ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN SERVICES
STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, May 24, 2021

The meeting of the Administration and Human Services Standing Committee was held on Monday, May 24, 2021at 6:01 p.m., remotely via Zoom or by phone. The following members were present: Commissioner Markley, Chairman; Commissioners Philbrook, Johnson (substituting for Commissioner Kane), Ramirez, and Bynum. Commissioner Kane was absent. The following officials were also in attendance: Melissa Sieben, Emerick Cross and Alan Howze, Assistant County Administrators; Bridgette Cobbins, Interim Assistant County Administrator; Kathleen VonAchen, Chief Financial Officer; Misty Brown, Chief Counsel; Crystal Sprague, Manager in County Administrator's Office; Stephanie Stauffer, Community Development Program Coordinator; Angie Lawson, Deputy Chief Counsel; and Wilba Miller, Director of Community Development.

Chairman Markley said before I call this meeting to order, I want to announce that due to COVID-19, some committee members, staff and public are attending remotely via Zoom as well as on site. All participants joining by phone should mute their phones when not speaking to avoid background noise.

During the meeting, please make sure you announce yourself by name and title every time you speak so the public that is observing knows who is speaking. This is critical given the number of remote participants and is current guidance from the Kansas Attorney General.

Due to COVID-19 requirements, in-person public comment has been suspended unless otherwise required by law. The public is allowed to participate by Zoom or submit comments by email prior to the meeting, and those comments will be included in the record of the meeting.

Chairman Markley called the meeting to order.

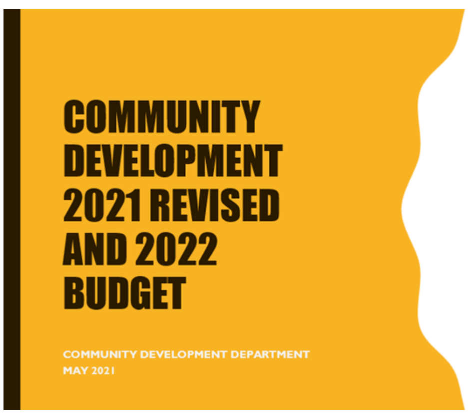
Roll call was taken and all members were present as shown above.

Approval of standing committee minutes from January 25, 2021. **On motion of Commissioner Ramirez, seconded by Commissioner Bynum, the minutes were approved.** Roll call was taken and there were five "Ayes," Philbrook, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum, Markley.

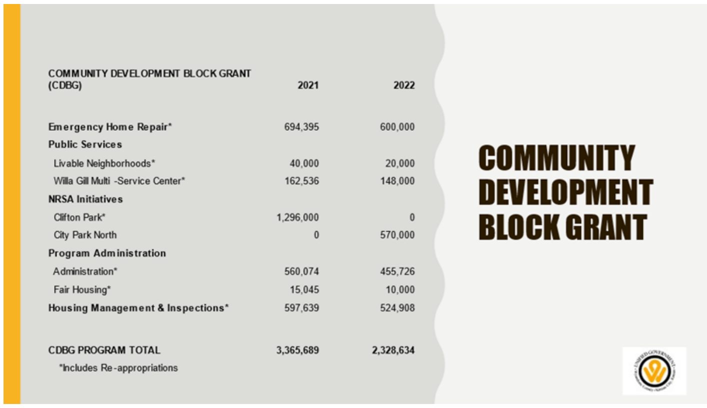
Committee Agenda:

Item No. 1 – 21827…DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN AND SCHEDULING PUBLIC HEARING

Synopsis: To discuss Community Development Department Revised 2021 and Proposed 2022 budgets; approve the Draft 2021 Annual Action Plan, set the public hearing date and approval of the Final 2021 Annual Action Plan on July 29, 2021, submitted by Wilba Miller, Director of Community Development.



Wilba Miller, Director of Community Development, said tonight, I'm going to present the Revised 2021 and the Proposed 2020 Budgets for discussion and then the Draft Annual 2021 Action Plan prior to sending it out for public comment. The revised '21 and '22 budgets reflect how the Unified Government allocates HUD dollars for the following programs, and we'll start with the Community Development Block Grant, Home Investment Partnership, the Emergency Solutions Grant, the Lead Hazard Control Grant, along with Healthy Homes Program, and the CARES Act funds for the Community Development Block Grant, and the Emergency Solutions Grant, and the final allocation of America Rescue Plan funds for the HOME Program.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)	2021	2022
Emergency Home Repair*	694,395	600,000
Public Services		
Livable Neighborhoods*	40,000	20,000
Willa Gill Multi -Service Center*	162,536	148,000
NRSA Initiatives		
Clifton Park*	1,296,000	0
City Park North	0	570,000
Program Administration		
Administration*	560,074	455,726
Fair Housing*	15,045	10,000
Housing Management & Inspections*	597,639	524,908
CDBG PROGRAM TOTAL	3,365,689	2,328,634

*Includes Re-appropriations

So, most of the commissioners that are here tonight have seen our budgets before. I'd like to remind you that the 2021 Budget will be the budget that was adopted by the full commission last year, plus any re-appropriations that were left from 2020. So you will see different numbers, for instance, on Emergency Home Repair. The $694M includes re-appropriations that were not used for last year, and the $600,000 will be what's scheduled out of the 2021 funds for the draft annual action plan for next year's use.

So, you can see we have Emergency Home Repair. We have our annual public services for Livable Neighborhoods who had an additional allocation leftover from last year. Willa Gill Multi-Service Center also had funds left over from last year. We have Clifton Park NRSA initiatives. Obviously, we were not allowed to do, well, we could not get the NRSA project done last year for Clifton Park, so we carried it forward to meet with this year. The whole total project will be $1.296M. We're setting up $570,000 next year out of ‘21 funds for City Park North.

We received a letter from HUD after we submitted these to you for the standing committee. We received an additional allocation of $33,770 for Community Development, so we put it under public facilities infrastructures. It could be used for parks. Finally, we have Program and Administration, which is our admin staff, any fair housing activities we pay for, as well as housing management staff and inspections. So, the total program this year with re-appropriations is $3.3M and the Community Development Grant allocation for next year is $2,362,404M.

Do you want to ask questions about the Community Development Block Grant? Anyone, before we go on to the next grant?

Commissioner Bynum said, Wilba, if you could back up just a little bit. Stay on the screen. **Ms. Miller** said, okay. **Commissioner Bynum** said give us a little bit more information. So, for example, the Community Development Block Grant year. **Ms. Miller** said, okay. **Commissioner Bynum** asked, does it not run concurrent with our regular calendar year budget year? That's question one. **Ms. Miller** said, okay.

Commissioner Bynum said question two, obviously, I'm seeing a difference of about $94,000 in Emergency Home Repair Funds between ‘21 and ’22. **Ms. Miller** said, okay. **Commissioner Bynum** said you may not know this tonight, but I would ask that when we do hold our public hearing that we know how many repairs. I'm going—I guess I'll ask also, in 2020 with COVID—**Ms. Miller** said right—**Commissioner Bynum** said we probably were lower on repairs we were able to do. Just talk us through that a little bit. I think that's it for me for now.

Ms. Miller said, okay, well first of all, the funds that we had left over from last year, and COVID did make a major impact on this one, we received 57 requests for assistance last year. We completed 28 of those. 15 were rejected for different reasons such as above income and multiple properties. We did 11 roofs, 5 plumbings, 4 barrier removals, 6 furnaces and 2 electrical. Part of the issue was, of course, we did not go into clients’ homes for some time and then even when we did start taking appointments, clients didn't want us to come into their homes. It's picked back up finally. This year we're getting quite a few roofs—especially with all this rain, we're getting quite a few roof applications. So that's why we carried over that $94,000.

The fiscal year for HUD funds is like the year that we've got right now for next—for 2021, we received this $2,362,404M. By the time we submit to HUD, and we have to submit before August 15th, they go through their approval process and we go through our environmental review processes, it's almost the end of the year. So, 2021 funds will really not be spent until 2022. It was the easiest way we have found to budget these funds. Trying to squeeze it in at the end of the year just did not work out well for us. So annually, that's what we do. So, these two, 2021 is this calendar year that we're spending right now, and it's really 2020 funds. Next year in 2022, we’ll really be spending 2021.

I believe if you look at the rest of the budget in 2021, every place that had additional funds brought over from the previous year were because of COVID issues. We weren't really allowed to get out and about. A lot of that—I know that Willa Gill had grab & go lunches instead of allowing clients to come in. Construction people weren't really working on the parks. We had some work done at City Park, but it was a tough year last year for us. We had a hard time meeting our timeliness goals. **Commissioner Bynum** said thank you.

Commissioner Philbrook said a real quick update on the Livable Neighborhood section. **Ms. Miller** said right. **Commissioner Philbrook** said it's like they didn't do anything if that's a normal '20. **Ms. Miller** said, well, they had—I think we've discussed that they get $20,000 from us annually. Basically, it pays for supplies, printing costs and some training. They just—they'll probably get into 20 of that 40 this year, but I don't know how to say it. I know that they're revisiting what their goals are. I think they're trying to spend more money. A lot of it, yes, you have to be careful that it's eligible too because it is public services and it has to meet a low-mod, a census track, and low-mod area stuff. **Commissioner Philbrook** said sometime later on we can get into the conversation on how Livable Neighborhoods, itself, how all the funding comes in, not just from this particular source.

Commissioner Ramirez said, thank you, Wilba, for coming tonight and giving us the first portion of the presentation. I just have two questions. For the public facilities/infrastructure, can you give like examples of what that could be used for? **Ms. Miller** said it can be park improvement. It all has to be spent in low-mod areas. It could be park improvements, it could be curbs and sidewalks, it could be rec center improvements, not maintenance, but improvements. Basically, those are the type of things. **Commissioner Ramirez** said, okay, that's great.

Just for clarification for my brain, the sections that have the asterisk, those are portions of money of the budget that was rolled over from last year that was not spent. **Ms. Miller** said, right. Those grant funds do not go away. In a lot of funds, if you don't spend it, you lose it; but in this case, our funds keep going until we spend them and meet our deadlines. So, we carry it over into the next budget every year. **Commissioner Ramirez** said, okay. I did not know that. That's every interesting. Those were all the questions I had at the moment for the CDBG. Thank you.

Commissioner Johnson said my questions, comments, are with regards to Willa Gill, of course. I just wanted to make sure that you received correspondence from them on the Mount Carmel Redevelopment Corporation dated May 14, and that we are sure to have some conversations about their recommendations to us with regard to CDBG allocations. **Ms. Miller** said, yes, I did receive correspondence from them and have shared it with the Administrator's Office. **Commissioner Johnson** said, okay, great. Well, let's plan on getting together pretty soon here before we go to public hearing to make sure we're all on the same page on that. **Ms. Miller** said, yes sir. **Commissioner Johnson** said thank you.

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME)	2021	2022
CHIP Down Payment Assistance Program*	247,626	223,123
Subrecipients- New Construction/Rehabilitation*	760,000	190,000
CHDO Set Aside- New Construction/Rehabilitation*	1,140,000	380,000
Program Administration	88,625	89,236
HOME PROGRAM TOTAL	**2,236,251**	**882,359**

*Includes Re-appropriations

We have our Home Investment Partnership Program. As you all know, we have a CHIP Down Payment Assistance Program. It's not been a very successful at all. We had to redo underwriting to meet some new HUD requirements and we're not getting very successl applications in. Part of the problem is that in the past, we gave up to $14,999 to clients that needed assistance and met all their criteria. HUD came along and said you just can't give everybody that meets that $14,999. You need to do underwriting and only give them what they need to get into the house. The banks were kind of like taking the $14,999 off the top and then saying this is what else they need from them. Right now, we haven't had any and we haven't had any since probably 2019. I may make a recommendation that we move the money to another line item if we can't get any—we are still getting applications in, we're still talking to people, but I did make that a issue that I brought up to the Administrator's Office that it might be more successul to use it for new construction or for rehab.

The next two line items. The first one are subrecipients, new construction, or rehab. That really means that agencies like Habitat that are not one of our, what we call CHDOs or

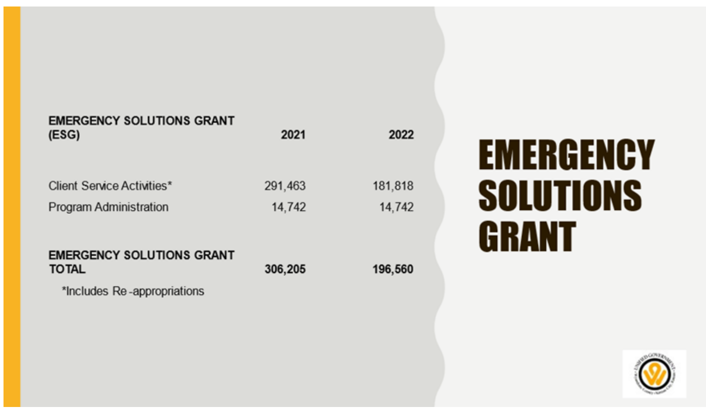
Community Housing Development Organizations. This $760 this year is for Habitat, three units. The CHDOs set aside are two agencies that meet all of our CHDOs' guidelines, CHWC and Mount Carmel. There are three for CHWC and I believe two for Mount Carmel. Contracts are being signed as we speak. Everybody was and is very concerned about the price of lumber and steel and roofing. We're going to give it a shot because we've got to spend these funds as soon as we can.

Then lastly, there's Program and Administration. Again, the reason why this is so much is not a lot happened last year. Whatever savings we have, we just carry everytihing forwarad. As you can see, next year our allocation is only $882,000, which means one unit for the subrecipients and only two for the CHDOs. We have to give 15% of our allocation to the CHDOs. We're required to by law. 15% of $882,000 isn't enough money to do anything. I know that even with $190 per unit, we're being told that it is costing them over $200,000 to build a unit these days. They've looked for houses to rehab thinking that that would be easier and they're really having a hard time with the market right now. We're just trying to do our best. Do you any other questions on HOME?

Commissioner Ramirez said can you explain, I believe it was the Chip Down Payment Assistance Program, which you we're talking about? Can you talk about that again one more time, sorry? **Ms. Miller** said, well the CHIP Program is for eleigible 80% or below indivduials who can get a first mortgage loan on their own and we would give them, in the past, up to $14,999 and that would give them a five-year affordability period. They had to stay in the unit for five years. Well, HUD came along and monitored us two years ago, I believe, maybe a year ago, two-years ago, and said you're not doing your underwriting correctly. You need to redo it. We sent staff and had training. Now that we are only giving—some people may only really need, based on their income and their debt to income ratio, may only really need $5,000. Well, our lenders are not happy about that. Our clients are not happy about that. They remember that we used to give $14,999 and so some of them have just kind of fallen to the wayside. We're still taking applications and people are still interested, but they're not interested if they're only going to get a smaller portioin of money.

I had suggested that we move that money to another one of these line items. It would only be around a unit. We're giving $190 per unit.

Commissioner Ramirez asked, what was like the overall feeling of the room when you brought up that suggestion? **Ms. Miller** said it was fine. We have timelines for all of our funds. With HOME Funds, we have to allocate within two years and we have to spend within five years. With COVID, we just got struck. I mean, this is quite a bit of money, $2.2M, but we need—some of this is ‘17, ‘18 money, ‘18 and ‘19 money, and get it spent. Like I said, with CHIP, it didn’t help because we have’t had any new ones since 2019. **Commissioner Ramirez** said well, thank you very much for that explanation.



EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG)	2021	2022
Client Service Activities*	291,463	181,818
Program Administration	14,742	14,742
EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT TOTAL	**306,205**	**196,560**

*Includes Re-appropriations

The next page is our Emergency Solutions Grant otherwise known as the Homeless Annual Grant monies. Again, it’s reappropriation from the prior year and program administration. We allocate funds by doing a request for proposals. The agencies that are in our homeless organizations come to us and apply, and then we have a group that don’t get funding go through their applications and make recommendations for their activities. We usually have between six and seven agenices that receive funding through these programs.

LEAD BASED PAINT GRANT	2021	2022
LBP Abatement (CD) *	741,012	0
Client EBL Testing (HD)*	63,799	0
Healthy Homes- Repair/Rehab*	95,626	0
CD Dept. Administration*	56,079	0
HD Dept. Administration*	29,138	0
TOTAL	**985,654**	**0**

*Includes Re-appropriations

The next page is our Lead Based Paint Grant. This is very confusing in that this is the last year of this grant and there are line items like lead based paint abatement, which is taken through our department. The Client Lead Level Testing through the Health Department. The Healthy Homes Repair and Rehab, we both sort of share that. Then we have CD Administration and Health Department Administration. Hopefully, we'll get all of this work done and this will be the last year of it.

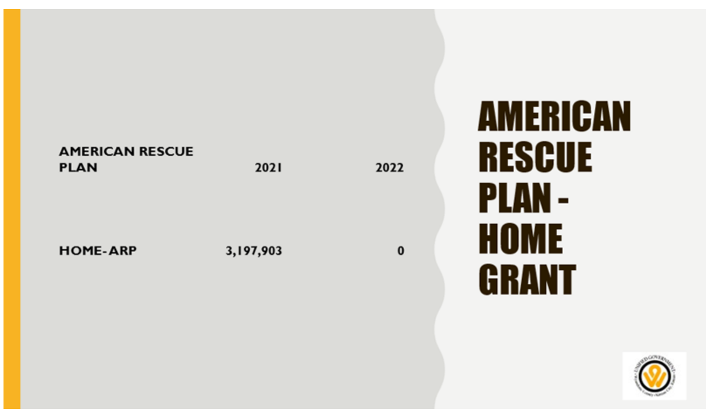
HUD has told us that if we have activities in progress by the end of the year still, they will let us carry it forward and finish out the program in 2022 if we need to.

The next slide is our CARES Act Funds. We received two allocations of CDBG funds that totaled $2,135,023. We are funding, or had recommended funding, Wyandotte Connect which was an application that came through the cities CARES request to hire community workers through the Health Department and the Community Health Council to go out into neighborhoods and work with people to get them to get vaccinated. It's prevent, prepare, or respond to Coronavirus. All of these things have to be for those uses.

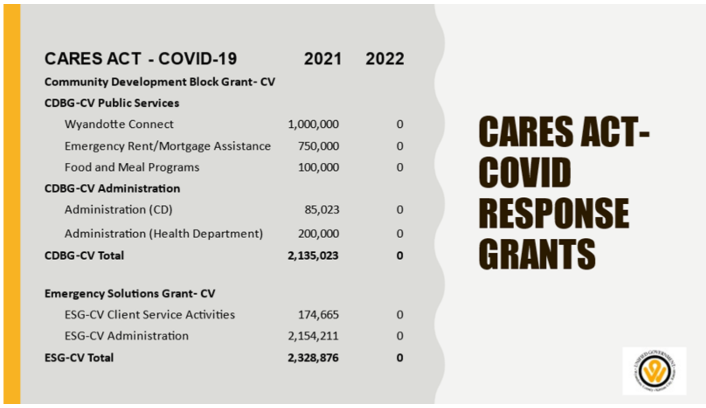
We also recommended, and I know you all adopted this last year, emergency rent assistance, but HUD has since now given us additional information that it would have to be what they call mortgage assistance or emergency payments to clients. We found that there are lots of rental assistance programs, especially through the state right now and even through our CARES Act, that's below. We're setting that aside to be used maybe to help extend the Wyandotte County Connect or to use at a time when we have another program that I'll talk about later in conjunction with that as well as the Food and Meal Programs. There's pantries and things going on with that. That $850,000 we sort of just want to let it sit in the budget until we have an opportunity to get some more information from HUD. Like I said, I'll explain that to you later.

We're also paying for a portion of besides our direct staff costs, the Health Department staff that are overseeing this program. They will work directly with the Community Health Council. The contracts are being signed as we speak. We hope to get this started just as soon as possible. They will be hiring around 13 community health workers to go out and try to get more people to take the vaccinations and any boosters, if we're required to do that.

The last one on this page is the Emergency Solutions Grant, which is very similar to our Homeless funds that are regular/annual. We had two allocations that totaled $2.3M. We had also in our RFP process for these and they are quickly spending this money. Some of the agencies have already spent their first round and are in their second round of funds. We have seven out of the first round and six out of the second round. These are all agencies that receive our annual allocations too. So, that's where this is.



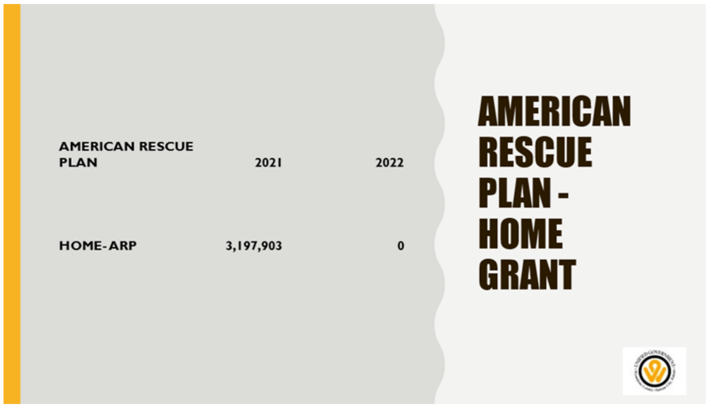
The next page is our American Rescue Plan that just came out recently. It is also under the HOME program. We've had very little information on this other than they are going to tie these HOME Fund dollars to the Emergency Solutions Grant and try to find a way to house in non-congregant areas, the homeless and provide services to the homeless. The housing for the homeless is a big thing. We've had one webinar about it. They have a lot of ideas and plans, but we have had no actual requirements come to us yet, no eligible activities yet. I mean we have an idea just bcause of our experience with HUD, but this may be where we want to use that $850,000 from the previous page to do something in connection with those funds and to build partnerships with some other agencies. Until we get our rules and our regulations and our training, we don't know. We expect to get them sometime in September, we're not sure, but we expect to. I can't answer a lot of questions about these funds yet.



Commissioner Bynum said, Wilba, could you go back one slide. On the Emergency Rent and Mortgage Assistance, the $850,000 total. The state program, KERA, is only for renters. There's no help for homeowners. I'm unaware of any help like that for homeowners. I'm just curious if we have any opportunity to help homeowners.

Then I need you to drop down to the Emergency Solutions Grant, the $2.3M. That, again, you say was out for RFP, the agencies are selected, the money's being spent. Is it the same kind of assistance that was given through CARES Act funding? I mean, it is CARES Act funding, correct? **Ms. Miller** said, yes. It is basically rapid housing, prevention, which it includes rental assistance. **Commissioner Bynum** said, okay. Again, not for homeowners. **Ms. Miller** said not for homeowners, no.

Commissioner Bynum said I am just curious, I've just not understood at any point during any of this money, why homeowners can't be assisted, but I'll let you speak. **Ms. Miller** said I had talked to the Director of the United Way. I can't think of his name right now. I'm having a senior moment. **Ms. Cobbins** said Todd Jordan. **Ms. Miller** said I did talk to him about mortgages assistance. The program is really—I don't know emergency payments to the homeowners was, I'll be honest and say I don't have a lot of information about that. I do know that Stephanie from my staff is on and she may or may not have additional information. When we first put this out to Commission last year, we actually called it Emergency Rental Assistance. Stephanie, do you have any additional information on mortgage assistance under the CARES Act?



Stephanie Stauffer, Community Development Program Coordinator, said well, I think, in general, the activity of emergency payments is really tricky to do under our CDBG. It actually exists in the regulation of kind of this provision that's a loophole, because of a double negative. HUD was really kind of discouraging in having folks use this money this way. It would have to be—we'd have to be really careful about it being an actual emergency and there would be a lot of strings attached. I think launching the program would be complicated. If there are less complicated programs, it would be better for the homeowners to do that.

Ms. Miller said, I think, Commissioner, part of it is that we don't have any programs or experience doing this kind of thing. When you talk about it, remember that this all has to be tied into that prevent, prepare, and respond to. We would be getting applications from a lot of homeowners who are already in default before. We could not help them. We would have to absolutely find out that it was due totally to having COVID or losing their job because of COVID. It would be, like Stephanie said, very tricky. I know that other cities that had this on their original plan, they changed their plans because it is very complicated. We can look into it some more for you if you like, but…**Commissioner Bynum** said in your freetime, Wilba, I would appreciate what you might be able to find, especially if you are familiar with any community that had success if they were offering help to homeowners, but thank you very much. **Ms. Miller** said okay.

Commissioner Philbrook said I thought I understood that at one time that the homeowners were directly petitioning the state for money instead of coming through us and that possibility is still there for the future. Stephanie, when you were reading through that stuff, did you read any of that? **Ms. Stauffer** said that's a good question. I feel like I remember reading about there being a program, but I don’t know the specifics. **Commissioner Philbrook** said, right. I do know that there are people that did do that. How many did it? Don’t know, but I know it was being done because I’ve had people tell me they did it. I understand there are quite a few homeowners that got on that, but that could have been people that had homes, that had renters that they were having to deal with so, I don’t know.

Ms. Miller said I know another thing that they were talking about that was causing complications is it’s not just paying the mortgage payment, but paying any escrows and those type of things that would not necessarily be eligible under the CARES Act. There was some discussion about different insurance programs, but I’ll double check, Commissioner Bynum, and see what I can find out for you. **Commissioner Bynum** said I really appreciate it. If I’ve been impacted by COVID by a job loss, my insurance is due, my taxes are due, my mortgage is due, and I’m just spouting off my opinion now. **Ms. Miller** said when you say taxes are due, I don’t know that the UG can pay the UG for back taxes. **Commissioner Bynum** said correct. I guess my point is, as I’ve said many times, we’re all about 30 days away from being homeless. **Ms. Miller** said, I know. **Commissioner Bynum** said if it were me living in a house where I’m paying a mortgage and I lost my job, I will be homeless because I can kiss my house goodbye. It just seems so unfair. **Ms. Miller** said right. **Commissioner Bynum** said but anyway, just my opinion. Thank you and you can go on.

Ms. Miller said, well, I do know the final page in your packet will show you the public notice that we’re going to put out for the Draft Annual Action Plan for 2021 and 2022. When you look at our budget, you know that all the budgets for Community Development Block Grants, Emergency Solutions Grant, and the HOME Program, those three are in our annual plan. The draft COVID, I mean the COVID, and the Lead Based Paint, and all those programs do not become part of our annual action plan. We have $3.4M for those three funds that we have to do a draft plan and it has to be—we have to have our second public hearing.

You know we all had our first public hearing and then we have to have a citizen comment period of 30 days before we submit—have you all approve it and submit it to HUD. It has to be submitted before August 15. We cannot wait until normal when we normally finalize our budget and our annual action plan when the Unified Government does their city budget because there will be no action on that, I believe, until September. What we’re aking you tonight is to approve the draft plan numbers and let us submit it out to the public for comment and set a public hearing of July 29 and adoption of the 29.

Chairman Markley said, Wilba, or whomever from staff would like to tell me, again, we're guide free tonight so it might have been in the guide and I don't know it, but can we do that all in one motion or do we need to have a motion to approve and then a separate motion to set the public hearing? **Ms. Miller** said we don't normally do a motion to approve the draft plan, but if you would like to, I think—**Chairman Markley** said I think that we just need a motion for the public hearing. **Ms. Miller** said I think what you're doing is just voting on setting up a public hearing and approving the plan in July.

Action: **Commissioner Philbrook made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, to approve**.

Chairman Markley asked, were there any comments from the public? **Ms. Godsil** said no public comments were received.

Roll call was taken and there were five "Ayes," Philbrook, Johnson, Ramirez, Bynum, Markley.

Adjourn
Chairman Markley adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

tk/tpl