



Council Worksession
July 11, 2023
5:00 pm

Present: Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas
Councilmember Graeme Allen
Councilmember Pam Axberg

Absent: Councilmember Abdullahi Abdulle
Councilmember Emily Dunsworth

Staff in Attendance: Devin Massopust, Sergeant Matt Farmer, Heather Monnens, Attorney

Guests in Attendance: Jennifer Dickinson and Lita Morgan with the Tubman Center

Update from Tubman Center Representatives

Massopust stated Jennifer Dickinson from the Tubman Center reached out to staff and asked to meet with the Council. He explained staff invited representatives to attend this meeting to speak with the Council.

Jennifer Dickinson, Tubman Center representative, introduced herself to the Council. She described the advocacy work she does at the Tubman Center and explained Tubman was a non-profit. She reported the Tubman Center was seeking sustainable funding sources to assist with providing domestic violence, mental health and homeless youth services in Ramsey, Hennepin and Washington counties. She commented further on how she works closely with the New Brighton Police Department on domestic violence cases. She noted she also assists with drafting orders for protection (OFP's). She discussed how the Safety Project helps clients by providing representation at OFP cases.

Lita Morgan, Tubman Center representative, introduced herself to the Council and stated she has worked for the Tubman Center for the past 16 years. She discussed how important it was for her to build relationships with victims, parents and prosecutors.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked why the public safety department was able to share personal information with the Tubman Center. Ms. Dickinson discussed the confidentiality clause and intervention line that was in place for domestic violence victims. Deputy Hamdorf commented on how difficult domestic violence cases are and explained officers work to bridge victims to advocates. He stated he has always felt good about assisting victims and connecting them to the Tubman Center.

Councilmember Allen indicated there has been a jump in domestic violence cases in New Brighton since the pandemic. He questioned if this was occurring throughout the metro area. Ms. Dickinson reported this was the case. She commented on how victims have been impacted by the pandemic and the isolation that ensued. She reported the County Attorney's office has had to take on more cases given the fact the Tubman Center only manages intimate partner cases. All non-intimate partner cases were now being managed by the County Attorney's office. She further discussed how additional sustainable funding would assist with meeting the

needs of victims going forward.

Further discussion ensued regarding the unique resources each case required.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas questioned if the Tubman Center had reached out to communities served by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department for financial assistance. Ms. Dickinson stated she had reached out and was waiting to hear back from these communities.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked if any cities provide funding to the Tubman Center. Ms. Dickinson stated she was in discussions regarding contributions with Mounds View and Vadnais Heights.

Councilmember Allen inquired what the financial expectation would be for a City with a population of 24,000. Ms. Dickinson reviewed the formula and stated the proposed ask would be \$35,000 for New Brighton.

Councilmember Axberg stated she has had the privilege of working with this organization and she understood they did good work. She requested further information regarding the Great Dreams campaign that the Tubman Center was pursuing. Ms. Dickinson discussed the goals within the Great Dreams campaign, which included updates to the Homeless Shelter. She noted the places to do work was also being upgraded. In addition, she indicated a pet shelter was being considered. She commented on how cities that provide funding to the Tubman Center would potentially be able to receive more services than cities that do not provide funding.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas explained the City Council has a priority set to explore an embedded social worker. She asked if funding this organization would assist with reaching this priority. Massopust reported the County has let the City know they will not be providing the City with a social worker. He explained there would be some overlap with the work being provided by the Tubman Center, especially for repeat callers.

Councilmember Allen thanked the Tubman Center representatives for attending this meeting and providing information on the services being provided to New Brighton residents. Massopust explained continued conversations would be held regarding this topic throughout the 2024 budget process.

Worksession adjourned at 5:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terri Spangrud".

Terri Spangrud
City Clerk