

COVID RELIEF SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

September 17, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

<https://kentcountymi.zoom.us/j/94748076195>

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Mandy Bolter; Vice-Chair Stan Stek; Commissioners Emily Brieve, Diane Jones, Stan Ponstein, Phil Skaggs, Jim Talen, and Robert Womack

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

Chair Bolter called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

I. WELCOME

Chair Bolter welcomed the group and thanked those who joined the meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

Commissioner Talen moved to approve the minutes from September 10, 2020 as presented. Supported by Commissioner Brieve. Motion carried.

III. ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Mr. Jeff Dood, Fiscal Services Director, reviewed different options for allocating funds to local units of government based on population and number of cases.

Commissioner Talen expressed concern regarding the dollar amount estimated for the City of Grand Rapids. It is around \$5 million less than they initially said they would need. He asked what would happen to any dollars that a municipality says they may not need. Mr. Britt stated it would be moved to the unallocated reserves or other municipalities with identified needs.

Commissioner Stek asked for more information about the nature of the contract between the county and local entity. Ms. Linda Howell stated there is language in each contract that puts the burden of compliance on the recipient.

Commissioner Stek also asked for the rationale behind using case numbers as a relevant allocation formula. Mr. Dood explained that Macomb County also did something similar. The assumption that the higher the case count, the greater amount of funds needed seems reasonable.

Commissioner Brieve noted that about 60% of small business relief grant recipients are in the City of Grand Rapids. This plus some non-profit grant recipients, homeless assistance and relief efforts likely make up for some of the amounts being requested by Grand Rapids.

Commissioner Talen asked if the subcommittee could receive the \$11 million breakdown from the City of Grand Rapids in writing. He also noted the law enforcement costs of other cities and dispatch costs in Grand Rapids would make a formula based only on population not the best option.

Commissioner Skaggs moved to allocate funds to local units of government under the assumption that \$10 million will be distributed proportionally based on cases and \$5 million based on population.

Support by Commissioner Stek.

Commissioner Ponstein stated it needs to be clear to the local units of government that they cannot wait until the end of the year to express what funds they will not use. The subcommittee will need enough time to decide what to do with returned funds. Chair Bolter agreed that a week or two deadline to respond will be helpful.

Commissioner Talen expressed concerns about the money not being reinvested into cities. He stated he struggled to be supportive of this motion without knowing the returned funds will be put back into this bucket.

Yeas: Stek, Brieve, Jones, Ponstein, Skaggs, Womack, Bolter - 7

Nays: Talen - 1

Motion passed.

IV. CARES FUNDING ADDITIONAL REQUESTS

Mr. Steve Duarte summarized additional CARES Act funding requests. Subjects covered included homelessness and affordable housing, Family Promise, the Convention Arena Authority, additions to programs performed by the Grand Rapids Chamber, adult foster care, and eviction assistance with the Salvation Army.

Commissioner Ponstein asked that the working definition of “affordable housing”, which Mr. Duarte referenced, be passed on to subcommittee members.

Chair Bolter asked that they wait to receive a proposal and breakdown from the Convention Arena Authority before moving forward. Commissioner Stek noted he too would like more information about the Convention Arena Authority.

Commissioner Skaggs suggested they also consider additional funding for schools and ensuring the WiFi project is fully covered.

Commissioner Talen noted the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce would like additional funds to continue and expand the Small Business Relief Grant Program. He asked if the non-profit program also has a need for additional funding. He also stated he would be comfortable moving forward with the adult foster care item and additions to the small business grant program which currently have funding amounts of “TBD”, but it will be important that they still receive more information about the line items.

Commissioner Talen noted the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce would like additional funds in order to continue and expand the Small Business Relief Grant Program. He asked if the non-profit program also has a need for additional funding. He then stated he would be comfortable moving forward with the adult foster care item and additions to the Small Business Relief Grant Program which currently have funding requests of “TBD”, but it will be important that they still receive more information about the line items.

Commissioner Talen moved to approve the additional allocations for line items on the report that included homelessness and affordable housing, Family Promise, and the Salvation Army.

Support by Commissioner Ponstein.

Yeas: Stek, Brieve, Jones, Ponstein, Skaggs, Talen, Womack, Bolter - 8
Nays: 0.

Motion passed.

V. OTHER

a) Bucket Updates - Childcare

Chair Bolter stated the subcommittee should review all the buckets and receive updates from staff so they can discuss potential options for reserve funds. Deadlines and timelines should also be considered. Commissioner Talen emphasized his interest in receiving information about the non-profit program as well and not just the small business relief program.

The group discussed that because the \$750,000 for for-profit childcare will be taken over by the Grand Rapids Chamber, that amount should be moved from the Childcare Needs bucket to the Small Business bucket.

Commissioner Talen moved to have \$750,000 put into to the Small Business bucket from the Childcare Needs bucket.

Supported by Commissioner Stek.

Yeas: Stek, Brieve, Jones, Ponstein, Skaggs, Talen, Bolter - 8
Nays: 0.

Motion carried.

b) Cure Violence

Commissioner Stek noted there have been inquiries from constituents about Cure Violence. He asked what investigation staff has done with this program and if it qualifies under CARES Act funding. Mr. Britt stated they will be receiving additional information and a formal proposal on Monday of next week.

d) Birthday Wishes

Commissioner Jones wished Chair Bolter a happy birthday.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Chair Bolter adjourned the meeting at 10:19 a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL FOR DISTRIBUTION Pam VanKemen