



Neighborhood and Family Services Commission Meeting
Avondale Civic Center, 11465 West Civic Center Drive, Mesquite Room
Wednesday, February 28, 2018 6:00 p.m.
Summary of Action

Commission Members in Attendance

Fabian Prado
Melissa Valdez
David Iwanski
Oliver Morrison
John Raeder
Wendy Dormer, Alternate

Commission Members Excused

Bradley Ruggles, Chair
Irene Marquez
Lisa Osborne, Alternate
Glenn Coleman, Vice Chair
Kristopher Ortega
Yvonne Hopper

Commission Members Unexcused

Delores Robinson

City Staff and Guests in Attendance

Chris Lopez, NFS Director
Matthew Hess, Housing & Community Development Manager
Martha Ortiz, Code Compliance Manager
Jennifer Griffin, Resource Center Coordinator
Paula Swenson, Administrative Assistant

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| 1. | Call to Order | 6:12 PM |
| 2. | Review and Approval of the August 23, 2017 Meeting Minutes | Approved |
| 3. | Election of 2018 Officers | Approved |
| 4. | Draft 2018-2019 Annual Action Plan | Discussed |
| 5. | Code Enforcement Division Update | Discussed |
| 6. | Family Services Division Update | Discussed |
| 7. | Future Agenda Items | Discussed |

8.	Announcements	Discussed
9.	Call to the Public	None
8.	Adjournment	7:43 PM



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MINUTES

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1. Call to Order

The Neighborhood and Family Services Commission meeting was called to order by Commission Member Iwanski at 6:12 p.m. Chairperson Ruggles and Vice Chair Coleman were excused from the meeting. It was noted that Ms. Wendy Dormer would serve in regular Commission Member capacity for the evening, which would include a count towards quorum and participation in action items.

2. Review and Approval of August 23, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fabian Prado made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Oliver Morrison seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Election of 2018 Officers

Nominations were requested for 2018 Officers of Commission Members in attendance at the meeting. Mr. Iwanski stated that all Commission Members should be considered during this election, even if the member is absent. Mr. Ruggles stated in November that he would not be able to chair the Commission for another year due to other commitments; but would be able to continue as a regular Commission Member. It was unknown if Mr. Coleman would like to be considered for either position for the new year.

Mr. Fabian Prado was nominated Chairperson and accepted the position. Ms. Melissa Vasquez was nominated Vice Chair. The votes were unanimous and represented all Members in attendance.

4. Draft 2018-2019 Annual Action Plan

The public hearing for the Draft 2018-2019 Annual Action Plan (AAP) was called to order at 6:21 p.m. Mr. Hess stated that this presentation serves as a public forum to discuss the draft of the City's fourth year funding and activity plan as required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Hess explained that the purpose of the AAP is to serve as an extension of the five-year Consolidated Plan (Needs Assessment). The AAP assigns funding to specific activities based upon actual allocation of funds each year within the Consolidated Planning cycle. Funded activities included in the AAP must further the following goals in the Consolidated Plan:

1. Preserve and expand affordable housing inventory
2. Replace outdated infrastructure
3. Acquire and demolish unsafe structures
4. Support programming for underserved populations
5. Promote business development and growth
6. Affirmatively Further Fair Housing in Avondale
7. Reduce residential lead-based paint hazards

The table below shows the proposed 2018-2019 activities and funding for CDBG.

Activity	Amount Proposed	Expected Outcomes
Administration	\$118,131	General administration (20% of total)
Street & Infrastructure Improvements	\$225,000	5-8 streets
Emergency Home Repairs	\$189,567	± 15 units
Youth Services	\$32,500	± 20 interns
Revitalization	\$25,464	Small business loan guarantees, signage, façade rehabilitation, events, technical assistance in City's Revitalization Areas
Total CDBG:	\$590,662	Assumes level funding – final allocations are to be determined

Mr. Hess stated that CDBG allows 20% of the total funding allocation for administration. Street and infrastructure improvements costs are \$225,000 for an expected outcome of five to eight streets. This does not include the total costs for streets; but allows leveraging of other funds to complete the projects. Emergency Home Repairs, which includes services for a/c replacement, electrical, roofing, or other items with a cost of \$10,000 or below is set at ~\$189,567 and ±15 units. For Youth Services, our Next STEP

program, which is a summer teen employment program, we are proposing \$32,500 for± 20 interns. For revitalization efforts, which includes small business loan guarantees, signage, façade rehabilitation, events, and technical assistance, we are proposing \$25,464.

The table below shows the proposed 2018-2019 activities and funding for HOME.

Activity	Amount Proposed	Expected Outcomes
Administration	\$8,390	General administration (5%)
Homebuyer Assistance	\$125,850	4-5 units
County HOME Allocation	\$134,240	Assumes Level Funding Final Allocations are to be determined
25% Required Match:	\$31,463	1 unit (either activity)
Administration	\$15,311	General administration (10%)
Substantial Rehabilitation	\$55,000	1 unit
Homebuyer Assistance	\$82,802	3-4 units
Program Income	\$153,113	Cash on Hand
Total Available (Allocation & Program Income):	\$318,816	9-11 units

Mr. Hess explained that the HOME funding allows for 10% of the total allocations to go towards Administration with a split to County, which leave the City with 5%. Unlike CDBG, HOME requires that we provide a 25% match. Similar to CDBG, these numbers will likely change based on final allocations. Mr. Hess explained that HOME funds that come back to us is called Program Income. This program allows the program income funds to be banked and planned for use the following year.

Mr. John Raeder inquired if the cap of \$10,000 for CDBG emergency home repairs was a requirement within the grant program, or if that was a stipulation dependent on the needs of the household. Mr. Hess stated that this is a local policy, not a regulation. Mr. Raeder inquired of the total figures as it related to the inclusion of the 20% allowance for administrative fees. Mr. Hess explained that administration includes program management, staff/labor, presentations, financial management and reporting. In essences, those expenses cannot be tied to the addresses where the repairs took place. Staff provides program delivery tied to specific addresses. Mr. Iwanski stated that 20% is excessive for administration fees, and inquired of the specifics of the programs and delivery. Mr. Hess stated that approximately, \$150,000 will go directly towards construction; however, there are other soft costs involved with preparing the scope of work for the projects, such as inspections and various testing for home efficiencies of the home environments.

Mr. Raeder inquired if the Next STEP program's participants are interns. Mr. Hess stated that the program participants are teens ranging from 16 to 21 years of age placed in a temporary summer teen employment program. This program is paid at minimum wage and allows for participants to acquire on-the-job training for a seven-week period during their summer break from school. Mr. Raeder inquired of specifics on how youth are identified or qualified for participation. Mr. Lopez stated that very specific guidelines are provided to us by Maricopa County regarding income qualifications and residence locations. The participants must pass a background check similar to regular status employees for the city. Mr. Raeder inquired of income qualification and residential status. Mr. Lopez stated that they must be at or less than 80% median income and live within the City of Avondale limitations. Mr. Lopez stated that we have evaluated the demographics of our applications to ensure we are reaching at risk teens and our most vulnerable residents' needs.

Mr. Iwanski stated that he still felt the 20% allowance for administration fees needs to be justified before Council on Monday evening as he felt it was a little high. He requested that his concern be noted and recorded in the minutes, and reported as a public comment.

Ms. Valdez inquired as to how homes are identified for help, if Code Enforcement is involved with identifying needs while they are in the field, or if it's primarily internet based. Mr. Hess stated that Code Enforcement assists, and residents call or stop into the office directly by way of referrals. The programs are available to anyone who resides in Avondale as long as they qualify. Family Services staff from the Resource Center also works very close with Housing & Community Development, as well as supervisors in other departments.

Mr. Iwanski stated that this item will go before Council on Monday evening as a regular item. Mr. Iwanski stated that he plans to be at the meeting, as well.

This public hearing closed with the adjournment of the Commission meeting at 7:43 p.m.

5. Code Enforcement Division Update

Ms. Martha Ortiz discussed the Code Enforcement Division and its purpose of enforcing codes in the City. The Code Enforcement Division consists of a Code Compliance Manager, Code Compliance Specialist, Administrative Assistant, and four Code Enforcement Officers.

Ms. Martha Ortiz stated that the mission statement for this division is to enhance the community through the administration of a fair and unbiased compliance program. Ms. Ortiz explained that staff strive to protect and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Avondale through the enforcement of various property maintenance and zoning ordinances. Compliance to the standards helps to reduce vandalism, deter crime, maintain property values, and prevent deterioration of neighborhoods. Staff work with residents, realizing there are times when people may need a little more time or help to correct the issues. Everybody benefits by making our city a better place to live, work and play. If we are unable to communicate with resident and a violation is identified, the responsible party is issued a notice providing reasonable time to correct the issue. Failures to comply may result in a civil or criminal citation and a fine may be applied. Ms. Ortiz explained that potential violations are discovered through systematic proactive inspections, citizen complaints, and referrals from other agencies or departments. Ms. Ortiz stated that most of our code enforcement concerns includes common violations of the Property Maintenance Codes and Avondale Zoning Ordinances, such as the following:

- Overgrown Grass/Weeds, Vegetation
 - Inoperable Vehicles on Private Property
 - Outside Storage
 - Trash/Debris
 - Sign Ordinances
 - Home Occupations
 - Parking
 - Illegal Land Use
-
- Code Enforcement programs and services include:
 - Avondale PROUD
 - Concentrated Sign Enforcement Campaign

- Graffiti Removal
- Bandit Sign Removal
- Merchant Inspections
- Clean and Lien
- Bee Removal
- Dumpster Assistance
- Southwest Valley HOA Training
- myAvondale Smartphone app

Ms. Vasquez inquired if the postcard notices are related to the Avondale PROUD program. Ms. Ortiz confirmed that these notice inform residents that staff are in the area to enforce the Avondale PROUD program. They also post notices in advance on the City's web page. Ms. Ortiz explained that bandit sign removals (in the rights-of-way) are performed on the Officers' first work day. This is the most productive time for removals after the weekend (when most postings occur). Merchant inspections are concentrated efforts at local stores for the lock up of materials used for graffiti. Ms. Ortiz explained the Clean and Lien Program and the timing of its institution to the City. This program came about during the recession to assist with vacant, abandoned homes, lots and buildings with violations. The city can legally go in with a contracted landscaper, clean the property, and place a lien on it for payback upon resale. Ms. Ortiz explained that Code is able to help with bee removal when it is safety-related and a resident is unable to take care of it themselves. If the bees are located in a public area, Public Works goes out and takes care of removing the hive; our water department takes care of them if they are in the meters. Examples when this takes place would be around a park or a school. Dumpster assistance is also available for larger clean-ups. They are offered free of charge and help to keep the city clean and free of excess accumulation. When requested, the contractor drops them off at the residents' address and they are picked up when the clean-up is complete. HOA training is provided through a partnership with the cities of Goodyear and Buckeye. This includes two Academies and three Summits per year; rotation of the events occurs within the three cities. Most times these events are filled to capacity well in advance, with a waiting list for cancellations. All are welcome to attend. We have a great smartphone app, myavondale, which is very user friendly. Reported concerns go directly to the city for staff to attend to. The response time is very quick and follow up is provided to the complainant if requested.

Mr. Iwanski inquired if bandit signs were an issue during election season and if additional restrictions applied. Ms. Ortiz stated that the City Clerk's Office has the requirements. Code Enforcement does a courtesy call to the posting party if a sign is in a place obstructing view. Otherwise, they are given 15 days and then notified for pick up. Most elections candidates pick them up without issue.

Mr. Iwanski inquired of Code Enforcement's public outreach efforts. Ms. Ortiz stated that most of our programs and services are listed on the website. Avondale PROUD postcards are sent out in a timely manner to give residents time to comply if they know they are in violation. Various materials are dispersed door-to-door and at various city events.

6. Family Services Division Update

Ms. Jennifer Griffin presented an update on the Family Services Division for Ms. Sherie Steele. Family Services' includes the Resource Center, Senior Center, Community Action Program (CAP), Early Childhood Programming, and the Contributions Assistance Program. The Care1st Resource Center (Resource Center) is the first of its kind in the southwest valley. This Center is a multi-faceted hub for human services that was established in 2009 through an innovative public and private partnership between the City of Avondale, Care1st Health Plan of Arizona, Inc., and First Things First. Last year, the Resource

Center served over 67,000 clients. Currently, we have 54 partnerships that assist with serving our community by offering programs at the Resource Center. Ms. Griffin stated that services include:

- English and adult literacy tutoring, (available through Southwest Valley Literacy)
- Teen pregnancy support
- Employment services, which includes a partnership with Goodwill for Job Fairs to be held in various locations in the City
- Parenting education workshops
- AHCCCS, TANF, SNAP and Affordable Care Act application and enrollment assistance
- Women, Infant, and Children (WIS) services, (walk-in, on-site services)
- Rental utility assistance
- Citizenship classes
- Medicare benefits counseling
- Information and referral to housing programs
- Legal aid services
- Domestic violence support groups
- Veteran resources
- Celebration of Reading to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday
- Health and Resource Fair

Ms. Griffin discussed the hours of operation:

- Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Every third Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mr. Iwanski inquired if it was known how many of our participants were Avondale residents. Ms. Griffin stated that we believe it's approximately 75%. We are working on implementing a database that will help us gauge our demographics for specifics to apply for additional grant funding streams. Ms. Griffin stated that Family Services' looks to serve all ages in a one-stop shop, from birth to seniors in the future Center. We believe if they need one service, they may need others, and we are looking to help participants reach a level of self-sufficiency, if possible. Ms. Griffin explained that providing space in the Center to non-profit organizations such as Helping Families in Need (HFIN), is an opportunity for participants to receive multiple human services such as AHCCCS, food stamps, Kids Care, and cash assistance during a visit in one place. An example of such an opportunity would be if they are there for a WIC appointment, or early childhood program, or to receive emergency assistance through the Community Action Program (CAP). This one-stop opportunity offers relief from traveling from place-to-place and helps with alleviating frustrations when people are in a time of need. This approach provides a friendly environment with personalized case workers who handle the paperwork on-site. Ms. Griffin stated that we are hoping to have Goodwill join us in the center so that we have an employment center directly on-site soon. Early childhood programs include parenting workshops, car seat education and safe installations, Science Center activities, and early childhood education with parenting classes. WIC is available and able to help with supplements and care. We have two caseworkers on-site to provide emergency CAP assistance, legal assistance, and domestic violence support groups. Mr. Juan Marquez oversees our early childhood programs and is also a Veterans Navigator, which gives him the ability to help veterans with referrals for services. Ms. Griffin described one of the newest programs at the Center, I-HELP. This program is available through various churches in the area that take on homeless men and women for a night each week. We have had great results and many success stories from this program. Trellis provides first-time

homebuyer assistance consulting services for first-time purchases. One of largest events during the summer is the back-to-school backpack program. Currently, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is underway. This is income tax preparation assistance for persons with an income less than \$54,000 a year. VITA is a first-come, first-serve, walk-in service available on Tuesday evenings from 5 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. until April 17. Our Resource Center is top performing west valley site. We assisted with 521 tax preparations last year; currently we are at 381. We believe we will surpass last year's numbers.

Ms. Griffin stated that the City of Avondale has been serving the senior population for more than 30 years by providing quality programs, meals and transportation to keep our participants healthy, active and engaged in the community. Last year, 30,060 meals were served from the center and 15,725 miles were driven to provide meals to homebound and disabled persons. Funding for this program is provided by:

- City of Avondale
- Area Agency on Aging
- City of Goodyear
- City of Litchfield Park

Ms. Griffin passed out newsletters and menus for the Active Adults (Seniors) program for March. Ms. Griffin described the CAP boundaries and service areas of: Avondale, Goodyear and Litchfield Park. Other service areas include unincorporated areas in Maricopa County. There is a dedicated phone line in place that opens on Mondays at 8:00 a.m. to assist caseworkers respond to crisis situations. This line is automated, dedicated specifically for this purpose, and takes multiple calls at once. The report generated from this line is a tool that caseworkers use to plan appointments for the week. Our caseworkers also offer monthly financial literacy classes at the Center, with the goal of implementing self-sufficiency skills. The Contributions Assistance Program allocates funding to eligible non-profit agencies that provide health and human services to Avondale residents. Last year, Council approved \$100,000 for this program. Applications are typically available online in mid-April and open for one month. Mr. Raeder inquired if any agencies were granted awards from this program for domestic violence and sexual education classes. Ms. Griffin stated that A New Life and Sojourner each receives awards to provide domestic violence intervention; and A New Leaf provides sexual education classes. There is a \$10,000 maximum award to agencies. Ms. Griffin invited Members to tour the Center.

Mr. Lopez stated that the City is in the middle of identifying a site for a new Resource Center with combined services by all divisions. This Monday, there will be an update presented to Council.

Mr. Iwanski stated that he was pleased to hear that Veteran Navigator services are available. Our military personnel and families are important to him.

7. Future Agenda Items

Mr. Lopez stated that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 27. We expect to have a legislative update by the City's Intergovernmental Affairs Assistant Director Jessica Blazina; along with a Development Services Update by Director Tracy Stevens.

8. Announcements

None

9. Call to the Public

None

10. Adjournment

Ms. Melissa Vasquez made the motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Mr. Oliver Morrison. The motion passed unanimously. The public hearing and Commission meeting adjourned jointly at 7:43 p.m.

Signature of approval:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'F. Prado', is written over a horizontal line.

Fabian Prado, Chair

Next meeting, 6:00 p.m. – Avondale City Hall – June 28, 2018