

Carolyn G. Goodman, Mayor (At-Large)
Brian Knudsen, Mayor Pro Tem (Ward 1)
Victoria Seaman (Ward 2)
Olivia Díaz (Ward 3)
Francis Allen-Palenske (Ward 4)
Cedric Crear (Ward 5)
Nancy E. Brune (Ward 6)



City Manager Jorge Cervantes
City Attorney Bryan K. Scott
City Clerk LuAnn D. Holmes

City Council Agenda

Council Chambers · 495 South Main Street · Phone 702-229-6011
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January 4, 2023
9:00 AM

33. Report by Randy Robison, Director of the Office of Government and Community Affairs, regarding an update on the Office of Government and Community Affairs department projects and initiatives - All Wards

Minutes:

RANDY ROBISON, Office of Government and Community Affairs Director, introduced the item and said his office primarily handles legislative matters. This item, however, focuses on the two new initiatives of grants administration and diversity outreach. They are very important as grants administration helps the City obtain, track and coordinate grant funding, and diversity outreach helps the City connect with the community.

KELLY CROMPTON, Government Affairs Manager, who was tasked with putting the grants team together, said the team has done an amazing job over the last year. When the grants administration team was created, it reviewed grant applications as part of an approval process, but that was archaic and a hindrance when it came to grants. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff identified the need for a centralized process in order to work with the federal delegation to help identify the City's eligibility for federal dollars that were becoming available. Consequently, they gathered the staff members to keep track of funds awarded, funds received and funds expended, and ultimately reported that information to the City Manager's Office and the City Council. This process was very successful, and they decided to form a team of grant administrators, consisting of BRIAN LOVELIN, who worked in the Finance Department, and DARCELL CAMPBELL, who worked in the Neighborhood Services Department, and they both came with a wealth of knowledge on grants applications.

MR. LOVELIN said he started with the City 5.5 years ago as a financial analyst, handling departmental budgeting, forecasting and financial reporting, as well as various grants, particularly during the pandemic.

He started with the PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which was submitted for the record, that he and MS. CAMPBELL shared in presenting and gave an overview. The team is working to update the City's grant policy and on streamlining the processes and procedures with the intent to align the City's grant policies with current best practices in grant management in addition to centralizing City-wide grant resources and administration processes to better compete for federal grants.

The GPAR (Grant Proposal Application Review) form will be revised and will have information to be included with the grant application submittal and tracked by fiscal year. This will help automate grant tracking. The team will strive to identify grant opportunities that align with City priorities and strategic planning. Outside of reoccurring Formula A grants, which are for HUD (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development), the City receives notice of funding opportunities through its federal lobbying firm, Squire Patton Boggs, and establishes partnerships throughout the community, such as with Nevada Grants Lab. Additionally, Grant Writing USA offers external services and training programs. These resources will help the team identify all the opportunities to ensure strategic application for all available grant funding.

The Grants Administration Team has extensive experience with federal and non-federal grants to provide

guidance pre- and post-award. Although the receiving departments are responsible for administering the grants, the team will provide guidance where necessary to ensure success starting from the original application, filing and data management and reporting requirements through the grant closeout period.

To organize and aggregate grant proposal submissions, a new process includes tracking the status of GPAR forms, which will help the City identify the real-time status of grant proposal submittals and award amounts and grant applications awarded and denied. Should a City application be denied, additional follow-up includes reaching out to the agency to identify the reason for denial and to determine the potential to reapply. Additionally, a dashboard is under development to help track the grant data submitted through the GPAR form and provide a running total of grant dollars applied for by department and by fiscal year, which will provide a City-wide overall portfolio.

MS. CAMPBELL took over the presentation and stated she is a 21-year employee who has experience with many types of grants and helped establish the City's Emergency Rental Assistance Program under the Treasury Department. She continued with the PowerPoint presentation and reported that as part of tracking and monitoring the status of grant proposal submissions, departments are being asked to provide updates on the proposal status. This will allow the team to track successes and determine the need to strengthen applications to better plan and prepare for future funding opportunities.

As part of the effort to centralize grant information and resources, a Grants Administration Team site was created to provide useful information, such as grant training opportunities, links to a variety of grant agencies, demographic data and grant news from the City's federal lobbyist. Additionally, forecasting opportunities will also be posted for the departments to plan accordingly.

Regarding grants administration accomplishments, the team helped the Office of Government and Community Affairs roll out \$121 million of the \$131 million received in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds, and this included setting up the financial and software system, infrastructure, hiring staff and hosting workshops for external agency partners and City departments, comprising a total of 64 programs. The GPAR form was updated and offered in an electronic format, making it easier for departments to translate the proposal elements into the form, which eliminated the need to pull additional information sought by the grant team. Additional elements to be provided include how the grant request aligns with the Council's priorities and the ward.

Roundtable meetings will be hosted quarterly to discuss with departments what works, to collaborate on multiple department initiatives and to receive feedback.

The Grants Administration Dashboard is underway and soon to be forthcoming. Departments will be able to click on the department to see by fiscal year the grant requests and awards. One of the components will provide information on grant funding expenditures.

MS. CROMPTON said the dashboard will be very helpful and only as good as the information input by departments. The team has looked at opportunities available to provide input to agencies, which may help establish guidelines as well.

MAYOR GOODMAN said this team has been long-needed. At the request of the Mayor, MS. CROMPTON explained that VICTORIA (VICKI) CRAM, Squire Patton and Boggs, is a federal lobbyist, and her role is to represent the City in Washington, D.C., and take care of guiding the Councilmembers in Washington and setting up meetings with the federal delegation and agencies. She also represents other large cities and has experience with local governments to encourage discussion and work together on state and local grant opportunities.

MAYOR GOODMAN thought building the grant team is a wonderful idea for the City to identify state and local grant opportunities, even for businesses. She mentioned that EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE MIKE JANSSEN is similar to CITY MANAGER JORGE CERVANTES in always looking for funding opportunities and being ready to put in for available grants.

COUNCILWOMAN BRUNE agreed that this was a wonderful idea, as Nevada ranks 45th in the country in federal grants per capita, which means Nevada is leaving a great deal of grant funding to other states. She asked if the team is also looking at city organization partnerships as well and how those opportunities are being communicated with the City's network of community partners. MS. CAMPBELL said that to date, most of it has been in collaboration with the State and Clark County. Some departments provided links to other agencies, and those will be shared. MR. CERVANTES added that in the past the City has partnered on grants with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, on research and with the Nevada Department of Transportation. Staff looks for

collaboration opportunities as it is to the City's advantage to do so.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN said he used to manage the grant process as a City employee. Regarding the dashboard, he asked if it will include competitive funding or the grant type. MR. LOVELIN replied that it would include that, as it will provide a breakdown of the type of funding, which the Councilman thought would be helpful, noting that it would be great to understand how competitive the City is. MS. CROMPTON added that the team was created to pull information that was not being tracked. The Councilman asked if there are protocols to keep the City from seeking funding that is not needed, and MS. CROMPTON replied that before the team was created, City departments were competing with each other. With the team, they can review grants and identify the best fit for the City. MAYOR GOODMAN said that the key is to have a coordinated effort given the complexity and competitiveness of the grant process. MS. CROMPTON noted that the City was successful in obtaining a RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) competitive grant for \$26 million for Ward 3.

COUNCILWOMAN BRUNE inquired as to the City's F&A (Facilities and Administration) cost, to which MR. LOVELIN replied that the City does not have an F&A cost rate. Generally, if the grant allows it, administration would be a direct cost.

MR. ROBINSON introduced RAMIRO REYES, Diversity Outreach Officer, who came to work for the City about one year ago and has a unique background that fits perfectly with the City's goals for diversity and other initiatives.

Before resuming the presentation, MR. REYES wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked staff and the residents for their collaboration. He said that his position existed in a different capacity 10 years ago and was revised and reinstated in 2021, which is good because there have been many changes in Las Vegas since its creation. He reviewed the slides.

Diversity Outreach Officer – The State of Nevada is the third most diverse state in the country ranking behind only California and Hawaii, and Clark County ranks 22nd in the Diversity Index. He opined that Las Vegas is doing great in the way of diversity and in engaging diverse member communities that call Las Vegas home. One of his top priorities is to highlight the City of Las Vegas' resources, programs, events and opportunities to diverse communities throughout the city. These collaborations align with the City's strategic plans, and he noted that he has worked closely with the Department of Public Safety to create an LBGTQ (Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender, Queer) liaison position to promote the human rights campaign. He emphasized that the City received a 100 percent score in the municipality quality index and hosted the first Latin Pride Festival in Las Vegas, and he hopes the City will soon host the first of many LBGTQ events for the Latino community as well.

Promoting healthcare is a top priority of his, and he collaborated with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) to provide facilitator training to facilitate ongoing conversations around mental health. NAMI does a great job of providing safe spaces for diverse communities, specifically for the Black, Latino and Native American communities. The intent is to continue to develop this partnership and promote other initiatives, such as the Buen Aire Para Todos Campaign, whose representatives were included in the Latino Network of Southern Nevada meetings. The meetings can include bringing in different community leaders to keep them updated on events of interest throughout the city.

Recently he engaged the City in the participation of World Refugee Day and with the Calpulli Tepeyolohti Danza Group to perform at a ceremony at Gary Reese Freedom Park, as well as collaborated with the HONOR (Honrando Orgullosamente Nuestras Obras y Raíces) Latino Awards, hosted in the Council Chambers. The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the lack of available language accessibility resources. Consequently, the City started a collaboration in 2022 with the United Way, the Governor's Office of New Americans and the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District to discuss language accessibility and possible resources. As such, the Public Information Officer helped people process their applications for ARPA funds during the Food Truck Expo. Many small business owners were contacted before the 2022 Holiday Season to let them know they were approved for ARPA funding. He also thanked Business License employees who helped.

MR. REYES referred to some of the images depicting a variety of banquets and community celebrations, including three Latino-led non-profits that used City facilities and held the Equestrian Posadas Event, Promotores Celebration and Amiga Latina Entrepreneurship Summit Collaborate on the same day.

Another priority is partnering with local chambers of commerce, business development organizations and City departments to address the needs of small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs. To help these efforts, they

hosted several events and held Coffee with Commerce with the Urban Chamber, the Veterans Chamber, as well as others, and started the pilot program Doing Business With US, targeting the Advanced ESL (English as a second language) refugee student population to provide information on what to do to obtain a business license with the City.

MR. REYES concluded by saying that this is very important work, as the community continues to grow, and is a perfect example of supporting DEI (Diversity Equity and Inclusion).

MAYOR GOODMAN felt the City is number one in appreciating different cultures, adding that she hopes the Asian community will be included in the future.

COUNCILMAN KNUDSEN said he would be contacting the diversity team for ideas on how to better connect with the residents in Ward 1, as he wants to make sure they are heard and included.

COUNCILWOMAN BRUNE said it is important to engage diverse communities, as well as individuals with different disabilities, so she asked for the recruitment of a disabilities liaison. She asked if language accessibility will include the blind and the deaf.

COUNCILWOMAN DIAZ thanked MR. REYES for the efforts in connecting the City with various community partners to improve diversity in the community.

MR. REYES said he would love to meet and replicate all his efforts, adding that there is a lot more work to do.