

COVID RELIEF SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

October 5, 2020 – 8:30 a.m.
County Administration Building – 3rd Floor, Room 310
<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 8:30 a.m.

I. WELCOME

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

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

Commissioner Brieve moved to approve the minutes from September 24, 2020 as presented. Supported by Commissioner Ponstein. Motion carried.

III. YOUTH VIOLENCE AND CRIME PREVENTION

Mr. Britt explained criteria, goals, and strategies to prevent youth violence and crime in the community. Various organizations have provided input and assistance about this topic, and formal proposals may be incoming. The Sheriff and Prosecutor have also been on board with this conversation.

Commissioner Stek noted that many entities fall within the 501(c) category, so there must be an effective oversight committee ensuring the most qualified agencies are selected.

Commissioner Talen asked if United Way is still involved. Mr. Britt answered no, not for this project.

Commissioner Talen also reminded the group that this is not a law enforcement program but a prevention program. He cautioned against having too many law enforcement officials on the review committee. Chair Bolter agreed. She also noted that some organizations would become ineligible for grant assistance if they serve on this review committee, so that is why some groups may not be involved.

Commissioner Stek suggested the program be continued after the pandemic if it proves to be effective.

Commissioner Womack brought up the subject of gun detectors that can be put on buildings to provide real-time data when a gun is fired. The technology is called ShotSpotter and it can be especially helpful for areas where people might not be able or willing to call the police. Commissioner Stek asked about the price for the equipment. Mr. Womack replied about \$60,000 per square mile.

Commissioner Jones asked if they are looking to enhance existing programs or create new ones. Commissioner Stek suggested that one of the aspects they look at is the potential for the entity to perpetuate the program. Mr. Britt stated they will add language regarding sustainability to the document.

Commissioner Stek moved to approve the criteria as presented.

Support by Commissioner Brieve.

Yeas: Commissioners Womack, Skaggs, Brieve, Jones, Stek, Talen, Ponstein, Chair Bolter – 8
Nays: 0.

Motion carried.

IV. CARES FUNDING ALLOCATION PLAN REVIEW/UPDATE

Mr. Stephen Duarte summarized COVID-19 expenses through September 30, 2020.

Chair Bolter asked if the various chambers have been paid out yet. Mr. Duarte answered not yet but some will be soon.

Mr. Britt stated there has been a formal request from the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce to continue the small business relief program. Further assistance for those experiencing homelessness should also be considered. Mr. Duarte added that there may also be further needs for the Health Department and public safety.

The group discussed various uses for reserve funding, which included additional school assistance, isolation, increasing the youth violence prevention allocation, and ShotSpotter technology.

Commissioner Stek asked for an update on the PPE program. He asked if there are sufficient funds still available. Mr. Calvin Brinks, Purchasing Manager, stated they have been receiving about 150 requests per week. They have sufficient inventory for 300,000 - 400,000 more, so they will not need additional funding. Chair Bolter suggested they use the rest of the line item amount and then donate unused PPE to schools or other organizations that need it.

Commissioner Brieve asked about the County's needs for meeting spaces now that they are beginning to meet in person again. Mr. Britt stated they are investigating different spaces that can house their needs. Chair Bolter noted that a space that could sufficiently accommodate all commissioners could also be useful for other groups within the community.

Commissioner Jones stated there is also a need for more rapid testing. Mr. Britt answered he will follow up with the Health Department on this.

Commissioner Ponstein suggested that for future school allocations, they allocate only to the Intermediate School District and let them determine how to distribute to other schools.

Commissioner Talen asked about the roughly \$1.2 million remaining in the CRF-Homelessness line. Mr. Duarte stated they wrapped up the Fulton Manor program and that money is available to be used for this new activity.

Commissioner Ponstein asked about more information on isolation. Mr. Britt answered that the Health Department has been working with Mel Trotter and the Guiding Light Mission to manage clients recovering

from COVID-19. If another location is found, they will work to support a nonprofit organization again to manage the client population.

Commissioner Skaggs emphasized the importance of subcommittee members receiving clear and timely information so that they can make informed decisions.

The subcommittee requested that staff create a recommendation for the remainder of unallocated funds before their next meeting on October 8.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioners Ponstein and Stek thanked staff for the diligent safety measures that were put in place to allow for a safe in-person meeting today.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, Chair Bolter adjourned the meeting at 9:21 a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL FOR DISTRIBUTION Pam VanKeno