

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE CITY OF SOUTH GATE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
January 13, 2021**

**INTRODUCTORY PROCEDURES**

Chairperson Cyndi Esquivel called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Committee Member Susan F. Janer

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chairperson Cyndi Esquivel, Vice Chairperson Jimmy Torres, Committee Members Marie De Lourdes Castillo, Janet Cazares, Candice Esquivel, Susan F. Janer, Juliano A. Jarquin, Virginia Johnson, Jovanna Laborin, Darlene Lopez, Angelica Martinez, Norma Mendoza, Christina Montalvo, Benigno Nunez, Lizette Ruiz, Jacquelyn Saucedo, and Anthony Zepeda (17/19)

**Excused Absence:** None

**Unexcused Absence:** Committee Members, Brigitte Garza and Denisse Martinez (2/19)

**Staff:** Paul Adams, Interim Community Development Director, Dianne Guevara, Management Analyst, Abel Torres, Housing and Grants Analyst and Erika Soriano Recording Secretary

**COVID-19 Meeting Procedures** were read into the record by Abel Torres.

**AGENDA ITEM(S)**

**1. MINUTES**

Item 1 – Committee Member Marie De Lourdes Castillo moved and Vice-Chairperson Jimmy Torres seconded and the motion passed (17/19) to approve the minutes for the regular meetings of September 30, 2020 and December 9, 2020. The Citizen Advisory Committee members were polled pursuant to COVID-19 Teleconference Meeting Procedures as follows, with Committee Members Brigitte Garza and Denisse Martinez absent (2/19):

<i>NAME</i>	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>ABSENT</i>
Chairperson Cyndi Esquivel	Yes		
Committee Member Jimmy Torres	Yes		
Committee Member Marie De Lourdes Castillo	Yes		
Committee Member Janet Cazares	Yes		
Committee Member Candice Esquivel	Yes		
Committee Member Brigitte Garza			Absent
Committee Member Susan F. Janer	Yes		
Committee Member Juliano A. Jarquin	Yes		
Committee Member Virginia Johnson	Yes		
Committee Member Jovanna Laborin	Yes		
Committee Member Darlene Lopez	Yes		
Committee Member Denisse Martinez			Absent
Committee Member Angelica Martinez	Yes		
Committee Member Norma Mendoza	Yes		

Committee Member Christina Montalvo	Yes		
Committee Member Benigno Nunez	Yes		
Committee Member Lizette Ruiz	Yes		
Committee Member Jacquelyn Saucedo	Yes		
Committee Member Anthony Zepeda	Yes		

**2. BROWN ACT PRESENTATION**

Item 2 – Housing and Grants Analyst, Abel Torres made a brief presentation of the BROWN ACT and will provide a summary of the Act as well as the entire handbook to the Committee Members.

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the floor for public and committee comment.

Vice-Chairperson Jimmy Torres asked Abel Torres how the Brown Act is applicable to COVID-19. Mr. Torres stated he was not aware, but would research the question and get back to the committee members. Chairperson Esquivel asked Abel to check with the City Attorney.

Paul Adams stated that we cannot change the Brown Act and can only follow the posting guidelines and make it work with our online meetings. Paul further stated that the City always to go beyond the Brown Act guidelines by posting on the City’s website and on other social media platforms.

**3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FY 2021-22 APPLICATION PACKETS**

Item 3 – Management Analyst, Dianne Guevara provided an overview of the FY2021-22 CDBG application packets and explained which applicants received regular CDBG and those who received Covid-19 CDBG funding over the past year. Ms. Guevara also stated that the application packets were delivered to each of the committee members and to let staff know if they did not receive their packet.

Ms. Guevara also provided a schedule of when the Citizen Advisory Committee would be meeting again which is as follows:

- January 27, 2021 presentations from Public Service applicants
- February 3,2021 presentations from balance of Public Service applicants and Non-Public Service applicants
- February 10, 2021 Discussion and deliberation

Ms. Guevara explained that the City will be receiving approximately \$1.4 million dollars from HUD for the FY2021-22 program year, and that city staff received a total of 16 applications – five of which were from Non-Public Service entities. Ms. Guevara further explained that the Citizen Advisory Committee would be hearing presentations from applicants over the next few weeks and would be providing recommendations to the City Council on what they believed were priority activities.

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel made a comment that she requested a breakdown of the organizations that recently received COVID-19 funding and that were also requesting funding for the 2021-22 program year. Ms. Guevara stated that, attached to the agenda bill that CAC members received, was a breakdown of the amounts of COVID-19 funding that the current applicants received. There was some discussion as to which organizations actually received COVID-19 funding, specifically, the South Gate Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Guevara stated the Chamber received regular CDBG funds and would resend a more thorough breakdown.

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the meeting up to the audience.

Adolfo Varas asked if entities that applied for funding attended the mandatory meeting that was required and was there proof that they attended, because it wouldn't be fair to other applicants if others did not attend. Mr. Varas also stated the he was confused about the COVID-19 funding that was awarded and believed that the Chamber also received these funds.

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the meeting up to committee members.

Committee Member Virginia Johnson made a comment that it appears there is only about half the money available for all the requests for funding. Ms. Johnson further stated that in the ethics training, which is required every two years, there is a lot of training and questions regarding the Brown Act. Ms. Johnson also asked how the City Council could review recommendations made by the CAC a day earlier than when they were provided.

Committee Member Jovanna Laborin asked Ms. Guevara to repeat the funding the Chamber received because she stated the Chamber is saying they received COVID-19 funding.

Paul Adams stated that recently, there was a City Council meeting that awarded COVID-19 funding as well as regular (re-programmed) CDBG funding and that this is where the confusion lays.

Chairperson Esquivel requested an updated list of all the organizations that received COVID-19 funding.

Committee Member Laborin stated that she recalled that Compator received \$80,000 and that there are still some things that are not cleared up, and that the rental program is still not up and running because of contract issues. She asked if M.s Guevara could look into that.

Ms. Guevara also stated that she believed this matter was confusing because the City Council allocated funding for COVID-19 related activities (approximately \$800,000) AND regular (re-programmed) CDBG activities (approximately \$1 million dollars).

Chairperson Esquivel requested an updated list of all the organizations that received COVID-19 funding. Chairperson Esquivel also commented that the re-programmed funds were not "unspent", but rather re-directed.

Committee Member Darlene Lopez asked about the applicants attending the mandatory meeting and how they could prove they attended. Ms. Guevara responded that each of the applicants did attend one of two mandatory online meetings held in October – one for Public Service applicants and one for Non-Public Service applicants. Ms. Guevara stated that staff kept a list and confirmed who attended the meetings. Committee Member Lopez asked when the meetings occurred, to which Mr. Torres replied that it was on the same day (October 22) Public Service applicants at 10:00 a.m. and Non-Public Service applicants at 2:00 p.m.

Vice Chairperson Torres asked how it gets decided that Public Service applicants get \$210,000 and Non-Public Service applicants get \$810,000. Chairperson Esquivel replied that this is a HUD requirement that Public Service applicants only get 15% of the grant allocation.

Paul Adams stated that for COVID-19 related activities, HUD provided a waiver regarding the 15%, which allowed the City the ability to award much more. Mr. Adams also stated that the funds awarded to the South Gate Chamber of Commerce for the Small Business Grant program were from regular (re-programmed) CDBG funds.

## Comments

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the meeting up to public comments.

Adolfo Varas asked if there were any reports which demonstrated a success rate for organizations that received COVID-19 funding, and how the funding was expended. Mr. Adams responded by saying that there have been three rounds of COVID-19 funding awarded. However, to date, only the first round of funding has significant information to report and we have collected the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter reports from these organizations. The 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter will be due by the end of January. The other funding has not had sufficient time to show any impacts on the community. Mr. Varas was concerned that some of the organizations were requesting additional funding without being able to demonstrate any accomplishments, to which Mr. Adams acknowledged that that was correct.

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the meeting up to comments from committee members.

None

At this time, Chairperson Esquivel opened the meeting up to comments from staff.

Ms. Guevara responded to Committee Member Virginia Johnson's earlier question regarding the recommendations that the City Council would be reviewing on January 26. She stated that, on that date, the City Council would be reviewing and considering the recommendations the CAC made regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of COVID-19 funding – not the regular CDBG funding for the 2021-22 program year.

Paul Adams stated that last year was a very unusual year in that we have already allocated over \$4 1/2 million dollars. However, this is now back to normal in that it is more in line with a normal year. Mr. Adams further stated we need to get back into a mindset of addressing regular community needs and that by the time these funds are available, we should have COVID-19 under control and out of most people's minds.

Committee Member Angelica Martinez made a comment regarding providing a list of organizations that have already received COVID-19 funding, to which Chairperson Esquivel indicated that the committee would be receiving a list from staff.

Committee Member Lizette Ruiz brought up a concern that she has expressed in previous meetings regarding the ability to review meeting minutes from previous meetings to see how members have voted in the past. This would help newer members see what a typical year of funding looks like. Ms. Guevara stated that the minutes would be posted by this week.

Chairperson Esquivel mentioned that Committee Members Darlene Lopez and Lizette Ruiz brought up some very good points during the last meeting and requested that these points be made available to the City Council. Ms. Guevara indicated that it made part of the minutes and that it would be part of the staff report as well.

Committee Member Virginia Johnson made a comment that there is a priority list in the packet and expressed concerned over how we would be able to maintain the level of funding one we go back to allocation only \$1 million dollars for the entire city.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Citizens Advisory Committee, the time being 7:33p.m., Committee Member Marie De Lourdes Castillo moved and Committee Member Virginia Johnson seconded and the motion carried (17-19) to adjourn. The Citizen Advisory Committee members were polled pursuant to COVID-19 Teleconference Meeting Procedures as follows, with Committee Members Brigitte Garza and Denisse Martinez absent (2/19):

<i>NAME</i>	<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>ABSENT</i>
Chairperson Cyndi Esquivel	Yes		
Committee Member Jimmy Torres	Yes		
Committee Member Marie De Lourdes Castillo	Yes		
Committee Member Janet Cazares	Yes		
Committee Member Candice Esquivel	Yes		
Committee Member Brigitte Garza			Absent
Committee Member Susan F. Janer	Yes		
Committee Member Juliano A. Jarquin	Yes		
Committee Member Virginia Johnson	Yes		
Committee Member Jovanna Laborin	Yes		
Committee Member Darlene Lopez	Yes		
Committee Member Denisse Martinez			Absent
Committee Member Angelica Martinez	Yes		
Committee Member Norma Mendoza	Yes		
Committee Member Christina Montalvo	Yes		
Committee Member Benigno Nunez	Yes		
Committee Member Lizette Ruiz	Yes		
Committee Member Jacquelyn Saucedo	Yes		
Committee Member Anthony Zepeda	Yes		

Respectfully,

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Paul Adams, Secretary  
Citizens Advisory Committee

APPROVED:

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Cyndi Esquivel, Chairperson  
Citizens Advisory Committee