

**CITY OF NORWALK**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**MAY 19, 2021**  
**VIA TELECONFERENCE**

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Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID.

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Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Lamond Daniels at [ldaniels@norwalkct.org](mailto:ldaniels@norwalkct.org) to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

**ATTENDANCE:** Barbara Smyth, Chair; Gregory Burnett; Dominique Johnson; Thomas Keegan; Diana Revolus; Keenan Roberts; Nicholas Sacchinelli; David Heuvelman (7:07 p.m.)

**STAFF:** Maria Escalera, Director of Human Services;  
Lamond Daniels, Chief of Community Services;  
Mary Oster, Early Childhood Coordinator

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL**

Ms. Smyth called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and called the Roll as indicated above.

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No members of the public wished to comment this evening.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD ON APRIL 21, 2021**

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

Correct the spelling of Ms. Lauricella's name and Mr. Burnett's name.

Page 2: second paragraph, fourth sentence should read: They also discussed "Must meet a quota".

Page 2: third paragraph, first sentence should read: There was much discussion on what this would entail, but they were interested in approving the actual description wording so it could be posted in a timely fashion.

Page 2: third paragraph, second sentence should read: This person would do the finding of grants, develop a system for tracking grants, the administrative work and the departments would write the subject matter for various grants.

**\*\* MR. BURNETT MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS AMENDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **4. DISCUSSION**

Updates-Community Services Department, Lamond Daniels

Mr. Daniels acknowledged that over the weekend, the City of Norwalk lost one of its employees who worked for the Community Services Department, through the Library. He expressed his deepest sympathy for their children and family.

Mr. Daniels reported that the Community Services Department continues to support the CT Food Bank food distribution. They moved from Calf Pasture to Veteran's Park for the summer. They are seeing up to 1,000 people each week from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Covid testing takes place at Veteran's Park in the afternoon.

Mr. Daniels said that Led By Us will be officially launching their Norwalk Speaks Campaign on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at Ryan Park. In addition, Covid vaccines will be offered at the event.

Mr. Heuvelman joined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

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## 5. ACTION ITEMS:

- \*\* **MR. BURNETT MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE A PROGRAM SUPPORT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND CONNECTICUT INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITIES, INC. FOR FUNDING SUPPORT, MONITORING AND REPORTING FOR THE EARLY HEAD START AND HEAD START PROGRAMS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$500,000.**

Ms. Oster reviewed the request. She said the municipal match for the City is \$500,000. She noted that it is important to have a monitoring mechanism for this funding. She added that she worked with Ms. Escalera.

- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- \*\* **MR. KEEGAN MOVED TO Authorize the Mayor, Harry W. Rilling, to execute any and all documents necessary to accept and receive Child day care grant funds allocated to the City of Norwalk from the State of Connecticut, Office of early childhood for State Fiscal Year 2021 and 2022**

Ms. Oster reviewed the request and said that they currently receive funding for subsidized toddler and pre-school slots. The State increased the amount making them on par with the School Readiness stream.

Mr. Heuvelman asked how many day cares this funding will serve. Ms. Oster said this increase is only going to cover funding for 40 pre-school slots at Growing Seeds at Ben Franklin.

- \*\* **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- \*\* **MS. JOHNSON MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR SHARED SPACE LICENSE AGREEMENTS TO REGIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS SELECTED BY THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND ASSIST RESIDENTS IN CITY HALL.**

Mr. Daniels gave a presentation, showing the proposed Norwalk Community Services Resource Hub. He noted that he has the support of Mayor Rilling for this initiative.

Mr. Daniels explained that many services are offered regionally and are located in the greater Stamford and Bridgeport areas. His proposal is to work with the service providers and offer them time and space in Norwalk. He presented the social services regional map. He said that transportation can be expensive and a barrier to people seeking help. He said that he has been working with larger organizations and asked them to come to Norwalk.

Mr. Daniels described the different services such as, workforce development, job training, emergency rental assistants, and self sufficiency programs. He said this initiative is intended to remove barriers, make services accessible, increase awareness of the services and increase engagement.

Ms. Smyth asked Mr. Daniels how he sees this initiative working logistically. Mr. Daniels said that his office will help with promotion and will create a calendar.

Mr. Keegan thanked Mr. Daniels and said this is a great idea and another way to serve the people in the community. He told Mr. Daniels that he has his full support.

Ms. Revolus asked for clarification on the 211 direct support. Mr. Daniels explained that he envisions having dedicated 211 lines in City Hall and with the localized 211 line, the residents will be talking to Norwalk residents. He added that he wants this to be a one stop shop.

Ms. Revolus asked Mr. Daniels if he finds that more services are needed, for example, family navigators. Mr. Daniels explained that they will start with workforce development and emergency rental assistance. He said that needs change over time. Every time someone makes a call, it will be tracked, which provides better information for when they talk to regional providers and lets them know how many requests come in for their services.

Ms. Revolus asked why the location will be called “swing space”. Mr. Daniels said the space will be used by different groups.

Mr. Burnett said this is a great resource for the City. He asked how people will know what services are available at City Hall and when. He noted that several of the clients may have technical difficulties. Mr. Daniels said he is sensitive to that and they plan to utilize the community network, such as the Norwalk Housing Authority and neighborhood groups.

Ms. Johnson said she hears from her constituents who are non-profit leaders asking if there is any leeway for use of the swing space by non-profits. Mr. Daniels said he would love to be a part of that conversation.

Mr. Heuvelman thanked Mr. Daniels for doing things that are outside the box. He asked if this will be enough space. He wants to be sure they can accommodate all of the service providers. Mr. Daniels said that about 10 organizations have been identified. Ms. Revolus said she would like to see Upward Bound come to Norwalk. Mr. Daniels said they are talking about larger programs. He said the goal is to serve constituents in our backyard.

Mr. Burnett asked Mr. Daniels if he thought about setting up this type of program in the community, such as at the Housing Authority rather than have residents travel to City Hall, which could create a barrier. Mr. Daniels said people will tell them where they want to go. He added that there is a liability piece in this too. He said he has those concerns about where and when to offer services.

Ms. Smyth said it feels daunting to go to another city when you rely on public transportation or a ride from someone.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*\* MS. REVOLUS MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORWALK AND FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S AGENCY TO SERVE AS THE MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021 FOR A TWO YEAR TERM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000 YEARLY.**

Mr. Daniels said he wanted to recognize the work of Ms. Laura Epstein, who was a champion for seniors. He said he was excited to carry on her legacy to be sure seniors are not forgotten.

Ms. Escalera reviewed the historical perspective and described what an Agent for the Elderly is. She said the Human Services Department will oversee the new Municipal Agent for The Elderly. The goal is to announce and award the new Municipal Agent for the Elderly in July.

Ms. Escalera explained that a transition plan will be developed so all seniors understand the changes. She noted that this is not a senior center. It is a person who will connect and provide services to seniors in Norwalk.

Ms. Escalera reviewed the three proposals that were submitted and said that the panel selected the Family and Children's Agency. They are a trusted community resource and understand the needs of the community.

Ms. Smyth said this is an attempt to take all services to a high level and provide accountability to the elderly and the City.

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ms. Revolus wished Malcolm X a happy birthday.

**6. ADJOURN**

**\*\* MR. REVOLUS MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business, and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 16, 2021