issues.

Councilor Lundberg asked about assistance information. She asked if any of the HSC program recipients overlapped with the energy grant assistance recipients.

Mr. Manela said people could be in both groupings.

Councilor Lundberg said there had been a huge spike in energy assistance. She asked if it was because people had been laid off and couldn't pay their bills.

Mr. Manela said also because the energy costs had increased, the Federal government had increased the amount of grant funding. They were in the same situation with rent assistance. The power point slide only showed new enrollments, not current recipients of assistance.

Discussion was held regarding the energy assistance. It was noted that the need was greater than the assistance available.

Mayor Leiken asked what role the utilities played in energy assistance.

Ms. Wolfe said they were a huge help.

Mayor Leiken asked if they had a breakdown of the assistance from Springfield Utility Board (SUB).

Mr. Manela said they could get that information for the Mayor.

Mr. Manela said they had just seen a human services plan that had strategies to address changes in the complexion of the community. In 2008, about 53,469 households were at or below the poverty level. The levels had increased between 2000-2008, a trend before the economic downturn. About 41% of children in public school were eligible for the free lunch program. About 28% of households in Lane

County had children under 19 years of age. The Latino population had grown significantly since 1990, so the HSC had been very diligent in making sure that all of their organizations had bi-lingual staff to accommodate new people in the community. The trend of who they would be serving would be changing. Adults 65 and older would be increasing substantially. It would be important to provide services to the elderly.

Ms. Wolfe spoke regarding the Project Homeless Connect event. She said she co-chaired the event and she thanked Ms. Block who took the lead on many projects discussed today. She also acknowledged Springfield Housing Manager Kevin Ko for his work on the logistics of the Project Homeless Connect event. Springfield was well represented. She described the purpose of this event. It was started four years ago and involved a number of public and private sector agencies. 1402 people attended the event this year and there were more than enough volunteers helping at the event. She noted some of the highlights from the event. She discussed some of the services provided and the number of people that took advantage of the different services. She noted the high number of people that turned in vouchers for new glasses and those that received dental care. This event gave people in the community something to do to help the homeless community. Hugh Masengill, a community volunteer, put together a yearbook that told stories of people that were homeless. Project Homeless Connect purchased copies of the book and sent them to the jurisdictions.

Ms. Wolfe discussed the one-night homeless count and noted that Ms. Block was the lead staff on that effort. This count happened all over the United States on January 27, 2010. She discussed the number of people that were homeless in our community, and how they were counted.

Mr. Manela said 94% of the funding received by the HSC went out to services and agencies in the communities. Their office not only funded outside agencies, but did things like Project Homeless Connect and several other programs. They encouraged community members to be involved. They also sponsored training for non-profit agencies over the last couple of years. He explained some of the training they sponsored.

Mr. Manela discussed funding from Springfield since 2007 and said he was pleased by the support from the cities and the County. Last year they did some analysis, looking statewide and regionally at the kinds of contributions made to human services. They looked at eight communities in Oregon and considered several factors, including ability to pay. The City of Portland was excluded as it was too large to compare, and the City of Ashland was excluded because it was not a CDBG entitlement city. Springfield was about where it should be in terms of giving with their past support. On average, jurisdictions were spending about .61 % of their General Funds on human services. If Springfield came up to the average of other cities, they would be contributing an additional \$15,000 above what was funded during the last budget year. That would be a total of about \$35,000 over the base amount budgeted. The HSC asked Mr. Manela to go to each jurisdiction to provide information prior to the budget for consideration. They understood that budgets were tight, but were interested in seeing whether or not the jurisdictions had the ability to continue the one-time funding that had been provided in the past few years. When the economy picked up, they hoped the jurisdictions would consider increasing to an amount that was comparable to the average of other similar jurisdictions in Oregon. He thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to present to them.

Mayor Leiken asked City staff when the budget process started.

Mr. Grimaldi said they would start in April.

Mayor Leiken said he appreciated the report. He discussed the Project Homeless Connect event and the impact it made on him. He worked in the cafeteria during the event.

Ms. Wolfe said 17% of those attending the event were from Springfield.

ADJOURNMENT

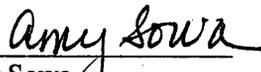
The meeting was adjourned 6:15 p.m.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa



Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:



Amy Sowa
City Recorder