

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Mary Hussmann (Chair), Yam Basnet, Courtney Blasius, Meredith Bushey

City Staff Present: Ray Coffey, Elaine Wang

Guests Present: Kate Nugent, Aurora Hurd (Council Liaison)

Call to Order by: Mary Hussmann

Meeting Start Time: 6:36 PM

II. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

None

III. Public Comment

Decision: Motion to Approve Minutes as presented.

Motion by: Yam Basnet

Second: Courtney Blasius

Passed, Unanimous

IV. City Council and Department Updates

Councilor Hurd reminded the Commission about the upcoming Pride Event on September 17, 2022. They also let the Commission know that City Council would be discussing potential options for renter protections (i.e. just cause eviction policy) at their upcoming City Council meeting on Tuesday, September 6.

V. Review of Draft COVID-19 Recovery Nonprofit Grants Program Guidelines

Decision: Motion to Recommend Guidelines and Applications as revised.

Motion by: Mary Hussmann

Second: Yam Basnet

Approved, Unanimous

The group reviewed the draft Non-Profit Grant Program Guidelines and Application questions in depth, and made a number of ministerial changes and typo corrections. In addition, the group discussed the following sections in more detail:

- Made edits to Sections 2A and 2B to clarify the intent of the language, and also

discussed whether to broaden eligibility. Yam recommended adding a category of eligibility for groups doing good work in the community which may not have a formal “non-profit” designation (i.e. mutual aid groups, “associations” within the New American community, etc.), stating that the current eligibility criteria may limit participation in the grant program within the New American community in particular. The group discussed the willingness to take on the risk associated with funds being allocated to an unincorporated entity and whether that risk would outweigh concerns of potentially limiting grant participation from groups without a formal status. The group also discussed the fact that both the Commission (serving as the Grant Review Committee) and then the City Council would need to approve applications/awards, thus providing two layers of vetting for projects.

- Meredith and Courtney recommended that we add for additional “proof of legitimacy” for groups that don’t have formal status, such as a formal reference from a client or partner agency. Ultimately the group decided to include an additional eligibility category for “Unregistered, unincorporated charitable or mutual aid organizations that serve Winooski residents.”
- Meredith Bushey signed off at 8 PM (prior to Motion to Approve Guidelines and Application as Revised).
- The group adjusted the first application question to shift from a “cost per service” focus to more broadly ask if the funds requested reasonably relate to the services proposed.

VI. Adjourn

Motion by: Yam Basnet

Second: Courtney Blasius

Meeting End Time: 8:34 PM