



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

SOCIAL SERVICE GRANTS COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: October 22, 2024

Time: 11:00am

Location: 1st Floor Conference Room, Cyrus K. Holliday Bldg. 620 SE Madison (*a virtual attendance option is available*)

Committee members present: Councilmembers Sylvia Ortiz, Brett Kell, Neil Dobler (Chair)

City staff present: Director of Planning & Development Rhiannon Friedman, United Way of Kaw Valley vendor staff: Brett Martin, Jessica Lehnherr, Joyce Katzer, Juliet McDiffett, Audrey Mott

1) Call to Order

Chairman Dobler called the meeting to order at 11:00am. Committee members introduced themselves.

2) Approval of July 9, 2024 Minutes

Committee member Kell made a motion to approved the minutes from the previous meeting. Committee member Dobler seconded. Minutes approved 2-0-0.

Committee member Sylvia Ortiz entered the room.

3) 2023 Year-End Review

Brett Martin, Vice President of Community Impact with United Way of Kaw Valley (UWKV) introduced the 2026 Social Service Grants (SSG) Cycle items. He spoke to the data that includes the e-C Impact portal for the 2023 year. Martin added that UWKV does not have a lot of influence related to the performance measures as a vendor. There are programs that achieved over 100% of their goal; which potentially could suggest the projection number was too low. Under the current contract with UWKV the programs choose their own projections. The Request for Proposal (RFP) will be ending this year with UWKV.

Rhiannon Friedman Director of Planning & Development stated that The City of Topeka is seeking to enter into a contractual relationship with a qualifying entity to provide complete administrative oversight of the City's Social Services Grant Program.

Chairman Dobler acknowledged the high Achievement levels from many programs. He noted there are some programs that were below their goal and asked if that is noted with UWKV for the future. Brett Martin responded yes, the performance scoring was taken into consideration for those programs.

Committee member Sylvia Ortiz added she supports having a higher threshold for the programs performance to strive towards. She asked if there are any grantees that have monies left over what happens. Juliet McDiffett, Director of Community Impact, stated there are no partners that haven't spent all of the grant. Rhiannon Friedman Director of Planning & Development stated that if there were funds remaining her Department would come to the Social Service Grants Committee to see how the monies could be used under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines.

4) Review & Approval of 2026 SSG Cycle Items

Brett Martin with UWKV stated that there are no updates for the 2026 Priorities and Scoring Sheet. He did add that during the Appeal Process the Board had conversation about attendance but felt through training it could be resolved.

The Grant Process Timeline for the 2026 Calendar was adjusted based off of 2025 and dates moved forward. There was a suggestion to release the proposals prior to the workshop so that grantees have adequate time to review.

Committee member Brett Kell supports sending out proposals before the workshop to be better prepared for the grantees.

Chairman Dobler asked Brett Martin if he has any suggestions to adjust anything in the process. Martin replied reviewing the City of Topeka priorities to ensure they are in line with a vendor. He added that it has been a good process for the UWKV the past four years. Lastly, he stated the City staff was exceptional to work with.

MOTION: Committee member Ortiz made a motion for approval for the 2026 Social Service Grants Cycle Items; Priorities, Scoring Sheet, and Calendar. Committee member Kell seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

5) Vendor Contract Renewal

Rhiannon Friedman Director of Planning & Development spoke to the importance of having a vendor that can oversee the request for proposals and grant management of the Social Services Grants. The 2026 applications are being accepted from October 1, 2024 and closes October 30, 2024. The contract will be awarded for one year with the option to renew for four additional one-year periods.

Committee members Sylvia Ortiz, Brett Kell and Chairman Dobler all expressed they're appreciation to the staff at UWKV for all their work and acknowledged that there was a good collaboration between the SSG Committee and UWKV. Ortiz added that grantees have also expressed their gratitude for the services from the UWKV staff.

Committee member Sylvia Ortiz asked if there are testimonials from grantees. Brett Martin confirmed the grantees Performance Measures give reflection on the last cycle.

6) Other Items

No additional items.

7) Adjourn

Chairman Dobler adjourned the meeting at 11:26am.

Meeting video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/WJE83p06G44>