**INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL COMMITTEE**
**MEETING MINUTES**
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020**
**2:00 PM**
**MUNICIPAL PLAZA ROOM B**

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| **Members Present:** | Councilmember Peláez, Chair, *District 8*<br>Councilmember Cabello Havrda, *District 6*<br>Councilmember Perry, *District 10*<br>Deanne Cuellar, *Citizen Committee Member* |
| **Members Absent:** | Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan, *District 2*<br>Dirk Elmendorf, *Citizen Committee Member*<br>Will Garrett, *Citizen Committee Member* |
| **Staff Present:** | John Peterek, *Assistant to the City Manager;* Brian Dillard, *Director, Office of Innovation;* Troy Elliott, *Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Finance Department*; Melody Woosley, *Director, Human Services;* Nancy Cano, *Office of the City Clerk* |
| **Others Present:** | John Butchkosky, *Community Liaison, Texas Alliance for Human Needs* |

**Call to Order**

1. **Approval of the January 28, 2020 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to approve the Minutes from the January 28, 2020 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting. Citizen Committee Member Deanne Cuellar seconded the motion. The Motion carried unanimously by those present.

2. **Staff briefing regarding Status of Poverty Report recommendation related to fostering integration of asset-building and social safety net services.** [Colleen M. Bridger, PH, PhD, Assistant City Manager; Melody Woosley, Director, Human Services]

Melody Woosley reported that the U.S. Census Bureau released the 2018 American Community Survey one-year estimated data which ranked San Antonio as having the highest poverty rate among the 25 most populous metropolitan areas. She stated that the Department of Human Services and Metro Health collaborated to develop the Status of Poverty Report (SPR) which was released in December 2019 as follows:

Overview of Poverty in San Antonio:
- Nearly 20% of San Antonio residents live in poverty
- Poverty rate higher for Hispanics and African Americans
- 54% of San Antonio households living in poverty were female
- A higher percentage of San Antonio residents were women, compared to Texas and the US

- The City invests approximately $454 million annually to reduce barriers to socioeconomic mobility

Educational attainment in San Antonio:
- 18% of San Antonio residents do not have a high school diploma
- Only 16% of Hispanics and 25% of African Americans in Bexar County have a Bachelor's Degree
- Lower average educational attainment in the west, south and east areas of the City of San Antonio

Employment and Income:
- Over 25% of workers in the San Antonio-New Braunfels Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) had occupations with median wages less than $25,000
- Median household income in San Antonio is lower, and poverty rates higher, than in Bexar County, Texas and the U.S.

Affordable Housing in San Antonio:
- 91% of low-income renters in San Antonio are cost-burdened*
- 70% of low-income homeowners are cost-burdened*
- 70% of African American residents and 62% of Hispanics are renters
  *Defined as spending more than 30% of income on housing

Wealth, Assets, and Financial Health in San Antonio:
- San Antonians have low median credit scores, high delinquent debt and limited savings
- Median credit score of residents in predominately non-white zip codes is lower (615) than in predominately white zip codes (721)
- 35% of predominately non-white zip codes have medical debt in collection status, compared to 18% of predominately white zip codes
- The medical debt gap between whites and non-whites is larger in Bexar County than in Texas and the U.S. overall

Physical & Mental Health - Ms. Woosley stated that in order to make ends meet, families must apply, enroll and recertify in multiple benefit programs which were difficult to access, time-consuming, and had rigid eligibility. She noted that such program requirements could be barriers to achieving financial stability.

- One out of every 5 children in Bexar County experiences food insecurity
- A higher rate of San Antonio residents rely on cash public assistance of food stamps than in Texas and the U.S. overall
- Women in the highest income quartile have a life expectancy of more than 5 years longer than those in the bottom quartile
- For men, the difference is 10 years
- Residents in low income zip codes have a higher risk of diabetes-related hospitalizations

Local, State, and Federal Investments:  $454.4 million:
- Business/Entrepreneurship: $2.7 million
- Wealth, Assets, Financial Health: $7.6 million
- Health: $28.2 million
- Housing: $29.3 million
- Homelessness: $36.1 million
- Employment: $73.4 million
- Transportation: $128 million
- Education: $149 million

Ms, Woosley stated that the SPR included fifteen recommendations across five categories which were focused on equity:

- Focus on highest need geographies and populations
- Foster integration of asset-building and social safety net services
- Enhance safety-net for low-income families
- Expand access to products and services that support asset-building and preservation
- Offer organizational support to non-profits to enhance long-term viability and outcomes

Ms. Woosley provided the recommendation specifically proposed for oversight by the Innovation and Technology Council Committee (ITCC):

1. Expand investments in existing asset-building hubs to better coordinate access to other service providers and "warm handoffs" to services for families in need;
2. Invest in referral system technology to streamline referral processes across asset-building and safety-net services providers; help track the outcomes of clients; and
3. Nurture Peer Learning, Knowledge, and Innovation to better integrate safety-net services.

Ms. Woosley provided the proposed charge for the Committee with the following areas to address to ensure fair outcomes for residents:

1. Expand Financial Empowerment Centers and develop innovative strategies to strengthen referral networks with other service providers
2. Explore technology solutions to streamline referral processes across providers; guide clients in next steps; and improve coordination of services.
3. Enhance the work of delegate agency learning networks and Faith-based initiative action teams to incorporate asset-building strategies and better coordination between government, Faith-based, and non-profit agencies.

Ms. Woosley stated that staff would brief the other City Council Committees and partner agencies and conduct a SASpeakUp Survey with emphasis on outreach to low-income residents. She concluded by noting that final recommendations would be presented to City Council at a B session in April 2020.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked how programs could be created and implemented based on the variances in the Status of Poverty Report.  Ms. Woosley stated that more research could be

conducted, best practices could be identified, and a speaker series featuring subject matter experts and their recommendations could be coordinated to provide feedback to this Committee. Ms. Woosley noted that the City currently has three financial centers that could be expanded and enhanced to include a greater array of services. She added that through innovation and technology, the financial centers could be designated as centralized hubs for residents to access services and referrals more efficiently. She cited the City's Utility Assistance Program which was upgraded as online application system that significantly reduced barriers to services with no waiting nor standing in line.

Councilmember Perry noted the $454 million in local, State and Federal annual investments to reduce barriers to socioeconomic mobility. He requested comparison data of peer cities, and requested data on the City's investment for homeless initiatives. Ms. Woosley stated she would provide the information.

Citizen Committee Member Cuellar voiced concerns regarding generational poverty. She stated that many grandparents were raising their grandchildren and needed to re-enter the workforce which required additional job skills training in technology. She added that many children were born with bad credit. She noted that families with barriers to technology such as not having a cell phone or internet access created barriers to jobs and socioeconomic mobility. She recommended Jordana Barton with the Federal Reserve as a speaker to this Committee to discuss a broadband deployment of the Community Reinvestment Act for targeted local communities. Ms. Woosley agreed.

Chairman Pelaez observed that the data-informed decisions to be made would be guided by accurate data. He noted digital divide challenges for targeted local communities and that the creation of a website resource page would not be the best next step. He observed the need for robust engagement to meet residents where they were in order to expose them to available resources. He stressed the importance of listening to the suggestions of residents.

3. **Staff briefing on the Open Checkbook effort.** [Troy Elliott, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Finance Department]

Troy Elliott stated that the City's Open Checkbook was an online system that consisted of spreadsheet data for FY 2014 to the present. He added that the data was only viewable by selecting only one fiscal year at a time, and then the month. He noted that the display of some payment methods could subject the City or its vendors vulnerable to fraud.

Mr. Elliott announced the deployment of a new Open Checkbook system. He stated that the City's Open Checkbook system would be added to the registry of OpenGov which would allow more visibility, accessibility and additional filtering options so that the public could easily search for the data they needed.

Mr. Elliott reported that the consumable Checkbook Data would allow for searching by specific time frame, and service and vendor type. He noted that payment information that could leave the payee or the City vulnerable to fraud would be redacted. He added that a comprehensive list of service types would be enabled in a user-friendly format. He noted that all data categories would be filterable, searchable and downloadable.

Mr. Elliott stated that the new Checkbook Data application would enable users to create and view the City's spending trends in a presentation-ready visual graphic chart. He added that users could access and download additional supporting documents.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested that the service category be expanded to allow for more description. Mr. Elliott agreed.

Councilmember Perry asked if all data categories would expand and provide further support documentation when clicked on. Mr. Elliott stated that staff would finalize the application design for optimum flexibility. He stated that the new Checkbook Data application would be deployed in mid-September or October 2020.

Councilmember Perry asked how the public could access the information not readily available on the current system. He requested information on the in-house cost to launch the new Checkbook Data application. Mr. Elliott replied that users who requested information not available on the current spreadsheet data posted online could obtain them through an Open Records Request. Mr. Elliott noted that no expense was incurred in acquiring the Checkbook Data application because it included in the OpenGov module the City already owned. He added that he would provide additional in-house cost information.

Chairman Pelaez stated that the launch of the new Checkbook Data application was another way the City could offer the public transparent access to financial data in a user-friendly format.

**Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

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*Manny Peláez, Chairman*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

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*Nancy Cano*
*Office of the City Clerk*