

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Strategy Session on Monday, April 6, 2020 at 5:04 p.m. in Room CH-14 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, James Mitchell, Matt Newton, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston II.

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**Mayor Lyles** said tonight's Strategy Meeting is being held as a virtual meeting and it is being done in accordance with the Electronic Meeting Statute. The requirements of notice, access, and minutes are being met through electronic means. The public and the media are able to view this meeting on the Government Channel, the City's Facebook page, on the City's YouTube page. Going forward, next Monday, we will have our April 13<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting which will be held at 6:30 p.m. and that will also be a virtual meeting. The public and the media can view the meeting in the same methods, the Government Channel, the City's Facebook page, or on the City's YouTube page. Members of the public who wish to comment on the items that will be on the April 13<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting Agenda should e-mail their comments to the City Clerk at [cityclerk@charlottenc.gov](mailto:cityclerk@charlottenc.gov) by 9:00 a.m. Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. I don't think that is going to work because the agenda goes out on Thursday. I want to correct that, we will change that time and just the comments because the Agenda for the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting will go out tomorrow. If you are a member of the public or a resident, you will be able to find that agenda on our website by Wednesday and if you have comments you can e-mail those to the City Clerk at her e-mail address [cityclerk@charlottenc.gov](mailto:cityclerk@charlottenc.gov) by Thursday at 9:00 a.m. We are asking you to limit those comments to 375 words and those comments will be sent to the Charlotte City Councilmembers as well as included in the record of the meeting.

Before we start, I think it would be only appropriate that we take a moment to thank the people that have been with us for the last two weeks as we've gone through this declaration of stay at home. I want to particularly thank our health care workers, our Police, Fire, Solid Waste, and all essential workers that have been taking us through and helping us maintain the services of this community as well as holding up this community for the last two weeks. All of us have been watching the updates that occur on a regular basis and hearing a lot about this, but you know sometimes that is just noise in the background and we have to remember that what we are doing here right now is a civil responsibility to try to maintain the safety and wellness of our own community and our City. We watch this as others all across this country are experiencing the difficult times that we are facing. I want to say thanks to those who help make it possible for us to be responsible to each other. We are doing all that we can, but I know that coming up is Passover and Easter and at those times when all of us are having services around our faith or our religion and those that just really want to be a part of what I see as a beautiful Charlotte spring. I want to remind everyone to practice social distancing. That has been proven to be the most effective way to flatten the curve of this really dangerous virus.

I want to say to the 600 residents plus that have contracted this virus in our City that we wish you well and a full recovery. To those four people who lost their lives to this virus that live in our county, to their families and their friends we mourn with you. We are in this together as a city, as a county, as a country and we can make a difference. I want to say thank you to the residents, I want to say thank you particularly to our City Councilmembers who understand how difficult this can be and that is why we are having a virtual meeting tonight. We believe that by doing these kinds of things to make a difference that we will all be better off in the end.

With that, I would like to recognize the City Manager who will review this evening's agenda, and then we will proceed with our presentation.

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said tonight we will do a follow-up since you last met on March 15<sup>th</sup>. I appreciate your willingness to allow some agenda items that would have

been on the last meeting of the month of March to move up so that you could allow us to continue to keep the government operating.

#### **ITEM NO.1: COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE**

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said tonight what we really want to do is start off with having the Chiefs talk about the Emergency Operations Center and I have to mention that during the Retreat, it was very interesting that Councilmember Graham really wanted us to focus on Emergency Management and even before this crisis we had a briefing on Emergency Management Operations. All I can say is that I'm not only just proud of what is happening at Emergency Management but what is happening through the City. I echo what the Mayor said, it is not just CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department) and Fire, but it is Solid Waste, CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System), Transportation and Water and everybody that is in operations. It is a time for us to lock arms and work together and not just the City, but the City and the County, and the Towns. I really believe we are working well together. The Chiefs tonight will set a framework of how the Emergency Operations Center functions and I think that would be a great opportunity for Council to get insight. After that we will have Chief Putney and I believe Chief Estes maybe, here tonight also, to talk enforcement. As you know with the declaration comes enforcement and that is something that we would like to be able to talk with Council about tonight.

Then the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, that is something that many of you have spoken with me over the past few days to see if you could get an update. So, we are going to have Ryan Bergmann, Budget Director, give us an overview of what the City expects to receive in terms of the stimulus package. We will also have Pam Wideman talk about specifically some funds related to ESG (Emergency Solution Grant) and funds related to CDBG (Community Development Block Grant). Then Kelly Flannery and Tracy Dodson will talk about the stimulus funds that are available to people. There are a lot of questions we had, how does this work, when does the spigot turn on so, we believe we have a good line up to go over the stimulus package in detail.

The Mayor mentioned the April 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting so, on the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting what we would like to provide for Council is an update, not only on the FY20 budget but a little bit of insight into some of our challenges with the FY21 budget and what are some expectations with that. I do want to thank the Council because we've been trying to provide platforms to you to push information out and because of the Mayor and the Council and your ability to have such a strong outreach, we believe the word is getting out. We appreciate all that you are doing.

**Mayor Lyles** said we are going to start with Chief Johnson; thank you for what you've been doing at the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) and we will go ahead and begin unless there are questions from the Council. It is kind of difficult because I don't get a chance to see you all. Are there any questions before we start the meeting?

**Chief Johnson, Charlotte Fire Department** said I will do a brief review of the timeline and then talk about how the EOC is structured currently, then I'm going to allow Chief Bonham and Chief Graham to fill in any gaps that I may leave.

I would like to start off being a little bit repetitive, but I would like to thank all the first responders, Charlotte Mecklenburg Emergency Management Office, all of central and support personnel, not only for the City but for the County and the Towns. It is an extraordinary event and we've had a lot of people step up and do good work during this time period. As you may remember, March 12<sup>th</sup> we did open up the Emergency Operations Center, it was a soft opening really trying to determine exactly what we were dealing with and to what scope we would have to expand the Emergency Operations Center. We did a state of emergency declared here on March 13<sup>th</sup> and we opened up the EOC fully on March 16<sup>th</sup>. It runs 12 hours, 8:00 to 8:00 seven days a week. We are fully staffed with members from departments from the City, the County, the Towns, we

have CMS. We have a number of volunteer organizations in there as well as representatives from Atrium and Novant.

The EOC is comprised of a structure that starts off with the Incident Commander who is Gibbie Harris, the Public Health Director; she is our Incident Commander. We are here to support her and the County in their decisions. The Policy Group is made up of the City Manager, County Manager as well as the Town Managers. There are some City Directors in there as well as subject matter experts such as Atrium and Novant are in there just for their subject matter expert, and not necessarily in a decision-making role. The Emergency Center Operations Managers, Deputy Chief Cindy Bonham is actually the Director of Charlotte Mecklenburg Emergency Management Office and Battalion Chief Wyatt Graham is the Deputy Director and he does the day to day operations. These two have been doing an outstanding job. I would like to thank them publicly for the work that they've been doing to make sure that the EOC is operating and believe me when I say Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte are well ahead of many other cities and counties within the state and I can brag on that.

We do have a Joint Information Center which is comprised again of City/County and hospital PIO's (Public Information Officer) which makes sure that we have one message going out and that is very important in these types of events is that we have one message and not sporadic or broken messages. They have done an outstanding job trying to share information about the stay at home, how do you protect yourself and just making sure we are ahead of the curve answering some of the reporter's questions, some public questions, and things of that nature. They work Monday through Friday as well at the EOC and then they go virtual on the weekends, but still working diligently.

Our operations section is made of Emergency Services Branch which includes City and County Fire, all law enforcement, which includes CMPD and the Towns as well as medic for EMS (Emergency Medical Service). Our Human Services Branch, which is probably one of the busiest if not the second busiest, which includes public health coordination, our volunteers, Assisting and Disaster, which is a big component for CLT (Charlotte Douglas International Airport) representative, Rob Kelly I believe is his name, has been very instrumental there. We have the hospitals, we have childcare for first responders and hospital personnel, and we are now starting to expand that to other essential personnel. As you know with schools being closed it is tough for come childcare to be available to these employees and we've opened that up and that has been a huge success. Logistics is obviously, one of the biggest components, the most important component. Anybody that is running emergency knows that you can't do anything without proper equipment and so that section is very important, and it has been running well.

Finance and Admin Section has been set up; as Chief Graham reminds me, one of the biggest things is to talk about recovery. Our response is going to be expensive, not only in staff and overtime hours, but obviously, the supplies we talk about, and a lot of the initiatives that we need to get done. We need to make sure that we are properly documenting all of that so that we can get all the money that we can recover back from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and the state. There is some good coordination going on there. The Planning section, which is one of the other big parts, between Planning and Human Services, really is a key component to what we are doing. Every day they are working on an IAT (Incident and Action) plan which runs for three days, but they are also doing contingency planning. As negative as it may sound, we need to have plans, morgue plans, we need to have mass care plans, we need to have contingency planning. That is where a lot of your coups come into play. We also need situational awareness since we have situation units there. Long-term plans and demobilization which is what you start working on in the beginning, but really at some point we need to start demobilizing a lot of our assets.

At any given time, we could have up to 100 people working in the EOC and that would include people staffing the volunteer hotline, also staffing the stay at home call center which I have to really thank the 311 staff for stepping up and really filling that gap. I think that is really assisted in this transition with the stay at home. We have the VoAd or

Volunteers Assistance in Disasters. They have a single point of contact for donated items, which is another component of a disaster that you definitely don't want to lose track of so, we have gotten that assistance there.

I have already mentioned the childcare so, I will give you some of the numbers that we have as of 4:00 so, we have 739 positive cases as of 4:00 this evening. At this point, I'm going to stop my presentation and Chief Bonham, if you anything that you would like to add to that, then we will be here for questions.

**Chief Bonham, Charlotte Fire Department** said I would just like to say it has been an honor to work with Chief Graham and Chief Johnson. We are texting each other almost 24-hours a day, in fact, today started at 5:30 a.m. Also, I just want to brag on the City and the County, this Policy Group that has been put together is so far ahead of some other counties we have heard from. We have heard from some counties where the towns just go off and do their own thing and they are not really collaborating and from the very, very beginning we have established a group with the City and County Managers and all of the Town Managers, and we actually do roll call where everyone agrees on the decisions being made. So, true collaborations in the City and the County and the collaboration in the EOC with all the different agencies and everything working has been outstanding. I'm very proud to be a part of this effort. We have some tough roads ahead, we know that it is not always going to be easy, but we are going to get through this and come out on the other end I feel like very successful.

**Chief Graham, Charlotte Fire Department** said a couple of things I want to make sure we cover tonight. We have an amazing team, but we are not done yet. We may be just entering into the event so often and may go on for some time. The curve as we talk about it, is a speculation because it hasn't happened yet so, think of it in terms of a hurricane. When you work in the EOC nobody knows the difference between the County and the City. I want to make that clear so, this morning at I think it was 5:28, I sent a text to Chief Johnson and Chief Bonham, Ms. Diorio, the County Manager, and the Health Director. The Health Director sits next to me every single day and we've been together for I think like a month or something like that. A long time. There are no real days off, not just for us, but for our Firefighters on the street, the Police Officers on the street, the Medic Crews on the street, the City and County workers are providing services. We fully understand what they are going through. It is important to understand if you think of the virus in terms of a fire and the restrictions that we put in place and the measures that we are taking for firetrucks. We are going to continue to send firetrucks to the fire until the fire is out. That is where we are at. Long-term recovery efforts and Mr. Jones and the Mayor talking about those are important and they begin now, but we also have an issue as we let those restrictions up, we don't know what is going to occur in our communities. So, working with the hospitals is key to that as you are well aware, we've been involved in some efforts to up the amount of beds that are available for Atrium and Novant and they are working very closely. We talk to them three or four times a day and probably talk to the state seven or eight times a day, including Director Sprayberry. We are on the phone until 11:00 p.m. and back on the phone at 5:30 or 6:00 in the morning. That is the world that we are living in. I think there are about 170 folks that have either worked in the EOC or worked around the EOC or working virtually.

I will tell you one of the challenges for us is the social distancing because we've taken over the Academy and we do everything we can to socially distance, but the work still has to be done. As we see tonight operating in a virtual world is not always the best-case scenario for us to get communication done because there is a lot that goes on in terms of interpersonal communications in our expressions. That needs to be communicated across the board. Everybody is in it together and it is one fight. What I would ask of our Council and our leadership is to constantly send the message that if you don't need to be out, you need to home. You need to ask yourself why are you out of your house? We've got to get a hold of this and as we all came to work this morning and got on the roads you are thinking in the back of your head, where are the people going and how are they all essential. We did have an issue that we are working with the State Department of Revenue, businesses were sending information in to ask if they could continue to operate and the state stay at home order is different than ours

because it states if you can maintain social distancing you can stay at home. Businesses were relying upon that to remain open. We think we've got that fixed today and we sent messages to the state and the state sent messages to the Department of Revenue to not issue those any further to Mecklenburg County. We are waiting to hear if that was completed or not, but that is a big part of it. I know our Councilmembers have been busy at home doing things and working on messaging. I think I even some karaoke going on so, that is good, and we need to continue doing that. I've seen some radio shows or podcasts that are out there talking about what we do, but the City is a huge part of this and Emergency Management, as we all know, falls to the City, but it is a function of the County. Mr. Jones is on a phone call every morning with the other City and County Managers and they have an open discussion and they rely upon subject matter experts from Emergency Management, Chief Estes with CMPD, our hospitals, our Sheriff is on there, our Superintendent of Schools and they are on there every single day and they are having these conversations. I said it this morning, this is slightly different than a tornado where Emergency Management has to make the calls right then to do certain things. We have time to talk about the actions that we are going to take and the implications. We understand where we are, but we have to continue down that road because it is not going to be over until we can stop the virus.

**Councilmember Winston** said first I have a question for Chief Johnson; what do you mean by needing to demobilize our assets? What is the impact on whatever that meant?

Chief Johnson said demobilization is just part of an activation so, we would be, for example, if we had 100 people in the Emergency Operations Center, part of that demobilization plan would be to send those people back to their normal day to day work. It is demobilizing resources such as personnel or anything else that we may have deployed out into the field.

Mr. Winston said Mr. Jones, from a City operations perspective, how do we discern when we have to send information, questions, and actions up through the EOC for guidance versus making our own determinations and taking our own actions?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Winston; what we are trying to do is to make sure that things are running through the EOC, much like 311. Because we can capture data with 311, it is much better when a constituent is making a request through 311 so, as we run information up through the EOC that data is captured, and we have that for decision making.

Mr. Winston said I'm not just speaking Emergency Services and the work of Fire and CMPD. While we have an emergency response, we also have a day to day business of the City while both are taken from limited resources. Are we able to kind of create a line where we don't have to go through there to kind of deal with responsibilities of the City amongst ourselves or is literally everything going through the EOC?

Mr. Jones said if the question is just the day to day operations of the City, you would channel those through me so, not everything is going through the EOC, just operations of the City would be no different than any other day and those would come through me.

**Councilmember Newton** said Chief Johnson; thank you for that report. You mention the number of cases; do we know how that has increased over time and do we have a number for how many folks we've lost to date?

Chief Johnson said there is modeling going on; typically, the hospitals are doing that modeling. If you are talking about the number of fatalities in the county, the number is six, and I believe they were investigating a possible seventh that has yet to be determined.

Mr. Newton said thank you for that information. I also wanted to ask you about our childcare services. When you had mentioned childcare being provided, are you talking

about our EOC folks or grander for our first responders and I guess more to the point and specifically what is our childcare policy for city employees?

Chief Johnson said I will answer the first question. Our childcare initially started off for first responders and medical personnel. We have to thank the County Parks and Recs personnel for stepping up and providing that as well as the YMCA. We had an anonymous donor that donated some funds, so the YMCAs were stepping up and doing first responders as well as medical personnel at the hospitals. We took some time to review that information that we received as far as the capacity goes, and we were able to expand that to other essential personnel that aren't first responders for the City, County, and the Towns. For example, Solid Waste, Charlotte Water, Transportation, CATS, the personnel that still has to work every day, we expect as the central services, they are going to be included in that going forward as long as we have the capacity to do so. I think Chief Graham wanted to comment a little bit more about the numbers or the modeling.

Chief Graham said today was the highest days we've had; the Medical Director told us that as we were walking out the door. She wanted to make sure that was kind of pushed forward. The second part of that is, numbers over the weekend, Saturday and Sunday, are not as accurate as they are during the week. As we've gone through this, we've seen a pretty large spike every Monday so, that might be indicative of some numbers over the weekend.

Mr. Newton said I'm happy to hear, so thank you for the information pertaining to childcare services. I'm thrilled to hear that we are extending the scope of those services to include our Solid Waste Services employees, our transit employees. Can you keep us posted on that Chief Johnson; or maybe Mr. Manager, so wherever we might have gaps? You said so long as we can provide that; will you keep us posted were any gaps or shortcomings in providing that service when and where they occur?

Mr. Jones said sure, we can do that Mr. Newton. I believe that HR (Human Resources) sent out the survey last week for the other city employees and they have been populating that daily.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I have a question about the hospitals. What information do we have about the current status of capacity at the hospitals and what is being done to absorb the surge that is still expected? Are they right now anticipating that they will be able to deal with the cases that come up?

Chief Johnson said I don't want to speak for Atrium and Novant, but I know for a fact that they are trying to reduce the number of patients at the hospitals with no elective surgeries and things of that nature to build capacity in as well as they have a surge plan that allows them to expand additional beds within their brick and mortar facilities.

Mr. Driggs said thank you. My other question was facemasks; they have been suggesting that facemasks might actually become a requirement, so do we have a sufficient supply of facemasks? Is there any likelihood that the City or the County will change its guidance on who should be wearing them?

Chief Johnson said we do realize that the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) did make a recommendation a day or two ago on that, and we spoke with Ms. Harris today about that. She is going to be evaluating that. There are studies out there that show that it doesn't necessarily provide the protection that some people may think. Once she makes a decision on that we will move forward with what we can with regards to that.

Mr. Driggs said okay, thank you.

**Councilmember Egleston** said good timing on the hospital question from Mr. Driggs. I did have a question, I think it is EOC and if it is something we will cover later just say so, but with the capacity issues of the hospital and trying to minimize the people coming into the facilities right now that are not Covid-19 related issues, I've heard some

anecdotal stores of difficulties that our Police Department is having in terms of when they encounter someone or come up to a call for someone who is having a mental health crisis in certain circumstances in the past they would have likely taken some of these folks, if needed, to hospitals, but now are unable to do so in some instances. Have we identified a specific place that Police Offices can go if they need to take someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis or do we have Tele help health options for some of these folks? What have we, or have we at all, come up with a solution there so our Police Officers are just kind of leave the scene without providing some sort of medical connection that person might need?

Chief Johnson said I personally have not heard of that particular issue. I don't know if you've heard that.

Chief Graham said one thing to remember is as we go through this, those policies and procedures are changing about every day. Because we have CMPD is in the EOC all the time they are working with our safety folks and their safety folks and they are communicating with Gibbie Harris, our Health Director, so I don't want to say they are doing one thing because they may have changed today. That would probably be a question for Chief Estes as to what their current policy and procedures are.

Mayor Lyles said Chief Estes will be coming in with Chief Putney, so do you want to come back to that?

Mr. Egleston said sure.

Chief Johnson said if I could just add one thing to that; Chief Graham made a good point, so we had CMPD and the EOC and we have DSS (Department of Social Services) and other County Departments in the EOC, so that is where those types of things get worked out, but hopefully, Chief Putney can provide the answer.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said Chief Johnson; for the 311 capacity; I know we have seen our call volume go up, what has been changing to address the additional call volume we are seeing?

Chief Johnson said I can't necessarily address 311; I think Ms. Wideman is coming a little later on and can answer that question. The Call Center that I was referring to was the Stay at Home Call Center that we set up right at the time the stay at home order was issued for the County. That was really just to provide an avenue for businesses and citizens to ask questions and get some clarification on that. 311 was able to provide us some personnel, very thankful for that to actually assist with the State at Home Call Center.

Ms. Ajmera said so, to follow-up on that have we seen a timely response to the calls we are seeing? I know we have gotten several e-mails that I shared about how folks are unable to get to talk to someone.

Chief Johnson said I would say early on the call volume was probably quite high and we started off with 10 lines and went to 20 lines the next day because the phones just constantly rang. I think that call volume has slowed, and we've been able to manage the call volume at the Stay at Home Call Center.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you Chief Johnson. The second question I have, this might be for Mr. Manager. What is the policy for our employees if they want to request a leave because of doctor's notes? What is the policy for leave for those employees?

Mr. Jones said for the most part what we are doing is making sure that if an employee feels that he or she is unable to come to work, the Director or the Supervisor is honoring that, and what we are trying to do first and foremost is to keep our employees safe and to keep them healthy. You may recall on that March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting the Emergency Family Leave that was approved, that can be used as it relates to Covid-19. I know you had a specific request that came in last week and we have since addressed that request.

**Councilmember Johnson** said do we have an estimated date that we are expecting the surge in Mecklenburg County, and if so, are there going to be special or increased enforcement or advisement for those dates? Also, if you know this information, is there a resource or a map where individuals or all of us can follow when these surges are expected throughout the nation?

Chief Johnson said what we've even learned today is that the modeling changes daily, if not by the hour and it really just depends on the numbers. I believe we originally had a surge date expected in mid-April and I think with our aggressive stay at home order and people trying to do social distancing, that has been pushed back. But again, that could change like I said by the day. As far as messaging goes we are going to have the same message today that we did when we had the stay at home order, which is if you are not essential you should stay home and only venture out if you have essential work to do or you need to get groceries, good or a doctor's appointment, things of that nature. That is going to be our message going forward. I'm not sure if I answered all of your questions.

Mayor Lyles said I think it was a national map where surges are occurring?

Chief Johnson said I'm not sure about that. I know that the state offers on their website, I believe some information on surges just for the state itself. There is some other information at the state websites too I believe.

Mr. Winston said what is the EOC's update on their guidance for how to deal with homeless populations, specifically homeless encampments?

Chief Johnson said I'll give you a little history on some of the efforts that the EOC has done in coordination with the County. Obviously, social distancing is important at our homeless shelters just because of the mere fact that we don't want the virus to get into any of those facilities. The County has made great strides and leased a hotel room for the homeless population so that we can increase social distancing. We have at least 142 personnel in that hotel, realizing that there is still a shortage of sheltering and we are reaching out to our faith-based organizations to see if they can help us with a room at the inn style assistance. The camps themselves really don't meet what you would require at that level, which includes security, the ability to feed them, and have social services just because it is an environment that you can't control. That is why the room in the inn style of assistance is preferred.

Mr. Winston said [inaudible] as preferred, but there are still tent camps. You go through North College Street right now, behind the Urban Ministries, the tents are pretty tightly together. I know that we have been doing actions in the past couple weeks of clearing tent camps and that is part [inaudible] for that kind of grouping together. Have we changed our guidance on what we are supposed to be doing as it relates to tearing down tent camps or anything like that?

Chief Johnson said let's talk a little bit about the CDC recommendation for such camps, is not to break the camps up, only because then what you will do is you will start to spread the possibility of persons that we don't have true test into the community. Now we could talk about personal property, which I think is a little bit different. If an encampment is on personal property, and I don't want to speak for Chief Putney, he will be in here in a little bit and can speak to this, but if it is on personal property and the property owner does not want the camp on their property, then law enforcement will have to be contacted. That is not an EOC stance on that.

Mr. Winston said that is what I'm asking; what is the EOC stance on breaking up homeless camps regardless of the property?

Chief Johnson said that is a law enforcement requirement; that is why I'm saying the EOC doesn't necessarily have a stance on it.



Mr. Jones said Mr. Winston; one of the things I would like to do is help address that question after Chief Putney comes in and talks a little bit about enforcement, but also Pam Wideman is going to come in and talk a bit about federal stimulus funds that are specifically earmarked for the homeless population. I would like to get the full conversation going to answer your question.

Mr. Winston said okay, also a question for the EOC; is there any update on implementing and systemic testing for city workers and other frontline workers? Can you give an update on the acquisition of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) for our workers?

Chief Johnson said as far as the systemic testing we would have to get back to you on that. I'm not sure where we are with that. Chief Graham; do you have something on that?

Chief Graham said yes sir; one thing to remember with the testing is you can test negative today and test positive tomorrow. So, while we want to see testing on a larger scale that is just to give us an indication of what the overall problem is in our community. It has its own challenges; they are also looking at new testing procedures and Gibbie Harris is our lead for kind of giving us guidance as we go down that road.

Chief Johnson said as far as answering your question about PPE, we are in the competition just like every other county and state and even against the federal government when it comes to acquiring PPE. One of the things we did set up which is the VoAd donation coordinator, single point source for donations and we have a number of organizations that want to donate PPE so, our goal is to coordinate those donations and make sure that we are matching that or cross walking that with our list from logistics and filling PPE as we can.

Chief Bonham said Mr. Winston; also, there is a streamlined process. I think you mentioned the first responders, so any frontline personnel that we suspect may have contracted this we do have a streamlined process in place where they can get a test and get the results back as quickly as possible.

Mr. Newton said our homeless population is a very vulnerable population susceptible to infection and the spread of this. They don't have homes to go back to; we know that under the stay at home order, so I really appreciate this conversation about the homeless. Having said that, Mr. Manager; you said we are exploring federal stimulus funds for our homeless? Did I hear that right and are those our funds or are we talking about funds that the County is receiving?

Mr. Jones said those would be our funds, so Mr. Newton as we talk about the stimulus package there are two buckets of money that will come directly to the City. One is our CDBG funds that will be \$3.5 million as a part of this package that comes to the City in any one given year. That is specific for a response to the Covid-19. Any given year we are close to about \$6 million so, that is a big influx of CDBG funds. Also, there is the Emergency Solutions Grant which typically, we get a half-million dollars and that is specifically for homelessness and as far as this package is concerned, a week ago we thought we were going to get another \$3.5 million, however, the HUD (Housing and Urban Development) secretary has decided to change the formula a little bit. We will still get \$1.75 million and that would be specifically to address homelessness and Pam will talk about that when she gets into the room.

Mr. Newton said that it is fantastic; it is not good that we've gotten reduced funds, but it is fantastic that the funds exist. I had another question so that was building upon the conversation we were just having, but we do know that we've experienced challenges with obtaining PPE for all of our City employees. I've had a number of City employees reach out to me, asking why they are not allowed to wear their own PPE. I was hoping someone could comment on whether or not we are at a place now where our employees, to make sure that we are keeping them safe, keeping them healthy, maintaining their well being. Are we at a place now where they are allowed to wear their

own PPE if we are unable to provide it to them? I've also heard a suggestion that that is not acceptable if our CATS or City Logo was on that PPE. Once again, I think their health and wellbeing are taken to be our number one priority and I want to see if there is any comment on that. Are they able to wear their own and do we have restrictions on their ability to wear their own if there is a logo, especially in a time like this where protection is paramount?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Newton; I just confirmed from our HR Director that the employees are allowed to wear their own.

Mr. Newton said besides any logo being on it, that is limited in nature and if they don't have any other options, I think we should encourage them to wear whatever they are able to wear. I think the ramifications from the standpoint of employees being scared to show up for work if they don't have the proper protection and option of not having to pay additional overtime as well. This is much more comprehensive, but first and foremost, it is their health, wellbeing, and safety that is important, and we need to prioritize as number one.

Chief Johnson said if I could just comment; I'm not going to comment on the logo, but I will comment on employees being able to wear whatever type of mask they want only, because there are certain masks like your N-95. I know we've heard that quite a bit over the past month or so. Those require fit testing and we as an employer have to make sure that the employee is properly fit tested or that is a violation of OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration). Those are some of the things we've talked about I know as Directors to try to make sure that we are getting the appropriate PPE for them. Again, I mention the single source, volunteers, I know what that we are out trying to purchase PPE. I can tell you at a state-level Chief Graham and Chief Bonham can jump in here if they want, but at the state level, the focus right now is on first responders and hospital workers. Our goal is to try to use the donated PPE to address any gaps that we may have for City, Towns, and County essential works that don't fall into that category.

Chief Graham said I want to make sure you understand it is acute care workers in particular, and then our first responders are running EMS. The federal government has depleted the supply chain is broken for personal protective equipment. The state is struggling to get additional personal protective equipment and any large quantities or even small quantities. It will get fixed, but this time we are even having to tell law enforcement that we have very limited supplies and some of the procedures that we would normally, what they call burn rate on PPE, burn through a much larger amount because those are standard operating guidelines. We've had to change those in order to minimize the impact on a PPE. It will get better, and we are seeing that day today, but it is a problem. It is not a problem that is unique to Charlotte or Mecklenburg County, it is a problem across the nation.

Mr. Newton said I think it is important that we expand our [inaudible] or procurement. We have community organizations that are making a mask. I'm working with John Lewis right now and reaching out to those organizations. I think we need to continue to do that. We have these shortfalls in keeping PPEs for our own employees and if our employees are not receiving the PPE or we are unable to provide for them, I think it is really important that they know that they can protect themselves and they can protect themselves without limitation. I would like to hear an update on that in the future, but I think what you are telling me Mr. Manager; is that they can do that right now?

Mr. Jones said that is correct.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton if you have any specific examples that the Manager needs to address would you just e-mail those to him so that we can make sure that people; sometimes the memo goes out, but not everybody gets to read it. We don't want to have any misperceptions about their ability to wear personal equipment.

Mr. Egleston said just one other question and if I missed this I apologize, but has there been any discussion around the hotels that are being rented by the County or with what

we have discussed setting up at UNC-Charlotte? If we've got first responders in particular, but I would also maybe lump in transit drivers, things of that nature that have concerns around if they come into contact with someone who tests positive for the virus or if they have concerns and they've got someone who is suppressed at their home, and if they are going to be an essential worker and going to be out in the field and potentially exposed to this, need to be able to isolate themselves from their family or someone in their home, do we have any strategies or ideas for how to get them temporary housing?

Chief Johnson said I'll let Chief Graham answer this in more detail, but I believe the County has set up the possibility of hotels for that purpose. I'm not sure if you want to go into detail.

Chief Graham said I don't want to go into too much detail for security reasons, but I do want to thank our great County Manager for setting that up early. She has a very good plan in place and the EOC staff are aware of that plan as we get the cases to come in where we have a worker that has an issue, we are able to handle it accordingly through that.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said I wondered if we are getting into this later, but if the EOC has information on how with regards to masks and whatnot, how that has been working on our buses? I still get some worries about drivers that feel that they are not distanced far enough from people riding the bus. Are they all coming in the back of the bus, does every bus have a back entrance and if they do can they not block off the first couple seats so that passengers cannot get that close to the driver?

Mr. Jones said Ms. Eiselt; yes, we are blocking off those first couple rows of seats. In terms of coming in through the back entrance, our buses are maybe a bit different than maybe some of the other buses in cities that do allow that. What occurs for the vast majority of our buses is that the way that rear door opens is to someone pulling the rope on the inside. So, if we were just going up to a bus stop, trying to have someone come into that back entrance, they would have to open the doors themselves and that becomes very complicated. What we are doing is when we start to think about social distancing, we went to the Saturday route for each day, with the exception of Sunday, and we noticed that when we noticed some crowding at certain stops, we would send a bus behind a bus. It is really two pieces, yes, we are trying to protect the drivers with gloves, and with hand sanitizers, but coming in through that back entrance really becomes more of an additional safety concern, even for the potential rider.

Ms. Eiselt said thank you Mr. Manager. Just a second part of that question with regards to the discussion on masks; one thing I've been wondering, the CDC says it is probably better to wear masks, but no-one has ever said that they are really effective. They are not going to hurt, and they would help with somebody who is infected wearing the masks. I get a little bit concerned that there is this false sense of security when people wear their own masks. Are we really clear about that, especially for our bus drivers and our officers or anybody that when they wear a mask that doesn't necessarily mean they are going to be safe? Everybody is out there now sewing masks, donating them and we really don't know what the advocacy is. I don't know, I just have some concerns that we are giving this sort of false hope that mask is going to allow you to get on the bus, get near people or whatever it is.

Chief Johnson said I would agree with that 100% and I think that is part of the education that we need to have with our employees and just exactly what type of mask has been official for the purposes you are talking about to protect the employee versus actually protect other people from you. That is kind of what the CDC just recommended the other day.

Ms.. Johnson said we all seem to have quite a few questions regarding the CATS drivers because we are receiving dozens of e-mails from the drivers and their families with expressed concerns. Is there a strategy or a plan of making modifications if we are not able to get the PPE for the bus drivers, or how we are protecting them? I know that we've had numerous conversations offline but are these communicated to the drivers

and to the public, such as the back door. We thought for a while that individuals were going through the back door so, how are we keeping the public advised of what these changes are? For example, if someone is sick or getting these systems when they are on the bus, do the bus drivers have the ability to let someone off, or are we publicizing what is being done for our bus drivers because there is a lot of concerns surrounding that right now?

Mr. Jones said Ms. Johnson; I join you in that concern, not just for the bus drivers, but for all our employees, how we can keep them safe. Some of the things that we did do is when we went to this reduced route, we stopped collecting a fare. By stop collecting a fare that limited the interaction between the driver and the rider. We did explore that rear door entry, but as I explained earlier that didn't work well. We are continuing to look for protective gear for all of our employees, including the CATS drivers and that is where we are. We are, I don't think much different from cities across the country in trying to get the mask and we are going to continue to push hard to get them for our employees.

Mayor Lyles said last week I talked about this. I had this twitter account and I saw the media reporting on it, but at the end of all of my conversation about how do we protect our bus drivers, I said this is a national issue. I've talked to Mayor's across the country and across the state; we are in the same situation that they are in with the same questions and concerns and at some point, I just wonder will there ever be guidance on what we should be able to do and expect. Sometimes I think about this; we see what we are dealing with every day, but if we look across the country, you've seen subways, you've seen the rail across other cities and you've seen the buses and we need guidance as much as we can, just like we are following the guidance of the CDC. That would be very helpful, but unfortunately, we don't have that yet.

Mr. Winston said this is for the Chiefs; are you watching these funds go on a Legislative Agenda that we were never able to present for those that don't know there are federal funds that help us in our Area Disaster Relief that extends outside of Mecklenburg County and we were denied those funds by the federal government, kind of to our surprise, I think it was last year. Is there any noticeable shortcoming in the EOC regarding the lack of those funds during this crisis? How does our position extend outside of Mecklenburg County in terms of our emergency response?

Chief Graham said, first of all, I think I was with Mr. Jones when I found out that you guys were coming back and not able to hold your session, in particular, UASI (Urban Areas Security Initiative) because I was very much looking forward to your discussions in DC and following what you were doing up there. Thank you for what you were able to accomplish and representing our great City and County. The UASI Funds, because they are tied to terrorism there are always things because we look at all hazards approach, so when we buy major capital improvements with UASI funds they are able to help us in our other disasters and that is across the board regardless of where we get those funds from. We are pretty early into this, so I can't say one way or another whether we will not benefit from those funds, in regard to this event. What I will say there is a new Emergency Operations Center under construction and UASI funds that we did receive are part of those construction costs. We are very grateful to have those, and Mr. Jones and the City were able to come up with the actual construction costs and a UASI Grant will pay for the technology of the retrofit. It is about \$1.6 million upgrade, so sometime in June we will transition from our current Emergency Operation Center to the new Emergency Operations Center and when we do, we think, as far as technology goes and situation awareness, see a huge uptick in what we are able to do. So, thank you for what the Council has done in terms of UASI and keep digging because the fight is not over. We need those funds back, it is a huge benefit to the City and to the County.

Mr. Newton said I do have a few more questions; the first one is regarding our Sanitation Workers, are they on an AB schedule and seeing as how we will be more [inaudible] employed the one-arm bandit and seeing if we haven't, we are going to be switching to an AB schedule for our Sanitation Workers?

Mr. Jones yes, Mr. Newton; when we talk about the AB schedule the concept is trying to keep our employee's health and safety. So, what we did is one set of employees, whether it is Solid Waste or CATS, would work one week while another set of employees would stay home. Then the following week the set of employees who are at home would come to work and the folks that worked the previous week would stay home and stay healthy. Because as we've talked about most of this evening, this concept of the surge and having a healthy workforce. When we move to the one-arm bandit, so, in other words, to continue to keep our employees safe we move to a truck that is one person in the truck that picks up the trash and dumps it. So, you don't need two or three people on the truck. What has occurred is, in moving to that, not everybody in Solid Waste has a commercial driver's license. So, for a period of time, we went from this AB shift, we have to step away from it for a short period of time to get those individuals who do not have a CDL to get a CDL license. It is a big benefit and a bonus for those individuals to get the CDL and once we do that, we can transition back to AB schedule, but remember the most important thing we are trying to do is keep our employees healthy and safe and having three people on a truck was not where we thought was the best thing to do.

Mr. Newton said that is my concern as well. Do we have a timeframe for how long that will take for us to get back to the AB schedule? I wonder right now the ability for folks to get the CDL might be a bit channeling under the circumstances.

Mr. Jones said I don't disagree with you, but we are trying to accelerate that for those employees, and I will say that the alternative would be to have multiple people on a truck, and I don't think that is where you would like us to be right now.

Mr. Newton said no, and given consideration to our DOT (Department of Transportation) folks, have we given consideration to FEMA reimbursement? It is my understanding that FEMA will reimburse up to 75% of expenses that are Covid-19 related. Is that on our radar?

Chief Johnson said yes, we do have the finance section that has been working diligently to start capturing that with our third-party vendor here in the City as well as working with the County to make sure that we are documenting everything that we are spending between staff hours, overtime, any resources that we purchase. So, yes, we are monitoring that.

Mr. Newton said my final question Mr. Manager; are there any plans for limiting or the abridgment of the maintenance of our CATS and Transit services moving forward?

Mr. Jones said I'm sorry, could you say that again?

Mr. Newton said how are we looking at maintaining Transit services moving forward? Are we looking for any potential stoppage of those services anytime in the near future?

Mr. Jones said much like the AB schedule at Solid Waste, we did the same thing with CATS and so what that has done, it has provided us an opportunity to keep people home, keep people healthy. We will continue to provide this essential service in Transportation, but much like you have said and many Councilmembers have said, and I agree with, we have to do it in a safe way, and we continue to talk with our employees, understand what their concerns are, provide as much as we can for them. I think right now, that while you get some questions from time to time, I got a pretty good e-mail this morning from the head of the Union who was very appreciative of what the team is doing. I said the team, it is the Mayor, the Council as well as the employees of trying to do to keep people safe.

Chief Johnson said I just want to clean up one thing to make sure we are clear; the YMCAs are for Atrium and Novant employee's kids and that was paid for by an anonymous donor specifically for that group. I just want to make sure we are clear there, but essential City employees should be receiving their information either from

their HR or from their Director and those are the Parks and Rec essentials. I just had to clean that up.

Mayor Lyles said to thank all of you for being here. The next item on our Agenda is from our CMPD, Chief Putney and Chief Estes.

May I ask just one more thing; I noticed I was out walking, and people were cutting their grass and clipping their hedges, are we picking up yard waste now?

Mr. Jones said no.

Mayor Lyles said I think we need to publicize that a little bit more than we are not picking it up because they are putting it on the curb, and they need to put it somewhere else.

Mr. Jones said sure, and I ought to do a little bit of a public service announcement with that, and that somewhere else should not be the recycling can. Somewhere else, if you are going to put it in the trash bin and not the recycling can. But also, if it is just one of our residents you can take, I think it is two bags to the dump with no additional costs.

Mayor Lyles said just a reminder to all of our residents that we are not doing yard waste pick-up, you can put it into the gray can and you can take it to one of the County's Waste Facilities as well. But, please look to see what they accept.

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## **ITEM NO. 2: STAY-AT-HOME ORDER ENFORCEMENT UPDATE**

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said before I turn it over to both Chiefs, I think it is important to note that as we move in, we are wiping down the desk and the chairs and things of that nature. I appreciate both of our Chiefs being here today.

**Mayor Lyles** said Chief Putney; you want to start us off?

**Chief Putney, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police** said yes ma'am. Good afternoon; I just want to give a brief update around enforcement efforts regarding the proclamation and then Estes, who is our Representative for the Police at the Emergency Operations Center, the EOC, will talk specifically about PPE for our people and give a little bit more detail of the day to day operations.

First of all, we are the agency responsible for the enforcement of the declaration. As everybody knows so far about 1,400 reports have come through in various forms, be it 311, the web, or City app about issues regarding the enforcement thereof. We vet those through the EOC and then we respond with the proper agency. Obviously, our goal is always to get cooperation, and again, I am proud of this community because the vast majority of the time that is exactly what we see. However, our role is to enforce and this weekend we did have an increase in those efforts. There is no surprise that the Women's Clinic on Latrobe Drive was a focus for us. Nobody celebrates all the members of the community who do it right, it is those who take a stand and challenge and refuse to cooperate that get all the air time and that was no exception for this weekend. We had about 50 demonstrators show up; after 10 we gave our adequate warning that they were in violation of the mass assembly. We told them specifically and explicitly what our expectations were, and I gave them ample opportunity to leave. Many did, but obviously, we did have to make an arrest on those who exceeded that number and refused to leave. It was a total of 12 citations and then eight continued to resist leaving so, we also made eight arrests. I can tell you this is probably an indication of what we should expect to see as we move forward. People are passionate about their intent and sometimes to violate even in situations like this with the pandemic and we are going to be just as passionate about enforcing the law to make sure our City is safe. We also have an additional citation, it was a massage parlor, I think Air Quotes, and they were refusing to close. I don't want to give any more detail than that Mr. Manager.

Mr. Jones said I think you are fine.

Chief Putney said we were giving an adequate explanation of our expectations to gain compliance there; there refused and were cited. That is still an ongoing saga, we are still done with that particular establishment getting cooperation and I'm not surprised if we will need to escalate our enforcement there. The big thing is the parks are still open currently, and we've seen all the posting on social medial, we got a lot of information around that, and as we move forward, again, this is a difficult situation to be in with enforcement because it is a new declaration. We are learning as we move forward, and we are trying to get as much cooperation as we can and protect the City. So, to our community members who are refusing to comply with these orders, you should expect some additional restrictions potentially regarding the parks. I can't speak for the County, but if they do again, we are going to continue to work to have people abide by those additional restrictions, if and when they come.

I want to turn it over to Chief Estes; we've been talking a lot about PPE, and I will have to give credit to our Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Foundation as well. They are looking to spend some money to support us as first responders in that effort too, so everybody and anybody who is looking to assist, they are stepping forward as well, looking to fund and help us get hopefully priority on getting some more PPE for our people so that we can protect them even better.

**Deputy Chief Estes, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police** said a couple of points I would like to make about this. First, we are just as passionate about protecting our employees as we are about protecting the public. We have from the very beginning ensured that every Officer that went into the field on patrol had the appropriate PPE and when they used it, we replenished that at the end of the shift before the next shift started. We are very cognizant of their safety and wellbeing. To that end, currently today we have 28 employees that are out total. That includes three positives, two sworn and one non-sworn employee and then we've had 34 that we've had out that have since returned to work that we took out on precautionary measures. We are very conservative or our approach to our Officers if someone is sick, if they are not feeling well, if they have any indication we go ahead and place them out of work to ensure that they are taken care of and their families first. As the Chief alluded to, we are working very hard, not only the Police Foundation but also with our partners in Emergency Management at the state level and at the federal level to ensure that we get an adequate supply when that supply becomes available. I am happy to report today we have enough PPE as we are currently using it to be able to protect every Officer as they go out and do their jobs.

**Councilmember Driggs** said Chief; it is pretty clear that the protestors at Latrobe are trying to make this about a freedom speech issue; we did get a very helpful clarification from J. C. Snyder, which I've shared, but these arrests that were made, can you tell me how the cases were disposed of? Were the people in question detained, were they fined, what actually happened?

Chief Putney said at this point they were initially cited, a total of 12 and then we had eight who continued to refuse and who have been arrested. Those cases have yet to be adjudicated. They have been arrested to start that process.

Mr. Driggs said does that mean they are currently in custody?

Chief Putney said no sir, I think they were able to sign themselves out, all of them, but they were arrested and taken to the In-Take Center.

Mr. Driggs said then the action against them would be the misdemeanor that we included in the order related to the public gathering?

Chief Putney said that is correct.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said thank you, Chief Putney, for an update on enforcement. Are we doing any enforcement on non-essential travel?

Chief Putney said no ma'am. Right now, as you know, people can still go to the grocery store. So, what we are not going to be doing is proactively doing traffic check-points because that we think is a bit too intrusive for what we need right now. People do have the right to go get food and the essentials and it is kind of hard for us to determine the difference therefore, that is not something that we are looking to proactively enforce. I think that would be stepping a bit too far, to aggressive and we would be throwing the net too wide, catching a lot of people who are trying to take care of their families. Right now, we are looking where specifically complaint-driven, but we are not proactively looking to do random traffic stops to determine where people are going in particular.

**Councilmember Winston** said I ask this question when the Fire Chiefs were in about EOC guidance around the clearing of tent camps for the homeless population. Obviously, we have the law enforcement duties on private property, but we also have guidance from the CDC on this pandemic. How are we updating our stance and our actions as it relates to the clearing of homeless camps?

Chief Putney said quite directly we are not looking to clear homeless camps. What we are doing is, as you mentioned, if we get a private property owner who wants people moved, we've had a few of those. We go out and explain the situation to the people who are encamped, and they voluntarily have left. But the CDC guidelines are pretty clear. They advise not to go moving camps, but they also want, if they have tents, for them to be 12-feet apart. So, it is kind of a catch 22 situation, and generally, as I said before, we are complaint-driven, so we are not going out here actively trying to dismantle homeless camps. That is not what we are doing.

Mr. Winston said what are we learning nationally and internationally about how law enforcement personnel and the effect of COVID (mild to severe respiratory infection caused by the coronavirus) have on the workforce? What do we think we can expect going forward with COVID being that law enforcement officers have to interact directly so often in their job?

Chief Putney said what we are seeing, especially in the larger agencies is, in particular, as you are aware, New York, they've had quite a few people who have been exposed. We gave you our numbers, luckily, we are not significantly impacted yet, but they are saying this next week or two is when we should really get the largest increase, and we would expect to maybe be impacted by that with our Officers as well. So, what we have is a tiered approach as far as our staffing so we can get to a position where we are having the staggered shifts if necessary. Right now, since we had about 30 plus Officers who were in the protocol, who are now back to work, we are in much better shape and we are just going to continue to have them protect themselves and respond to whatever we see. Generally, we expect potentially the impact to be similar to the organization as it is on our community overall. We expect to have more people potentially exposed unfortunately.

Mr. Winston said have we done anything on both sides of the career; are we doing anything like freezing retirements and how is this affecting new recruit classes? Can you speak to both of those?

Chief Putney said the state beat us to the first one. I would not freeze any retirements, but that was done for me. For the most part we have a lot of hire backs, people who previously retired who came back. They are helping us, and it is really paying dividends right now, but we don't have as many people retiring until probably later in the year so, we are okay in that front. We also are about to graduate with 38 new rookies on Thursday. So, we are adding to our ranks that way. As far as freezing retirements, because we don't have many people leaving in the summer months, we should be okay there. I don't think I could really freeze them anyway. I think people would not really appreciate that well and I don't know that you want mad cops here during a bad situation who would prefer to have retired.



Mr. Winston said how are we messaging to our own workforce about how to be good models for social distancing behaviors while on duty? I've seen several groups of Officers congregating together throughout the City and doing things like taking trips to the Auto Bell to get their car washed. Can you speak to those particular incidents that I'm referring to, just congregating Officers and getting car washes as well as the overall messaging that was given to our workforce about modeling good behavior in the field?

Chief Estes said I will take a stab at this one. Just a couple of points, one we message via video and by roll calls and face to face messaging towards our employees. As far as congregating, some of the work necessitates us as Officers, being in pairs of threes and fours. As far as the car wash goes in particular, those are the places that the Officers go in order to get their cars cleaned and sanitized on the inside. They like the ability to be able to go after a shift or before a shift starts and have the inside sanitized through the use of a fogger, etc. If they congregate there while getting that done, then we can address that in a different manner. But, just to say in general, we are trying to make sure we do social distance, we do virtual roll calls wherever possible. We don't have a meeting inside the building anymore, it is either outside or one at a time or in the parking lots as we go forward.

Chief Putney said I will tell you this too; one of the challenges is because so many restaurants are closing. I remember the picture you sent, we have very few choices so, a lot of what we are doing now is having to be provided to them and they are trying to find places that they can eat during their tours and that would be a part of why we are talking about social distancing, even at the few places they can find to eat. I remember that picture and we are communicating with our people about social distancing for sure.

**Councilmember Bokhari** said Chief; great to hear from you. I just wanted to know from your perspective, do you feel like all of the current state of our ordinances and the level of support is where you need it to be, so our Police Officers are safe? I've heard anecdotal feedback from people threatening to spit on Police Officers and they say they have Covid-19 to Officers that are in need of things like potentially hazard pay for what they are going through. Again, all of that is anecdotal, and if it doesn't really come from you guys at the top I just kind of put it in a list and ask the question later. Is there anything you feel like you need right now from us that you are not getting?

Chief Putney said again, I want to be valid in my response because the vast majority of people are doing what they've been asked, and they are abiding by the declaration. Unfortunately, though crime is not taking a vacation right now. Crime is not adhering to this declaration, and our people are going to be in harm's way. I don't have anything specific to ask at this point. I do appreciate all the partners who are looking to get additional PPE because you've got to be safe doing your job and we want to make sure we allay any fears to that end, and I keep hearing that even more supplies are coming. So, there is nothing specific that I would ask at this time.

Mr. Bokhari said keep us posted on that, please.

Chief Putney said actually, except let them know when you see them that you appreciate what they are doing because that goes a long way, especially right now.

Mayor Lyles said I think you ought to be baking cookies for your Fire and Police Officers right now. Let's make sure that they understand that we really do appreciate them in more ways than one.

**Councilmember Johnson** said thank you Chief for the work that CMPD is doing and thanks to all the City workers. My question is because we keep talking about PPE; there is some technology that I've read about to disinfect and be able to reuse PPE. Is that an option that the City will consider and is that something that is approved nationally?

Chief Putney said it has been explored through the Public Health Director; we've got to follow her guidelines and her recommendations. That is something that I was just told today, that is being explored and once we get clearance there, we can act accordingly.

Mr. Jones said we are ready to start talking about the stimulus package and I do need to make one correction Mayor. Rodney Jamison, who does Solid Waste made it very clear that no yard waste. It shouldn't be in the recycling bin or the trash can because we will get fined \$1,000 bucks.

Mayor Lyles said okay, we don't want anyone to make us have to pay \$1,000 bucks, so yard waste has to go back somewhere until we start recollecting again or take it to one of the Solid Waste disposal sites managed by the County. So, no yard waste in the gray can or the green can and if it is sitting on the curb you might want to take it back somewhere else.

Mr. Winston said it is called mulch piles folks.

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### **ITEM NO. 3: CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT UPDATE**

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said last week when we're having some discussions there was a desire to get a better understanding of the stimulus package so, this next segment that we are really going to roll two segments into one, and talk a bit about the stimulus package, one as it relates to funds that will come to the City and Ryan Bergman will talk about the funds that will come to the City whether it is CATS or the Airport or CDBG as we've mentioned earlier. Then we are going to have our CFO, Kelly Flannery, and Tracy Dodson come in and talk about those stimulus dollars that will flow to our residents. That is some of the things have been discussed, like the small business loans, SBA loans, and things of that nature. So, this is just level setting for the Council and with that said I will turn it over to Ryan.

**Ryan Bergman, Strategy and Budget Director** said my staff has spent the last couple of weeks trying to go through this CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) which has been referred to the stimulus. We've been working closely with Dana Fenton to solve some of our questions and some of our problems and we think we can talk tonight at a very high level about some of the things that will affect the City specifically before, as the Manager said, we go into some of the things that affect citizens a little bit more. One of the overarching themes here and, maybe it is a bit of misconception. The Act itself allocates money for a purpose, but most of the allocations come with strings attached where the actual formula to allocate the funds and the regulations for the program don't come until later when the responsible federal department provides guidance. We are trying to learn as much as we can, but we are kind of in a timeframe where we know some of these allocations, but we don't know some of the others and then additionally, we have good estimates of what the funds can be used for, but they are not final yet. As the Manager said earlier, when referencing the Emergency Solutions Grant, until it is finalized you can't really count on the allocation.

I'm going to talk a little bit about six things; the first one I will talk about is maybe the biggest program, it is called the Coronavirus Relief Fund. It is for local governments to draw down if they have more than 500,000 people, and Charlotte does fall into that. Other local governments would draw down through their states. North Carolina received \$4 billion; it is for all our expenses to respond, to prepare, supplies, staffing changes. This is where Chief Johnson talked about some of the EOC costs, overtime, and things of that nature. This is where we expect to get reimbursement from this Coronavirus Relief Fund. Some of the guidance that we do know is that the fund will cover extra costs through calendar year 2020, so it is not just this fiscal year. Unfortunately, early indications are that it will not replace lost revenue, so this is entirely on the expenditure side for us. We are expecting formal finalized guidance on April 13<sup>th</sup> and the funding is expected to be available at the end of the month from that. But, like I said until we get

the finalized guidance, I don't want to project an allocation, but we do know that it will be a substantial amount to assist with our efforts.

The next thing that I want to talk about is Transit assistance. This will be for CATS, so nationally there was \$25 billion allocated, so we have received preliminary information that CATS should receive an allocation up to \$56 million. Just to let you know, CATS has about \$170 million annual operating budget so, an allocation up to \$56 million should be very beneficial to CATS. As we know they are one of the biggest impacted on the budget side because of the lost revenue from both fares and because they are so dependent on sales tax. Fortunately, the CATS money as of now looks like it can be used to replace the revenue, so that is a little bit different than the Coronavirus Relief Fund, so that is good news. We don't know yet when exactly that will be available, but we are tracking it closely.

The next one that I will talk about is Aid to Airports; \$10 billion was allocated nationwide. There is going to be an allocation formula yet to be finalized that includes enplanement, debt, and then liquidity of the Airport. We don't want to make a projection yet, we do know that Charlotte Airport does qualify. The only thing it needs to do is to ensure that it maintains at least 90% of its direct employees. That would be the City of Charlotte employees, which it certainly has, and the fund can be used for any expense that a normal airport can be used for. So, this isn't quite as specific as the Coronavirus Relief Fund; this can be used to pay debt service or things of that nature. So, Aviation has indicated to us that their first priority will be cash flow on ongoing capital projects.

The next one I will talk about is, it is a smaller one from the Bureau of Justice Assistance; \$186 million is available for law enforcement agencies nationwide. The City of Charlotte has received an allocation of up to \$1.8 million. I know that CMPD has already met on how to best utilize those funds, but they are to be used for projects to prevent, prepare, and respond to Coronavirus as well.

The final two, I will talk about, and I will talk at a real high level because then I will turn it over to Pam who is here. It is Community Development Block Grants and Emergency Solutions Grant. I will start with CDBG; there is \$5 billion total nationally. The first \$2 billion will be disbursed on our normal formula basis. Like the Manager said earlier, we will receive about \$3.5 billion. I also want to note that the other \$3 billion have yet to be determined. The HUD Secretary and the states will have a say in that, so while I can say it is probably, I can say that there is a possibility that the \$3.5 billion goes up and of course we will do everything within our power to try to get additional funds for that. The funds are expected to be available in late April according to federal guidelines, and it can be used for any normal CDBG activities that can help with responding to COVID. The Emergency Solutions Grant, as the Manager mentioned, we initially thought this would be \$3.5 billion, however, the HUD Secretary retained a portion of it to distribute later on a different formula. So, it is a similar thing, we will get at least \$1.7 billion, it is possible we could get more depending on that future allocation. Then similar to CDBG funds are also expected in late April. With these two specifically CDBG and Emergency Solution we have a formal allocation that we are getting. So, I will turn it over to Pam to talk directly about these two programs specifically.

**Mayor Lyles** said before Pam talks about some specifics, you have a couple of questions.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said I have a question about the CDBG Funding. Hypothetically, if we had CDBG now that we could use for Covid-19 purposes can that funding that comes at the end of April be used to repay what we used in our existing allocation of funding?

Mr. Bergmann said I think that is one of the questions we are working directly with our HUD Rep for Pan to see if you could use it that way.

**Pam Wideman, Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services** said Ms. Eiselt, specifically, there has been lots of talk about using a portion of our CDBG dollars to

assist with small businesses, so we are working right now to amend your consolidated plan to put that activity in there so we can go ahead and start using it for small business loans. Otherwise, we can use it for any of the other housing activities that you currently use it for.

Ms. Eiselt said when you say amend our existing plan, do we have an existing plan for Covid-19 response?

Ms. Wideman said you do not have an existing plan for Covid-19 however, you have a consistent action plan for which we submitted how you would use your current CDBG allocation. That is the plan that will need to be amended to use your current funds for Covid-19.

Mayor Lyles said so, existing money that we've already appropriated would require amendment if we used it for Covid-19 or things that were not included in the plan as a result of Covid-19, not really.

Ms. Eiselt said we must still have a lot of non-allocated funding from our CDBG Fund, is that right?

Mayor Lyles said all of the funds would be allocated would be a matter of what you did not want to do that you accrued.

Ms. Eiselt said I don't know if you are going to talk later in the conversation after Ms. Wideman is done about that emergency response for small businesses.

Mayor Lyles said yes, that is coming up. I thought your question was for Ryan specifically about the stimulus.

Ms. Eiselt said it was about the CDBG then I will wait for my next questions when we talk about the small businesses.

**Councilmember Watlington** said I just want to know about the funds you said were going to be specific to expenses. You said that North Carolina was getting \$4 billion; are we only getting reimbursed for the things that we can prove expenses for, or do you expect there is going to be some allocation there due to the size of the City regardless of what we've actually expended to this point?

Mr. Bergmann said we expect it to be an allocation up to an amount, meaning that we will have document the expenses are associated with Covid-19 and any money that is not used would just actually return to the State of North Carolina. That is why as Chief Johnson mentioned earlier we are going to great lengths to try to ensure that we are tracking everything that we can so that we can reimburse for anything possible.

Mayor Lyles said I have a list of four people that want to talk. We are going to talk about proposed uses for housing and small businesses with Pam, but I want to make sure that we get the other four people in first.

**Councilmember Winston** said to Mr. Eiselt's line of questions, what is our plan to meet and talk about all those plans and policies that we are going to need to adjust in relation to our Covid-19 response? How are we thinking we are going to set up all this business and kind of scrubbing all the things that we already have going on to make those adjustments?

Mayor Lyles said the remainder of this meeting will be on those topics and then we would take action if Council is prepared to take action next Monday to do this.

Mr. Winston said I have a question for Ryan; you mentioned the Airport. What are the resources that are presented or that we have whether it be from the Stimulus of in our own accounting, what are those resources that we have to offer support for Airport workers that are not directly Charlotte City employees or aren't employees of the

Airlines? We know that a lot of jobs are contract workers like janitors, food services, and other operations that support Airport activities. Are they included in those relief bills or are we having to figure out different options for those classes of workers?

Mr. Bergmann said I can tell you that the final regulations for the Airport funding have not been issued. As far as what Aviation has specifically, that is something that would better be served answered by Mr. Cagle that we can pass that on to him.

Mr. Winston said do we not have an opportunity to get that answered tonight?

Mr. Jones said part of the issue, Mr. Winston, as Ryan said, we don't have all of the regulations around it right now, and so as we get that there will be more clarity.

Mr. Winston said so, I guess asking it a little differently, is there anything currently being done for those workers that are not directly Airline employees or City of Charlotte employees that support the Airport or make it work? Is there any relief funding, stimulus funding being allocated to those workers currently?

Mr. Jones said sure, so Mr. Winston; we struggled about how to do this last segment but given how we have to do this virtually and people in the room; there are two parts to this. What Ryan started off with are those dollars that are coming into the city's coffers. When Kelly and Tracy come in, they will have a more robust conversation about the stimulus dollars that end up in an individual's pockets. So, what I would like to is I guess read a little bit ahead, but what we are going to do right now, so Pam is talking about basically \$5.25 million that is coming in the combination for CDBG and ESG and what Pam is going to discuss is how can we best utilize those funds to get to people. When we have Tracy and when we have Kelly in, we will talk about stimulus dollars, we will talk about some of our own funds and what are some opportunities to get those funds to businesses. That is a part of the overall discussion; we were just trying to break it down first by the money that is coming into the City and then go to the money that will end up in people's hands.

Mr. Winston said so, bring up my questions later?

Mr. Jones said please, yes.

**Councilmember Newton** said am I right in understanding that we can be reimbursed, or we can take, not just the CDBG dollars, but also the ESG dollars and apply them to the need that we see occurring in our community today with the understanding that they will be reimbursed just like the CDBG?

Mayor Lyles said no, there is no reimbursement. This is new money coming in for those purposes, but there is no reimbursement. Reimbursement will apply to expenses that the City made to respond specifically to the virus-like the EOC and overtime to Police Officers and people like that.

Mr. Newton said do we have a good projection Ryan on what shortfalls we might experience with a loss in sales tax revenue and increase in expenditures over the coming months and how much reserve we might have available?

Mr. Jones said I would like to tackle that. At the beginning of the discussion I said that next week we will talk about FY20 and where we believe we may end at year-end as well as some of the challenges for FY21. I will tell you that as I talk to City Managers across the state sales tax is an issue. Depending on where you go you will get different numbers so, we actually have our Economist who is looking specifically at what the impact will be for Charlotte, and we will have that tightened up this week, and be able to present to the Council on Monday.

Mr. Newton said is the soonest that we would be able to take any action, so am I hearing this right? The soonest that we would be able to take any action won't be until Monday? Is there an opportunity to finalize any plans, particularly for small businesses?

I think we are going to hear from Pam about housing needs, can we finalize anything sooner than that?

Mr. Jones said my understanding for tonight was to provide information to the Mayor and Council. You, Mr. Newton, as well as other Councilmembers have provided feedback to the team and we are analyzing some of the suggestions that you have. The goal has been to have something before the Council next Monday.

Mayor Lyles said we will send it out this week and then it will be on the agenda and then citizens could be able to comment on it by sending e-mails to the Clerk as well. That is one thing, but we would have to have a unanimous vote of the Council to put something on this agenda tonight. That is up to the Council, if we have unanimous, something that we want to do. Is that responsive?

Mr. Newton said would it be a majority vote to put something on an agenda between now and next Monday?

Mayor Lyles said no, either the Manager or I could put something on the agenda for Monday and I am perfectly willing to do that.

Mr. Newton said but I'm saying in between?

Ms. Johnson said I think he is asking us to basically make a new agenda, like have another meeting between now and then.

Mayor Lyles said have another meeting?

Mr. Newton said let me be clear. This is in response to a number of small businesses that have reached out to me indicating a lack of capital to survive literally within two-weeks and that being the case, I don't know. I think we will probably hear from Tracy a little bit later on about some of the plans for the process of getting funds into the hands of our small businesses locally. But that is the case, understanding that there is going to be a process, it is not going to happen overnight even after we pass it, the ability for small businesses to come in access those funds. I think there is a tremendous need to move at least that portion of it forward as soon as possible.

Mayor Lyles said I understand what your question is now so, I think that is the Council discussion. Certainly, after we hear from Tracy and Kelly at the end of the agenda we can have that discussion.

**Councilmember Driggs** said Ryan; I just wanted to clarify on the CDBG, you said there was \$5 million in this package. Is all of that in addition CDBG money that we've been getting?

Mr. Bergmann said correct; typically, we get about \$6 million so, this is an additional \$3.5 million.

Mr. Driggs said right, and it is to be used broadly for the same purposes as the CDBG money that we get regularly, but in the context of the virus, right?

Mr. Bergmann said correct.

Mr. Driggs said when do we actually expect to get the cash? Are we going to go ahead and start disbursing funds and then there is some future date at which we get money from the Feds or when will they write those checks?

Mr. Bergmann said the guidance we've gotten is that we can expect the funds in late April, but of course we have no way of guaranteeing that or knowing.

Mr. Driggs said on the relief fund it says basically a cost-reimbursement formula; does that mean that there is almost like a weird incentive is there for us to go out and spend more in order to get a greater reimbursement? How do they control that?

Mr. Bergmann said that is where the up to amounts will come in. As long as you can attach it to Coronavirus you should be able to get reimbursement for expenditures up to an amount, but we do have to wait until the final guidance to see how restrictive the expenditures will be. They have said specifically, supplies, preparation response, staffing costs will all be included.

Mr. Driggs said right, so we will, of course, want to do as much as we can in that area and realize that reimbursement.

Mayor Lyles said Ryan has given us a framework for the federal funds of what we know today. There might be differences as things come up. Now we are going to hear from Ms. Wideman about the \$3.5 million from CDBG and the Emergency Solutions Grant and her work with the community that she works with, the folks that usually fit in this area and what she has found as an answer or response to them as a result of changes required as we tackle this virus.

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#### **ITEM NO. 4: HOUSING TRUST FUND AND CHARLOTTE HOUSING OPPORTUNITY INVESTMENT FUND UPDATE**

**Pam Wideman, Housing and Neighborhood Services** said as Ryan has said I am going to talk specifically about two things tonight. I'm going to talk to you about how we propose to use our Covid-19 stimulus dollars that are coming from Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and then I'm going to give you a high-level update on the proposed Housing Trust Fund proposals that we are currently evaluating now.

To start with, let me talk about the Emergency Solutions Grant fund, our proposal there. We've developed these proposals, working with our partners at the County and also working with our homeless services providers and trying to fill in the current gaps as we know them today. As has been stated, we propose to get \$1.7 million from the Emergency Solutions Fund, we did get a letter today from HUD so, we feel really good about that. Based on what we know from the community, we plan to propose to do two things, we plan to work with the Salvation Army Women's Shelter to obtain 50 extended stay rooms that will be used across the homeless services network. This is really important because it also accounts for our partners like Safe Alliance, so while we will be working with the Women's shelter directly, the rooms would not be just for the Women's Shelter. They would incorporate all of our partners. This is particularly important because it helps us to continue to further decrease the count in the shelters and it also helps us to keep families in tack. So, we will be proposing to do that over the next eight months; that will get us through December. We would do a similar offering with the Men's Shelter as well for eight months and that would get us through December and that is about \$1.4 million is how we are proposing to use our ESG funds. We know that we will have, if we look at \$1.7 minus \$1.4, we will be a little bit of a balance and we anticipate that other things will come up as we go along with that. I will tell you the one bit of good news is that while we are waiting to get these funds from DC, we had a little bit of a balance in our ESG program and we are working to get a contract in place today, it is actually in the hands of the Women's Shelter, to go ahead and do five of these rooms for them based on the current situation.

In terms of the Community Development Block Grant Funds, we are proposing kind of a three-pronged approach. The first approach would be a mortgage relief fund for low to moderate-income residents. We know that many people will be without a job as a result of Covid-19 and so we want to help with some mortgage relief. The proposal is to provide up to four months or mortgage relief for 500 households. We have looked back at our House Charlotte participants over the past two years and so we based the costs

on that. We proposed a mortgage relief package up to \$2.2 million. The next thing that we propose to do is do some security deposit assistance. We know that as folks are in hotels, as we want to get them out of hotels and transition them to permanent housing, we propose to leverage the work of both the Men and the Women's Shelter and to provide security deposits to up to 1,000 households, a deposit of \$1,500 per household and we estimate that to be about \$1.5 million. The third thing we propose, consistent with the security deposit is a utility deposit. We know that many families have struggled to come up with the utility deposit so, we would do a similar program again, leveraging the work of both the Men's and the Women's Shelter to help people transition into permanent housing. We propose to provide up to \$250 per household to 1,000 households to assist with the utility deposit. The sum of the mortgage relief, the utility deposits, and the security deposits are about \$3.9 million and that is how we propose to help up to 2,500 households recover from Covid-19. I will pause and ask what questions you all might have?

**Councilmember Graham** said Pam; I want to thank you for the work, I think the outline is a really good outline, but a couple of specific questions; one, have you guys done any forward-thinking in terms of what happens in December when the grants expire to the households?

Ms. Wideman said yes sir; part of the beauty of working with partners like the Men's Shelter and like the Women's Shelter, not only do they place people in this temporary housing, but while they are placed in the temporary housing, they provide case management. That case management readies them to move into a permanent housing situation. So, with the utility deposits and the security deposits, that is what I mean by we will be leveraging the work that they do through their case management.

Mr. Graham said okay, and that is with the Emergency Solutions Grant, eight months for the Men and the Women's Shelter, both of those expire in December 2020. I'm just mindful of that, it is going to be awful cold in December when those grants expire. I just want to make sure that we don't have a situation where people are moving out and don't have anywhere to go.

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Graham; you raise an excellent point. That is why we were intentional about not spending down the entire balances because there could be a situation where we hear that a family might need one more month before they are ready to go. So, we will have some in reserve, but I do applaud both the Women's Shelter and the Men's Shelter for their case management, ensuring that people are ready to move on to a more permanent solution.

Mr. Graham said I think that is a good deal. Again, I'm just doing some forward-thinking trying to kind of plan beyond the crisis today for how we have to operate later this year going into 2021. The second question is about the mortgage relief; is there a cap on that or the average family? Who qualifies for that?

Ms. Wideman said what we proposed is to work with our House Charlotte buyers. What we know Mr. Graham; is that we looked back at our data over the past two years, the average mortgage for House Charlotte purchaser was \$1,122 so, while we didn't put a cap, we do have a pretty good understanding of what the average cost is per mortgage relief. What I should say is that we will be providing these payments directly to the mortgage holder, not to the individual.

Mr. Graham said suppose someone falls outside the guidelines of House Charlotte and needs mortgage relief? A small business owner that can't pay his rent or his mortgage but qualified outside of that guideline, is he not eligible?

**Mayor Lyles** said Mr. Graham; I think we are going to talk about business owners and their leases as well as mortgages with Kelly and Tracy. This is more around residential, low, and moderate because we have to meet our qualifications of who we can serve with CDBG. We will have some other thoughts about the business owners. I want to follow up to one of the things Mr. Graham raised and just thinking forward, you've gotten



the list of applications for the Housing Trust Fund money that was sent out to Council; if you will see there, there is a request for the \$800,000 to renovate the Statesville Avenue site which would increase some of that capacity. Talking about moving forward quickly, if we can get that quickly moving, I think if we could have that construction done, perhaps we would be more prepared with all of our resources by December. The Council still has to vote on that still.

Mr. Graham said what about rental assistance Pam; for renters?

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Graham; because we know that we only have this \$3.5 million to work with right now, we did not include rental assistance at this point. I would remind you however, that we currently do rental assistance with your home dollars, and to the extent that we get more CDBG dollars we could incorporate a rental relief program similar to the mortgage. We tried to think about what were the current gaps in the community today and so, the mortgage relief, the security deposit, and the utility is what we know of and have been hearing are the current gaps in the community today.

Mr. Graham said thank you very much and thank you for the work.

**Councilmember Driggs** said if you are going to ask us to kind of consider approving these plans could I ask what did you think of in addition? Have we given thorough thought to other people that might feel they should have been considered? Is this the most equitable and most efficient use of the funds? Are there any alternatives that we should be thinking about?

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Driggs; based on my probably week and a half or so conversation with our homeless services community, the partners that I raised, the Men's Shelter, the Women's Shelter, folks like Safe Alliance, and again, we will be working across our system so while I particularly named the Men's Shelter, the Women's Shelter and Safe Alliance, if a homeless services provider like Charlotte Family Housing, they would also qualify for these funds as long as they are serving the purpose for which they are set for. I believe we have considered as many of the players in our community as we should at this time and as we could.

Mr. Driggs said the December expiree; a little bit further to Mr. Graham's question, are we not tying that at all to what is going on. Like we just got that end date regardless of what is happening.

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said Pam; I'll take the first shot. Mr. Driggs, we started off discussing this as something that we would be very, very short-term, maybe 60-days, maybe 90-days, and Pam pushed us to say let's think about this longer-term. So, what is finite is the amount of dollars right now and so, I really trust Pam and where she is thinking to spread this out over this longer period as opposed to trying to get more capacity over a shorter period of time. That was the thought behind it.

Mayor Lyles said if I can add, we've already provided down payment assistance, and this reminds me a little bit of 2008 where people had their down payment assistance, they've paid their mortgage and yet they weren't able to keep their homes and so, the idea that we are already in with the homeowner with the down payment assistance program, assuring that they can hold on to their house. I'm reading this book called "Home Wreckers" which is about the 2008 situation, and if they lose their homes then they become rentals, usually for something else and that would impact our neighborhoods because these are all in our investment neighborhoods. I really feel like it is kind of like what we are talking about for small businesses, we are trying to have those folks stay employed and we are trying to keep these folks in their homes.

Mr. Driggs said I want to emphasize, I certainly trust Pam too. One of my questions was, are we kind of at a point where you are kind of shovel ready with this stuff? If we decided tonight that we wanted to go ahead with these proposals are we in a position to take action and if we did would that help you to actually move money sooner?

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Driggs; yes, what I share with you is shovel ready.

Mr. Driggs said again, I think what Mr. Newton was saying, if this is something that you are comfortable with and you think you've worked out the operational details, then you would be able to actually move money sooner if we took action tonight?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Driggs; absolutely, we believe that this is the proper use of the money, but as Ryan mentioned earlier, we won't get this money until the end of April so, if you took an action tonight, we would have to receive the money first.

Mr. Driggs said, and we do have to receive the money first; there is no way we could use city resources to bridge that?

Mr. Jones said I would not recommend that Mr. Driggs.

Mr. Driggs said so, in that case we are just as well off on this particular item waiting until next Monday to take action?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Mr. Driggs said alright, thank you.

**Councilmember Winston** said in general I think we need, as an organization, to step back and really evaluate the role that we play in housing. It is clear in this crisis that the most effective prescription to COVID is a safe home for people to go to. While it isn't clear exactly how, but it is abundantly clear that our role hasn't changed in order to get more people in housing right now. I think we need to meet very often and in the short-term to figure out how we augment our response to get people housed who aren't housed safely. For instance, one of the questions I would have for Pam for us to consider, while we usually spend our Housing Trust Fund Money on gap funding for development, what flexibility do we have to get creative on how we leverage those assets to get more people housed right now?

Ms. Wideman said thank you for that question Mr. Winston. Our Housing Trust Fund is a very bond language that supports the way that we use our voter-approved Housing Trust Fund. That bond language speaks particularly to the capital construction of units to support housing. So, I believe that is what the voters approved those dollars for and so, that is the way that I would recommend to use your staff, that we continue to use our Housing Trust Fund. Because of that, that is why you see the recommendations here around how we would use our CDBG Funds and our Emergency Solutions Grant Funds to do things.

Mr. Winston said real quick, I'm not clear as to what you all are referencing in terms of suggestions. I don't have anything.

Ms. Wideman said you don't have anything Mr. Winston, this is just my notes that I prepared to speak to you tonight from. You are not missing anything.

Mayor Lyles said that we will be coming out with the Agenda for Monday if we decide to that then. I think we are trying to get ideas and discussions so that on Monday we will be able to actually vote and put these things in play.

Mr. Winston said we haven't spoken about any of these deals or anything in our Great Neighborhoods Committee or anything like that. What I hear is that we are going to make decisions on Monday, but we haven't discussed any of these things.

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Winston; if I could help you just for a second here. We are doing two things tonight so, when I started my comments, I said I wanted to do two things, I wanted to provide you on how we might do our stimulus funding and then I'm going to come back and talk about our Trust Fund. I haven't gotten there yet, what we wanted to do first was test the proposals based on what we are hearing from the homeless

community about how we would use our stimulus funds and then I'm going to spend a few minutes providing you a high-level overview of our Trust Fund deals. As we did last year, and is our practice, I'm going to come back on the 13<sup>th</sup> and provide you a deep dive into each of the ten proposals that were jointly evaluated with LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) and then you would get to ask questions about our Housing Trust Fund and Charlotte Housing Opportunity Investment Fund deals on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Then we will come back to you on the 27<sup>th</sup> to ask for your approval. That is the sequence of how we are going to handle the proposed funding and the Trust Fund.

Mr. Winston said again, this is where I say I think we need to step back because we can't go about this Housing Trust Fund process in 2020 the same way that we went about it in 2019. I think we really need to figure out what is our overall plan of action for housing from top to bottom and start to execute that plan. It doesn't seem very wise to deal with those decisions in a vacuum without considering all the resources that we have and all the challenges that we currently have and modeling for moving forward for how we deal with this in kind of a mid-term because obviously, we don't know what is going to happen long-term.

Ms. Wideman said what I hope you are hearing Mr. Winston; and we can talk more about it is, we have traditionally and due to COVID, we are trying to continue to offer a continuum of housing services, a continuum of housing programs. The ESG is serving the homeless community, the CDBG that we talked about, that is going to keep low to moderate-income homeowners housed so that they don't lose and have to look for rental units that we don't currently have. The Housing Trust Fund is going to help us continue to do three things; it is going to help us to build newly constructed affordable housing to help us meet this need that we have, it is about 32,000 units, and those units don't exist. You also have a NOAH (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) in there that we are going to talk about. You have NOAH's in there that is going to help us to preserve as outlined in your plan. Then you also have 194 shelter beds that get back to the homeless population. So, it has always been our practice to address a continuum of housing needs across our community. That is how we continue to use both your local that the voters approved and your federal housing dollars.

Mr. Winston said this is my last comment; our continuum has changed, and we can't do it as we traditionally been going about it. Our Housing Trust Fund dollars usually gets spent on units that are not going to come online for 18 to 24-months. We need people to be in housing right now, like yesterday, and that has to be our priority in terms of how we spend our dollars to keep people housed. We have no policies, we have no practices, we have no guidance that suggests for us to do that, so what I'm saying is before we start making decisions, we have to make a plan to get as many people housed now and not in 18 to 24-months. We don't have anything that guides our organization to do that so, before we start making decisions on about \$20 million that we have that can be spent on housing right now, we need to figure out what that continuum now looks like in the very short-term.

Mayor Lyles said I don't know that there is a reply to that. That is probably a discussion for the Council to have and I don't know if anyone wants to weigh in on that as we go through the list because I think almost everyone wants to speak. As we are going through that I think you've heard Mr. Winston's comments and so some response and some feedback would be very helpful to the Manager and to Ms. Wideman as we proceed on this.

**Councilmember Watlington** said I've got several questions so I will just start at the top. I wanted to make sure that I understood the answer to Mr. Graham's question, and I will just restate it more generally. What happens if you don't meet the existing requirement for existing programs, specific to the mortgage piece?

Ms. Wideman said with CDBG dollars Ms. Watlington; the HUD rules say you have to serve households earning 80% and below the area median income. So, the reason we propose to work with our House Charlotte buyers is because we know that they meet that rule, number one, they are low to moderate-income residents, and two, as the

Mayor pointed out, we really, really want to help them maintain their status as homeowners. Those are the requirements that we would be looking to work with people in. If for some strange reason we go through all of our House Charlotte buyers, which I don't think we will, but as long as the person doesn't earn more than 80%, they could still potentially qualify for the mortgage relief. The important thing is that we stay within the HUD guidance of serving residents who earn 80% and below, but we really propose to work with people initially that you've already made an investment in to help them maintain their status as homeowners.

Ms. Watlington said so, right now then, outside of this program if you say you made 100% AMI (Area Median Income) and directly due to Covid-19 you were laid off, for instance. Is there anything in this proposal that would enable us to help these people besides what you are saying that these particular dollars are allotted for 80% or less, but is there anything else in our arsenal that would enable us to help people who are 80% AMI?

Ms. Wideman said for the CDBG dollars, it is just 80% and below. We have some innovative housing dollars and we will have to look, local dollars that don't have the strings attached, and we would have to figure out, work with Ryan, and figure out what our balances are. We could potentially help folks earning between 80% and 100%, but we would have to do that with local dollars. We could not do that with federal dollars.

Ms. Watlington said I would like to see something earmarked for that because I think about people who, and I know you just mentioned 80% to 100%, but I'm thinking about people who might be in professional services, but maybe they are consultants and that work has dried up ordinarily, they would be making a decent salary, but now they aren't able to conduct that kind of work. I don't know if these people are 1099's if you are looking at them as small business owners or not, but I would like to see something that would give a response to those people.

I want to make sure I understand how the security deposit program was working. The Mayor touched on a little bit of what I was trying to wrap my head around, in regard to, if we are helping on the front end get housed, but they've been impacted because their employment has been reduced due to COVID, what happens next? What problem are we trying to solve with the security deposit piece?

Ms. Wideman said for example, if someone, remembers there are often people in the shelter or who will find themselves in the shelter simply because they don't make enough to afford an apartment unit per se. Through both the security deposit and the utility deposit we are trying to take that item off the table, so we are trying to help them get into an apartment with the security and we are trying to help them with the utility deposit assistance as well.

Ms. Watlington said so these aren't necessarily people who were directly impacted by COVID, this is how we are going to reduce the number of people in the shelter by getting these people that are in the pipelines that are just saving for their security deposit out the door?

Ms. Wideman said when I talk to you about the ESG dollars, I talked to you about the Men's Shelter and the Women's Shelter and Safe Alliance and other housing providers, homeless providers putting people in a motel room. So, say that person has lost their job because of COVID, they find themselves in a motel room, they are going to be doing some case management while they are in that extended stay. When it is time to get them out, they might have the money for the rent, but they don't have the money for the security deposit or the utility deposit. That is how that money would help them. We are going to leverage that case management, leverage the job that they do have, but just really help them with the security deposit and the utility deposit.

Ms. Watlington said I'm thinking out loud, so this would only help somebody who has lost their job because of COVID but got another job going out the door. Like, we are not giving security deposits to people who don't have jobs?

Ms. Wideman said this would be for folks who are impacted by COVID, I just want to keep it simple because we have to tie the stimulus dollars back to folks who are impacted by COVID.

Ms. Watlington said that is what I'm confused about because if I'm impacted by COVID, I've lost my job or I'm working reduced hours?

Ms. Wideman said you might have lost your job and find yourself in a homeless situation, so that would be the subset of people we are trying to help.

Ms. Watlington said but if those people don't have jobs, once they get into the apartment how are they going to sustain their homes?

Ms. Wideman said the hope is through case management, so if today you've lost your job; it is April, right. We are going to put you in this extended stay, help you get there through December. Our hope is that you are going to get reemployed through case management, the services that you are going to receive from April to December. You are ready to move out in December, you've gotten a job, you are ready to pay some rent, but your impediment for moving in there is you can't come up with the security deposit and you can't come up with the utility deposit. That is where that will come in.

Ms. Watlington said so this isn't something to be deployed right now, this is something that would happen sometime later on?

Ms. Wideman said the other way we could do it right now, and literally Mr. Watlington and Council, we are building a plane and flying it at the same time. The other way that this could be deployed right now is, I lost my job, I'm able to maintain my rent, but I might need some help with my utilities to keep me in there. So, a part of this ESG is about prevention from becoming homeless. We want to do everything we can to keep you from becoming homeless.

Ms. Watlington said my next one is on the home requirements, and you might have already answered it when you talked about the mortgage piece earlier. I just wanted to make sure the target market for the home requirement is also 80% or below?

Ms. Wideman said all federal dollars for CDBG and for home are 80% and below.

Ms. Watlington said I will ask it, but it might be addressed by what you were just talking about with some of the wrap-around services. Have we thought yet, and I know you said this is very new and it is in flux; have we thought about how these dollars could be intersected with workforce development so that people who were impacted by COVID could also be matched with some of the skill gaps that we have in the community so that coming out of this we didn't just get them back to where they were or comparable, but we've actually helped them grow through social economically? I know that is a little bit more long-range thinking, but I'm just wondering if there have been things synergies there?

Ms. Wideman said one of the ways and again, I'll say we are building the plane and flying it at the same time. For example, say I lost my job and through some type of workforce development activity I find myself in a better job; I still might need some help on my mortgage relief while I lost my job, I still might need some help on getting into my next apartment so, I would suggest that you could perhaps leverage the mortgage relief again to help you maintain your house and you could leverage the security or the utility deposit to help you get into another apartment if you have your lost your job and you've obtained a better job through workforce development. That is how I see the funds leveraging each other.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Watlington; I also think that when you have applied for unemployment that is when Charlotte Works comes into play and you start working with them because one of the things about unemployment is that it is not going to last

forever and while the Governor is not requiring people to immediately go the first week, they are being open to helping people get ready for the work to reapply. It is just a matter of when will the economy come back to do that. I think we have to be very flexible because we don't know when that is going to happen and so, as we go through this, and I think we want to encourage people to get back to work, but if there isn't the opportunity through either the small businesses that are getting the money to keep their employees employed, if you are actually on unemployment, you might be in this situation where you will be working with Charlotte Works, but we need to be flexible I think as people are going through this crisis right now.

Ms. Watlington said as we think about our work within the workforce and business development, I think this has to carry through, right, and I fully expect that it will, but that is one that I will be watching as to how we think about this across the board.

The Housing Trust Fund, just so I am super clear, the Housing Trust Fund dollars have boundaries set around them because of how it was put on the ballot?

Ms. Wideman said right there is ballet language that spells out, particularly how those funds have to be used. That is not only Trust Fund dollars, that is the Neighborhood Improvement and the Transportation as well.

Ms. Watlington said and that is specifically capital for construction, but unless we can build something faster than 18-months, that is pretty much where we are with those funds?

Ms. Wideman said that is right and I'll go back to something that the Mayor said earlier and something that previous Council; you all asked us to look at not being so dependent on the state's programs, certainly that is a good program. We have our partner with LISC, so there are some projects that can get going a little bit quicker and so, the shelter beds, I'll point back to that; 194 shelter beds are in this stack of proposals that you will be reviewing. So, back to the whole December, if people aren't ready to go into a permanent, I've talked with the CEO of the Men's Shelter today and as soon as that is approved they can get going with that construction and hope to have it ready in December when we know it is going to get cold and we might need those new shelter beds. Again, it is a continuum.

Ms. Watlington said is it always for new construction or can we expand on existing structures?

Ms. Wideman said through your Housing Charlotte framework that the Council approved in 2018 I believe; it is a three-pronged approach, so it is new construction, it is preservation because we know we can't build new units fast enough, so we are preserving. I think you have 300 and some odd if I remember correctly in this current stack. It is new construction and it is preservation.

Ms. Watlington said if we took that money and invested it in existing NOAH that might be a way to get units faster?

Ms. Wideman said that is a way to get units faster and that is what you have done and that is what you will see in the proposals that I will be taking a deeper dive with you on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Lyles said can we send that information out this week as well, just a reminder of that list that you show whether it is a NOAH or new construction? We've all been so busy it is hard to keep up with everything.

Ms. Wideman said sure.

**Councilmember Johnson** said thank you, Pam, for these suggestions. They sound so wonderful and that they are going to reach a lot of people, but I do have some questions about them. We are in an extraordinary time and we have to all be so strategic and not

duplicating our efforts. Does Crisis currently help individuals with their security deposit and utilities?

Ms. Wideman said yes ma'am, you currently make an annual allocation to them to do that.

Ms. Johnson said okay, so when we talk about helping individuals with their mortgage, during the height of the foreclosures there were organizations like HUD approved organizations, and I imagine Charlotte Housing Partnership might have been one to help individuals with loan modification because mortgage companies are going to be working with homeowners don't we think? The reason I ask that is because the renters also, but there is no relief here for individuals to pay their rent and we still have to remember there is an affordable housing challenge here in Charlotte. So, even if we are helping with the deposits, it is the amount or rent that is challenging for many and the barrier for homelessness. Additionally, I'm really concerned, and I've had this discussion with several folks, I know that people are not being evicted or being put out and that the court is not issuing judgment for evictions, but if landlords are still able to file eviction there is going to be a backlog of evictions that are filed that are going to be on individual's record. I'm sounding the alarm on that, that it has to be looked at. If an eviction filed means that it is going to be on their record going forward, that is a huge barrier to housing. My question is mortgage companies work with homeowners, Crisis works with individual's security deposits, so we need to look at rental assistance if there is any way to do that.

Ms. Wideman said Ms. Johnson; let me offer this response; so, what I would say is that you are absolutely correct. We know that there is going to be some rental relief probably needed as a result of COVID. What I would remind you of is that the United Way, their first set of grants, if you will, they did just what you are talking about. I believe they made a grant to the Housing Partnership and socialserve.com, the shelters, so they did a rent relief grant of over \$800,000 so they did rent relief to do exactly what you are saying. That was the first set of grants that went out. What I would commit to doing is going back and looking at our existing home dollars to see if there are balances where we could look at perhaps, if it is okay, to see what other federal dollars we might have to further our work with rental relief as well. I don't know what other grants that United Way will be making from their fund around that same thing. I think the next round of grants is due in two weeks or so. They plan to make grants every two-weeks.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Graham serves on that committee that makes those recommendations.

Ms. Wideman said thank you, Mayor, for that reminder.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said Pam; thank you so much for your presentation. I got two or three points; number one, I think Ms. Johnson touched on it, let's make sure we are coordinating our efforts with United Way and maybe that just from educating the citizens, I think there are two excellent programs and we need to make sure people realize how we help them with 80% AMI there as assistance and we also have United Way program. That is just feedback. Secondly, how are we going to advertise this new initiative and maybe you can talk more on that April 13<sup>th</sup>. Thirdly, I do have a question, is this new initiative going to be housed in your Department only?

Ms. Wideman said from the Housing programs Mr. Mitchell; yes sir.

Mr. Mitchell said okay, thank you.

**Councilmember Newton** said I've got some heartburn over not offering rental assistance myself. I'm wondering if our goal is to keep folks in their homes, understanding that they are going to be racking up debt. Now certainly, evictions aren't moving forward right now, but when we come out of this and people wouldn't have paid those bill, those bills are still going to come due, and I'm wondering if we are approaching this wrong where we are looking at security deposit assistance, but we are

not helping keep people in their homes in the first place. I would be interested to know if there is any way where we can look at this from the standpoint of those debts accruing, and possibly provide some of that assistance so people aren't kicked out of their homes in the first place. Maybe if you could comment on that Pam; but I wanted to ask Ryan about the ESG funds. Are these guaranteed; do we know that we are going to get \$1.7 million in those funds? Did you say that earlier?

Mr. Bergman said yes.

Mr. Newton said so, right now, do we know what we have in our reserves?

Mr. Bergmann said which reserves? Do you mean like General Fund reserves?

Mr. Newton said General Fund reserves, yes sir.

Mr. Bergmann said we carry two month's operating expenses in our General Fund reserves.

Mr. Newton said I'm assuming that is larger than \$1.7 million?

Mr. Bergmann said yes.

Mr. Newton said so what prevents us from looking at those reserves being able to access those? Can we reimburse those from the \$1.7 from the ESG if we were to use reserves?

Mr. Jones said I will jump in; Mr. Newton; when we think about those reserves and I believe what you are talking about is that 16% fund balance. What Ryan mentioned earlier in terms of good financial practices, GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) recommends having two-months of operating expenses in that reserve. That is what we have now and when we start to think about that reserve we start to think about the long-term and we don't know exactly what is ahead of us, whether it is sales tax declines or even some challenges with paying employees as we move forward. So, while you could go into that, that is not what I would recommend based on where we are tonight in this discussion.

Mr. Newton said we could reimburse that right? It is not like we are at any loss in this because it will surely be reimbursed because you were saying Ryan that we are guaranteed this \$1.7 million.

Mr. Bergmann said there is a federal provision called supplanting which basically says that you can't use federal dollars to reimburse anything that you would have done, or you've already done. Most federal awards will carry that so, the risk would be you do something early and then you are not able to reimburse it from the money that we get in late April. We have no guidance that would be acceptable in this fashion so, we have to treat it like typical federal programs.

Mr. Newton said when are we expecting the ESG dollars to come in?

Mr. Bergmann said late April.

Mr. Newton said so what we are saying here from the standpoint of us; it is my understanding this is going to come back to us on Monday? Is that what we said?

Mayor Lyles said yes.

Mr. Newton said so we are going to consider voting on this on Monday, but the programs themselves and the funding won't happen until later. Is that right?

Mayor Lyles said it would be the 13<sup>th</sup> and we are expecting the funding within two-weeks and then getting operationalized, I think that would be generally about the



timeframe for it. So, if we go Monday and the funds would come in by the time the planning. I'm looking at Pam and Ryan, we would operationalize the programs that you adopt or approve.

Mr. Newton said the way I understand this, and I would look at it; nothing seems to prevent us from looking at this and approving tonight in my estimation because we still don't see the funds coming in until later, however, we might as well give a little more time for you Pam to work through this. I would, because we have nothing to lose in that regard, but I am someone that is very concerned about us not offering rental assistance here because I do feel like there are going to be plenty of people who are unable. They will get back to work and we can maybe say jobs, but they are not going to make three times as much in a month to cover some of the expenses that they have accrued by not being able to pay rent in the meantime. I think maybe what we can do is we can look at this and say our goal is those people not being homeless, put on the street and if we can help with that then we don't need to take the security deposit money and help folks in that regard so much as we are helping folks by not putting them on the street through rental assistance now. Maybe we can talk about that a little bit more Pam, but I am very concerned about no rental assistance in this.

Mayor Lyles said rental assistance is going to be a very big deal until unemployment checks come in and they are being projected in two to three weeks. It is a very difficult issue. I think a lot of landlords understand that. I think if you will follow up with Mr. Newton, I think he has got some questions about that. Is that fair Mr. Newton?

Mr. Newton said yes ma'am.

**Councilmember Graham** said I understand the times that we are in and this is in terms of how do we use the monies that we have set aside for the application that Ms. Wideman is reviewing starting next week. I understand clearly the moment we are in as a community and I understand the urgency of now, helping people now. But we also have to again, do forward-thinking in that we are still going to have to build affordable housing come December, January 2021 moving forward. So, we've got to exercise what I believe is some "discipline" to help our community through this crisis be as supportive as we can with the resources that we have, leverage the dollars that we are getting from Washington, DC. This community has been extremely generous in terms of its contribution to help with rental assistance and we can do more there. Mortgage relief, we are going to talk a little bit about small business, so I just implore the Council to understand the moment that we are in today, but also understand that we are going to have to operate tomorrow, and we are going to take a big financial impact. The Manager hasn't talked about that yet, but you know it is going to be tough sledding, so, we have to make sure that the dollars we have set aside for the affordable housing Trust Fund. I've talked to a number of stakeholders in the community within the last week and a half relating to our Trust Fund dollars, how they are being utilized. I met this morning virtually with the Men's Shelter and others so, folks are rightly concerned and we ought to be supportive as possible, but we have to plan for today and look forward to tomorrow where we are going to have to make some serious financial decisions later this year so we need to be mindful of some of the decisions that we are making today and the impact it is going to have on tomorrow. So, I just said that I look forward to receiving the presentation from Ms. Wideman next week. There are a number of good applications there to support our long-term strategy for affordable housing, and I just think again, I just caution us to understand the moment we are in, understand that we have to help people help themselves, but we've got to operate as a City tomorrow, and if we spend all the resources today then we are going to pay for it six, seven, eight months from now. I just said that as a comment. I do echo what my Councilmembers are saying in reference to how we can be a little bit more supportive on the rental side, and I'm pretty sure that Ms. Wideman has heard that loud and clear and it is just a combination of some of the things that we should be doing.

Mayor Lyles said before we go back and circle around to the people that have already spoken on housing, I'm going to ask Pam to go through the Housing Trust Fund

information, and then we will come back and circle around to people that want to speak again.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said Ms. Wideman; thank you for your presentation. How much total balance that United Way has been able to raise to address rental assistance?

Ms. Wideman said Ms. Ajmera; please don't quote me on this, but I believe it is \$15 million. I can contact them and have a precise answer for you on or before the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Ajmera said are all those funds being used for rental assistance of some sort?

Ms. Wideman said no ma'am, not all of them are being used for rental assistance. I was simply pointing out that that was one of the first in a series of grants that they made was for rental assistance.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Graham; if you have that number will you text Ms. Ajmera with it?

Ms. Ajmera said Ms. Wideman; if you could get that number for us that would be great. How much has been allocated for rental assistance specifically so that we have a general idea of how much is already there so, that we can make the decision whether we need to allocate more or not? That is number one; number two, I know that there have been funds allocated for hotel and motel assistance where tenants have been calling the helpline to get hotel and motel assistance and I was told it was only for a week. Is that correct?

Ms. Wideman said I don't know the answer to that Ms. Ajmera, but I can check with my colleagues at the County and find out what the duration of that was for.

Ms. Ajmera said that would be great because I have been told, we have gotten e-mails that it was only for one week and that is not sufficient. There are many families who have lost jobs and aren't able to apply for unemployment because of the system being overrun. That way we can understand whether we need to allocate resources there.

The third item; there have also been several e-mails about people who are not getting through to talk to someone when they call our hotel and motel helpline to get some sort of relief. Has that been addressed?

Ms. Wideman said here is my response to that Ms. Ajmera. It is my understanding that those calls are going to 211 so, we don't handle 211. What I will tell you though is that 311, all of those calls are going through. We receive about 2,700 calls per day and those calls are being answered by 311, but I don't know about 211.

Ms. Ajmera said I'm trying to understand if folks are calling 211 to get relief for their rental payment and if they are not able to speak to someone what is the alternative there? Can any of these resources be used for that payment extension, but then to also increase the capacity?

Ms. Wideman said let me talk with my colleagues at the County and just make sure I understand how 211 is being handled and then I can offer you a better response.

Ms. Ajmera said that will be great.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said I think it is clear that the Council has a desire to see more people stay in their housing and we know that it is cheaper than to have to house somebody who is now homeless. I'm a little bit concerned about how, and I know you are going to give us a presentation, but I'm concerned about how this is all going to get flushed out by next week when presumably we have to vote on it. Are we voting on this next week?

Mayor Lyles said it will be presented, but you don't have to approve it. You could say I'm not comfortable with it. This is being pushed to the agenda if you are ready, but it does not mean that if the Council doesn't agree with the direction it certainly will go to the next meeting.

Ms. Eiselt said I think everybody would want to see this get done as soon as possible to start helping people, but I think what Mr. Graham brought up about thinking forward has been on my mind too, and although we don't want to push that decision making out further, I also think there would be an opportunity when the eviction ruling ends for people that had been impacted for that to then apply to have some of that money to get relief for some of that money. My concern is on the process and the structure and this will go towards our response to the CARES Act as well with small businesses because we are not set up to help individuals and we are not set up to help all the small businesses that are going to need it. I would like to see us do more to help individuals, but doing that through even our COVID response fund and working with the organizations that are set up to help individuals like Crisis Assistance or maybe there is one out there that is going to really not be dealing with people that are already homeless, but looking for our community partners to fund that, to run that money through because I have a really big concern about a bottleneck that we are going to create when we try to get something approved and it is going to take a long time, and we want to tweak it or whatnot. I don't know if I said that very succinctly, but I'm really concerned about getting money into the hands of people that need it sooner than later, so we don't create a bigger problem than we are really struggling to fix. I would hope that we would use our community partners for that.

Ms. Wideman said Ms. Eiselt; I'm sensing the fierce urgency of now and I'm taking into consideration everything and I appreciate the feedback that you guys have given us. The housing programs that we propose to you, if you guys were to get comfortable for approving them on the 13<sup>th</sup> I would just remind you we are not going to get the money until the 23<sup>rd</sup>, which gives us time to kind of flush out the mechanics. I will remind you that some of this we've kind of done before, we've not had COVID before, but we've had other disasters like Katrina and you name it, so we have a concept to kind of who the partners are, how this could work and so I will commit to you if you all have other questions, we could talk about those as we lead up to Monday. We will work with the partners, but I do believe in all earnestly we can really get kind of the housing programs that we've talked to you about tonight up and running sooner rather than later. I will remind you guys that we've been working on the Trust Fund proposals since January, so that is nothing new. I believe we can get it done. I tend to not over-promise, but I really do believe we can get this done.

Ms. Eiselt said I think that is great because you are working within the structure of what staff really has built thus far, but we need that other layer of what is different because of this crisis now and how are we going to address that component. It seems to me the easiest way, none of this is easy, but one of the surest ways to do it is to work with our partners who know how to work with the individuals directly or who can help. It is kind of like the banker out there, if they know how to lend to people and they know how to qualify people, then let's use those people that know how to do that because it is isn't what we do.

Ms. Wideman said absolutely.

Mayor Lyles said let's go to the Trust Fund presentation.

Ms. Wideman said just real briefly, again, tonight is intended to be very high level. I would just inform you all that we are currently evaluating with our partners LISC 10 proposals. Within those 10 proposals, they are a combination of new construction, preservation, 194 shelter beds and that is especially important with where we are with COVID today, and it speaks to our continued partnership with the homeless community. Again, I will be back to you on the 13<sup>th</sup> to take a deeper dive with each of those proposals and then after that to the extent you are comfortable, we would ask you to approve them at the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, and that will still enable developers to meet the

North Carolina Housing Finance Agency May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. You will also, before your Monday meeting, receive the booklet that we gave to you last time that gives you more of the logistics about each of those deals. Again, I will point out, given this homeless conversation, 20% of the units in each proposal is for households earning 30% and below. That is all I have on that tonight.

Mr. Winston said kind of going back to the conversations my colleagues were having for I certainly do want to get to the Housing Trust Fund presentations, I'm very interested in talking about several of them, especially the Brook Hill proposal that is sitting out there. I think we do need to look forward and I think we don't need to look forward to December. I think we need to look forward to the next couple of months. We should presume that this will turn into a financial crisis as well. We know that people are not going to be able to pay their rents and their mortgages, and rent relief, that doesn't simply fall on the renter. There are large mortgages that have to be paid to financial lenders and as people don't pay their rent, even with eviction being postponed, those assets are becoming toxic on balance sheets. We know after 2008 there was a complete restructuring of the way corporate landlords, for instance, moved into rental situations. We should assume that there will be a restructuring of the way the housing market operates coming out of this. You see reports, if you kind of dig into between the lines, you see that there are a lot of pressures mounting. We also know from experience that already during a great housing market and great construction market, we see things like the Convention Center where HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) companies went out of business and shot up construction costs. We should assume that since small businesses are going out of business this will happen again. Again, I don't know about the wisdom of trying to invest in projects traditionally that are going to come in two years down the line when the market is going to be completely different coming out of this. Before we make any decisions on millions and millions of dollars of spending, I think it would be a good thing if we immediately put into our Great Neighborhoods Committee the charge to draft an emergency housing framework that will supersede the existing framework that we have. We have to operate differently in the immediate but also looking down the line in the short-term as we should make some strong assumptions about the changes that are coming to the housing market. We should make some educated assumptions about what is about to happen.

Mr. Mitchell said Pam; I'm just trying to remember the guidance we have on HTF (Housing Trust Fund) request; is it a maximum of \$2 million? Has that been the rule of thumb we've been using in the past?

Ms. Wideman said yes sir, we are trying to leverage our local partner like LISC such that you don't approve more than \$2 million per project from your Housing Trust Fund that allows you to better leverage your dollars.

Ms. Watlington said I forgot whatever the question was from the last time, but I do still have two; the first one is just [inaudible] I want to make sure that I'm not lost. We are still going to talk small business specifically, correct?

Mayor Lyles said yes, we will do that as soon as this conversation is over.

Ms. Watlington said and then just a general thought over all of these pieces. I really just echo what some of the other Councilmembers have said. I appreciate us building on what it is, but I would really like us to continue to think about who is left out. We know that right now with our existing programs pre-COVID, there is some segment of the population that doesn't meet whatever requirements are put out by each program. As we go back and really comb through what the requirements are for each of these pieces, I would like us to do that through a lens of what is true today so that we can make sure that we don't have a lot of programs that end up not being utilized because people who applied don't qualify. Does that make sense?

Ms. Wideman said yes it does.

Mayor Lyles said it may be helpful to add what the federal stimulus money was targeted as. You know the \$60,000 was for the \$600 monthly, they were targeting a \$60,000 salary. I think we need to have some reference points to our point about what we can do and who we are targeting. Also, other groups are targeting and working in close groups as well. Just some reference points on that would be helpful Pam if you could do that.

Ms. Wideman said yes ma'am.

Ms. Johnson said one of the things I wanted to clarify regarding the Housing Trust dollars; you said it is itemized or delineated to be used towards capital construction. Is that right Pam?

Ms. Wideman said that is correct.

Ms. Johnson said now that we are, and I keep using this word, in an extraordinary time, it could be a time to really start thinking outside of the box for the City. Could we take a look at building codes and enforcement and using alternative materials right now, such as shipping containers or the new form of construction. Is that something that we could take a look at because those construction projects are faster and they that much sooner than traditional? Is that something that we can take a look at and take a more innovative approach to construction at this time?

Ms. Wideman said yes ma'am, we can take a look at the shipping containers.

Mayor Lyles said I want to go beyond that; I think Ms. Johnson is talking about overall what is the latest in building materials and construction and not just the containers. But I do think it is time for us to look at that, but I also want to remind Council that the Great Neighborhoods Committee actually has a charge to look at the framework already. That doesn't have to be referred, that is already in their list and I think these questions that we are raising about how we do financing, what is different, what can we do that would perhaps looking; you remember when we had the tiny house thing going and it just kind of went away. I wonder if we are looking at our Comprehensive Plan, how do we plan for it. I know we've talked about duplexes and triplexes in R-3 neighborhoods or any R neighborhoods, but I think we have to look at things differently as well. I would support that effort from Ms. Johnson to look at materials and see, not the ones that make us lose our assets in five-years, but things that people are trying to look at to lower the cost of housing. I think that is important.

Ms. Wideman said yes ma'am, we will do that.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Winston; you sent a note about the housing framework to Committee, it is already in Committee.

Mr. Winston said when is the Committee going to meet to discuss this?

Mayor Lyles said I don't know when it's been scheduled or what information has been requested. I know that Mr. Graham has looked at a number of ideas with Pam, but I don't know the answer to that, and now at this time it may be a little bit difficult.

Mr. Winston said I would love to be shared with that information as I am the Vice-Chair of that Committee and I haven't heard anything about this.

Mayor Lyles said that is the last speaker on this topic. Mr. Jones do you want to introduce the next topic or bring the new people in?

Marcus Jones said the last topic on the agenda for tonight will be the stimulus funds, but how it relates to people, and we will have our CFO, Kelly Flannery, and Tracy Dodson come in and discuss that with us.

Mayor Lyles said Council; I'm reminded, I was listening to something from the White House and one of the folks said the economy is not the economy without people in it.

So, it is kind of an interesting thing they were talking about the [inaudible] position of are we trying to save the economy or are we trying to keep people well. I don't know how you do one without the other. It is interesting the position that they are taking.

Mr. Jones said before I turn it over to Kelly and Tracy, one of the things that we had talked about was CDBG funds and a lot of what we've been discussing for a period of time now has been the allocation of CDBG funds as related to Covid-19. We do have a current balance of CDBG funds that I would like to discuss tonight. It is about a million dollars and how that is deployed could also be wrapped up into whatever decision the Council makes this evening about moving forward. So, with that said, and as I said earlier, we tried to figure out how to put this thing together and now Kelly is going to talk about the stimulus package, not just from the perspective of the City collecting dollars, but what is out there flowing in the system.

**Kelly Flannery, Chief Financial Officer** said as the Manager mentioned there is a lot of opportunities for the individual for relief in the CARES Package. A lot of this I think you are familiar with, but I appreciate any questions you might have as we've done a fair amount of research over the last couple of weeks. Obviously, there are additional unemployment benefits and tax rebates. The US Department of Labor keeps putting out guidance every day on what that looks like, but we know for sure it provides an additional \$600 in weekly unemployment insurance benefits that we've paid back from March 29<sup>th</sup> and is scheduled to end July 31<sup>st</sup>. It will provide an additional 13-weeks of unemployment insurance benefits. It also allows for employment compensations for individuals that weren't previously covered by unemployment, and that will be independent contracts, the self-employed, and obviously, there are the rebates up to \$1,200 for those with a salary up to \$75,000. Those are expected in two to three weeks. There is also the ability to withdraw from your 401-K, your 457 with loan release, and deferred penalty.

We talked a little about mortgage forbearance. Borrowers with federally backed mortgages can submit a forbearance request that must be granted without penalties. These are interest for a period of 180-days as well as federal student loans are suspended.

Now small business; there are two programs that we are all familiar with, but there is also some smaller stuff that is not specific to small business but is applicable to all corporations and that is the Employer Retention Credit that allows for 50% of the refundable tax credit when corporations are doing their tax returns as well as deferment of employer payroll taxes. If we all remember in 2017 Tax Reform, there were a lot of changes to the Alternative Minimum Tax. A lot of that has been lifted and gone back to pre-2017 regulations. As it relates to small business, I think we are all familiar with the Disaster Loan Program. It has been expanded and I have on the slide a comparison of the EIDL Program and the PPP Program. The goal of the EIDL (Emergency Injury Disaster Loan) Program is to expand and offer financial support to businesses experiencing reduced revenue as a result of Corona. It provides up to \$2 million to small businesses via low-interest loans. Businesses will pay 3.75%, non-profits 2.75% for a loan term of up to 30-years. Companies can apply for an EIDL, can request \$10,000 advance. If the loan application is approved the SBA (Small Business Administration) mandated but it will be distributed and that \$10,000 within three days of the loan approval. Even if the loan is not approved, you are still going to receive the \$10,000 non-reimbursable, you don't have to give it back. That application is currently available, loans are being accepted now and that is on the SBA website.

Effective on Friday the Feds began the PPP, Payroll Protection Program. That is the \$350 million program, government-backed goes through individual banking institutions. For that one that is for working capital, payroll, rent, utilities. Businesses that maintain payroll levels at their normal level for at least eight-weeks will be able for forgiveness for those loans and it is a loan up to \$10 million. For that one, the eligibility is the typical small business administration definition of fewer than 500 workers. It is determined your amount up to the \$10 million by the amount of payroll you have, it is a formula. If you want to apply you can go to your existing SBA lender, your bank. On a personal note,

my family member applied on Friday, it was pretty easy. Those are the two federal programs. There is also the Golden Relief Foundation Program. That was created about three-weeks ago, it was \$15 million, zero percent interest loans. You only have to have one employee and you've got a \$50,000 program and that program has been completely spoken for. They are trying to identify additional funding, but that is kind of the state's contribution. The Golden Relief Foundation was money that came from the tobacco settlement back in the late '90s. It is technically a state received revenue.

I don't want to get too far ahead of the County because they haven't had the opportunity for the Board to review those programs yet, but tomorrow, based on conversations we've had with the County and publicly available information. The County is going to propose the Covid-19 Small Business Emergency Stabilization Loan Fund. It will be a \$5 million contribution, three percent interest loans to eligible business, again, for working capital as well as a Micro-Business Program. I believe that is \$350,000 and that will be micro-businesses which definitionally is five employees or less. That will fund \$10,000 funds that will not be available for Charlotte micro-businesses so that is the gap there. Right now, that is the program that we've identified both through the stimulus and the local government.

**Tracy Dodson, Assistant City Manager** said I want to start with a quick recap of the kind of what we did last week and let you know that our entire team has pivoted to focus on connecting and being a resource for any and small businesses. Through this, we have outreached to community organizations, small business partners, individual businesses themselves, but other partners like the Women's Business Center, the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance to understand what people are hearing and small businesses throughout our entire community. As Kelly mentioned earlier it really identify what the gaps are. In addition to that, the Mayor led and staff supported a series of small group discussions that were targeted in three areas, hospitality, retail, and finance. City Council appointed Business Advisory Committee was also very proactive in utilizing their members to reach out to the community and develop a list of recommendations based on what they heard. They focused on three primary areas, all small businesses, airports, and the Food Truck Industry. Councilmember Mitchell and staff have already had an initial discussion with [inaudible] Wilson, who is the Chairperson of the BAC (Business Advisory Committee) regarding these recommendations and we are working through them. We've also had an outreach to various landlords in the commercial and multifamily space to gauge what rent deferral and abatement strategies are being used. As you can imagine, it is across the board, but we are finding that many landlords are trying to work with individuals or with companies.

We also held a Small Business Forum on Friday with the assistance of Councilmember Bokhari's zoom platform and ended up with more than 466 registrations. We also created an e-mail that is specifically for small businesses to allow them to reach out with questions or concerns. That e-mail address, please push out, is [charlottesupportsmallbusiness@charlottenc.gov](mailto:charlottesupportsmallbusiness@charlottenc.gov). I think you also received an e-mail from Chad Turner at the LGBT Chamber with recommendations. We are gathering recommendations from a lot of different places and we are combing through all of these and prioritizing what can be done, what can't be done, and then what would need further investigation or collaboration. We will continue to assess those, but primarily we have categorized this into two things, what we are hearing from businesses is that they want to collaborate. We will continue to collaborate with our partners, but they are all in need to pivot and are actively seeking out ways to hear how others are adjusting and finding resources. There is a lot of information out there and people are really struggling where to get it or how to make sense of some of it. We have looked at continuing the Forum and identify ways that business to business can collaborate.

The other thing is that businesses want to connect. They obviously want to connect too money and resources, but the education around the loan programs that Kelly mentioned, and they also want to say that they are open for business in a different way, but that they are still open for business. We heard that loud and clear last week that businesses are pivoting, but they don't know how to get the word out there. While there

is a lot of need for money, we are looking at a lot more of what can be done to help small businesses and we are looking at this platform again for businesses to connect and create a database, the businesses that are open, whether it be restaurants which I know a lot of websites are already listing websites, but other services on how can we create a database for people to go to find out who is open for business. The other one is, we started collecting information on who is offering consulting, webinars, or other education around the SBA programs. We are looking at how to connect people to these resources, but then also, how we need to support these resources to make sure that they can meet the demand. There is a lot of people that are trying to offer one on one counseling with businesses to help them with the loan program and other questions they might have. We need to make sure and support that those can maintain the flow that is coming at them right now.

Mr. Winston said my question is from a City standpoint with our City money; since we don't know where any market is going to come out and we know that businesses do operate by the forces of the market, what is the wisdom in terms of using our resources to guess where the market will be when we come out of all of this versus putting our funds and assets and resources to individuals which will always be here regardless of what the markets do?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Winston; we tried to divide the presentation up just that way. So, the first piece, those CDBG dollars north of \$5 million, we thought about that in terms of people. The second part of the presentation as the CFO has shown, there are programs out there, and I think the biggest question that folks have is the timing, when do the dollars flow? One of the gaps that we saw in the analysis is that assuming that the County program goes through tomorrow, there seems to be a lack of a focus on micro-businesses in Charlotte, those five employees or less, and that is one of the things that we saw as a gap as it relates to some of the programs. So, people yes, we started off the discussion with those CDBG and ESG funds and now we are talking about the businesses and I think what you are asking is what is the City's role in that, and I think I heard you say to make sure we don't forget people.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you Mr. Manager for identifying gaps, especially for micro-businesses because, for both EIDL and PPP laws, we have gotten e-mails that a lot of businesses are not able to get dollars in a timely manner, especially those who may not have an existing relationship with the lender, so that could create the challenge. I think that is the area where we continue to invest in. Tracy, do you have a presentation of all the material that you went over and if you could send that to us? Also, if we could get some sort of write-up or presentation before the meeting so that we can prepare and ask questions that would be great. Also, we would like to send this to all the businesses who can potentially participate in this opportunity.

Mr. Jones said we can get that for you, yes.

Ms. Eiselt said thank you Tracy; that is helpful information. I have a couple of questions with regard to gaps and whatnot. The forum that you mentioned; what is the thought process for this being an ongoing forum in terms of is there any thought that this forum would continue for the long haul? I think we know that this is going to take a lot longer than a couple of months for these companies to recover and I think there is going to be an ongoing need for the collaboration, for the communication about what resources are out there, what companies can do. To that extent, some states have set up business recovery task forces and some cities have done that. I hope that this would sort of morph into a business recovery task force that would continue for the foreseeable future and continue to shed this kind of information for companies. And they are not limited to companies; I know the Alliance has been very involved in this, but a lot of the smaller companies are not part of the Alliance so, this would be for any company to be able to access information from the taskforce.

Ms. Dodson said what I will say is we have been talking to corporate communications about how we keep an ongoing forum going. We don't quite know yet know what the right cadence of that is, but we think that the issues and things that people are facing



will evolve as we go through this. So, we need to keep the dialogue open. Another piece is, we have about more than 20 partners that we work with; Alliance, for example is just one of them. Area Chambers and I mentioned the Women's Small Business, so we have a lot of different partners that are out there and have access in the lay of the land is talking to businesses so, we are trying to use our partners to understand what they are heading. We will continue, and I think we want to make a forum open to any and all.

Ms. Eiselt said okay, I think that is encouraging. The second piece and Ms. Ajmera touched on it, and I mentioned to you all earlier in the week. I was concerned about the CARES Act and continue to be because the already banked companies are the ones that are going to get access to that money first. Those that already have credit relationships with big banks, so it leaves out the smaller companies that don't have credit relationships that haven't been borrowing, and also there is a concern out there that some of the smaller banks won't participate in this program because frankly, it is really daunting for a bank to set up the back rooms operation needed to be able to get this money out the door and make sure that they are following all the regulations that are still in place that a bank has to have. Somethings have been waived, but not everything and so I hope whatever funding we have available that we will reserve it, and this gets back to thinking forward, reserve something so that we can anticipate who falls between the cracks and who is going to need that money. That is the second point, and lastly, I'll just say that we don't necessarily think of the artist community as a small business, but the arts organizations typically are larger organizations. The artist themselves are effectively small businesses. Some cities have put in place separate pots of money for stabilization for local artists and performers and I think that is something we need to think about and basically what they've done is they've identified the industries that are most vulnerable of never coming back whether it be entertainment, restaurant, hospitality, and the arts. So, I hope that there is something there that in particular will be for our arts community as well.

**Councilmember Egleston** said to Ms. Eiselt's final point there a moment ago, the Arts and Science Council has created a fund to help assist the artist themselves, and so maybe that is something that I know obviously, they are a part of our discussions going forward with the budget. Part of the budget stuff will be up in the air now and I'm sure significantly changing revenue projections, but maybe as we talk to the Arts and Science Council about how they fit into our budget that could be part of it, focusing on that fund that they have created to actually help the people and not just the institutions which I know is again, helping the people in that community is part of their charge already, but maybe we can do more specifically focused on that.

I guess my more general question is, I know that the state's reaction to this crisis was going to be somewhat predicated on the federal response. Now that there has been a federal response, I know that the state is working behind the scenes to try to iron out a deal before they go back into session on the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month. But, hopefully, they can walk in the door and vote on it and they would have done the hard work of negotiating it before they get there. I have not been given any impression that they are going to go into session before the 28<sup>th</sup>. If that is the case how much of our reaction or what programs we put forward or what capital we deploy will be predicated on what the state decides to do, and if that is still three-weeks away how much of the action we are going to take can we take before we know what the state is doing and how much of it will have to be dependent on the decisions that they make? I think three-weeks is going to be an awfully long time given that we are three weeks into this for a lot of people. Another three-weeks could push people past the breaking point, both individuals and businesses. I know there is some anxiousness about how quickly the City and the County are going to put forward their plans, or at least part of them.

Mr. Jones said Mr. Egleston; that has been everybody's frustration is that there are significant dollars out there, how do you get the dollars when do the dollars begin flowing, and to what extent are, we going to be repetitive with some of the things that we do. I do believe that right now, in terms of the first part of this discussion with the CDBG funds and ESG funds that makes sense because we see that as being a gap. In terms of what we are seeing with some of our small businesses the gap that we see right now,

and I think a couple of you have alluded to it, are those micro-businesses, and I will go a step farther and say potentially those micro-businesses in our corridors. We are not sure that is something that is specifically designed for those businesses.

Mr. Egleston said that would be your first priority then as something the City would do, maybe take on specifically that we don't anticipate being addressed by Washington or Raleigh?

Mr. Jones said yes when we started to talk this through and there is a bunch of different definitions, but if we start to think about what is deemed as being non-essential, and what is deemed that is non-essential in some of our corridors, we believe that those businesses are some of the ones we should focus on, and technical assistance is extremely important. We think that there is a big gap there. We do have a relationship with LISC, and we've had that for a while. That is just a place to start; I'm not recommending an amount or anything like that, but it is the gap that we identified when we started to look at the various programs.

Ms. Johnson said I think when we first started getting the calls we identified, I think you are right Marcus, that the micro-businesses or even to go a step further, the sole proprietor, the contractors, the realtors, the barbers and the beauticians, the independent contractors who are not even eligible for unemployment up until this last stimulus package. I don't think that they are able to apply until mid-April, I don't think that is even rolled out. I think that is a huge gap because we think about it from a federal standpoint, the individuals are eligible for unemployment, they are getting the \$600 per week additional subsidy, so there is this group that we really need to consider and the SBA loan, they may not have the paperwork. We just have to be able if possible, to provide something for those small businesses. Like you said, the non-essential, and I'm not sure if real estate is essential or non-essential, but you've got the realtors, you've got people whose business were just – they earn what they make. They don't have any other sources, so we've got to provide assistance for them. Some of them may not have been able to pay their April rent, so these aren't things that should be cumbersome, or if there is an option for small businesses those are the ones that we need to take a look at in my opinion. I did get a text from Crisis and also looked at their website, they are not doing rental assistance right now and that is the individual's offer, they are focused on the hotel extension. So, we've got to be able to take some action, it is not business as usual. What Mr. Newton was saying earlier if there is a way to make some decisions sooner than later then I think we as a Council, would all be on board for that.

Ms. Watlington said the City Manager actually brought this up; for me this highlights an existing gap. COVID or no COVID, in regard to supporting small businesses on corridors so, I would like to see, as we think about who is on those corridors. The laundry mats, the barbershops, the candy stores, who are the owners of these businesses and how are those owners, whether they are returning citizens, or they haven't been in business very long or they don't have the credit score necessary to get some of these other programs. I don't think we have to wait on the state to figure out how to close those gaps because they've been here. I would like to [inaudible] at the risk of being repetitive and be iterative in the solutions because, with small businesses, many of them are two-weeks away from out of cash. So, three-weeks is out of the question as some of my colleagues have already said. This one I definitely want to move forward on. To that point and Ms. Johnson just said it, from a timing standpoint I'm also okay to lean forward on this piece. I know we are still in a fact-finding mode because a lot is changing, but on this, in particular, I was hoping to see a proposal tonight. So, as soon as we can get to that I'm very interested in helping that move forward.

As it relates to small businesses, I just want to lift up a couple of things that I've been hearing and some of this is already in the e-mails that I've sent. I just want to echo what some of my colleagues have said as far as ensuring the speed of delivery. Folks don't want this to be super bureaucratic, consider who is being left out, whether it is like I said, it is the credit the age of their business of things like that. Finally, I just want to highlight, I know this work is going on, but I'm particularly interested in following it; the

Airport substance and how rent abatement is being trickled down to them. I want to make sure that it doesn't fall through the cracks. I just had a follow-up question about the County programs that were shown here. Is that including what they anticipate running tomorrow or now?

Ms. Dodson said there are two programs considered tomorrow; the larger one is a loan fund that is about \$5 million and the other is \$350,000 CDBG Program and used for the micro-businesses, including the City of Charlotte businesses, both are up for consideration tomorrow.

Mr. Graham said why is the City of Charlotte excluded, I guess would be my first question, from the County Micro-business grant?

Ms. Dodson said the City as well as Mint Hill, and I think it is because they are using CDBG funds and I think there is some sort of rule because we also receive CDBG funds that they can't kind of double serve the same population. We need to confirm that, but that is my guess.

Mr. Graham said that sounds reasonable. Victoria and others have stressed the point in terms of serving micro and minority-owned firms and I don't want to forget that population as well. Has there been many interfaces between the City's MWBE (Minority and Women Business Enterprise) Program with some of the discussions specifically and how are we working with them and how are we addressing that population?

Ms. Dodson said they are a part of that partner list that we have been reaching out to and gathering information back from at this point. We don't have something yet proposed specific to them, but they are a part of that discussion that we've been doing the outreach to, to understand the gaps.

Mr. Graham said I think we ought to think about them as a separate and distinguished group, minority-owned firms and I've already spoken with the Manager so he kind of knows what my trend of thinking is regarding helping with micro-business along the corridors in our community. Marcus, a question for you and then I'll be quiet; is there a community, for the lack of a better phrasing, a community spreadsheet that kind of outlines all these different programs that folks are doing so we can make sure that there is no duplication? There is a lot of money out there and there are a lot of programs out there, a lot of people are doing a lot so, is there such a document or someone kind of keeping an eye out for us in terms of who is doing what so there are no duplications?

Mr. Jones said you threw me off when you said community spread, but then you said sheet. I would say that we started this weekend trying to get a better handle on it, and I don't want to put this assignment in Kelly's lap, but it is so much information and so much that is being done. The thing that we find that I guess is low hanging fruit, is that gap for micro-businesses, especially in our corridors. I think and what I'm hearing from the Councilmembers tonight that is a space that we should get in fast.

Mr. Graham said I agree. Again, I think you guys know what my thinking is on that Marcus, so good presentation, just ready to kind of see some action steps.

Mayor Lyles said I think it would be helpful; it is not quite the same thing, but we ought to ask the Foundation; since the million dollars into their fund, how they have been doing it. I know Malcolm; you sit on that Committee and so the question is, what have they done. I know that they've done some individual things for people individually and then they've done some business stuff, but I don't know what those things are.

Mr. Graham said we are meeting on Thursday. I just went back to my notes, there is about \$475,000 worth of grants that dealt specifically with rental assistance and so, I will try to send something out to the Councilmembers tomorrow that deals specifically about that. There are a number of questions I want to ask Michael and the folks at the Foundation regarding targeted areas now that we are through with the direct funding. There is another group of funding that we will approve this week and then maybe there

are some specially-groups that we can kind of cluster-specific narrowly tailored interest that we can fund so, we will see where it goes.

Mayor Lyles said thanks for that update.

Mr. Newton said moving forward I think it is really important that we include our minority Chambers of Commerce, the [inaudible] Chambers of Commerce. There is a reason why we received an e-mail from Chad Turner this past couple of days is because those Chambers have not felt as though they have been included in this conversation. I think that they are a very important part of our City and they reflect a large number of businesses that we should be supportive of. I would ask that we include them in this conversation moving forward. There is a website supportclt.com that actually has a lot of really fantastic information that they have compiled. I would agree with a number of my colleagues that we need to act on this as soon as we possibly can because that information truly reflects the situation. This is an exceptional time, unprecedented in nature, but reflects the hardships that many, many small businesses in the Charlotte area are going through. Councilmember Egleston was mentioning that there are some that just aren't going to survive literally in the next two weeks and they need help. They are not receiving it; let's be clear about this too, they are not receiving it from the SBA. There are challenges and barriers there; from what I understand the SBA is now doubling its interest rate and on top of that the payments aren't received upwards to 10-weeks later. We can do better of course. Ms. Eiselt was mentioning other cities that are creating funds and there is a reason for that because they know that these gaps exist. I'm very appreciative of the fact that we have identified a gap right now, I would like to know more about what the County is doing. I do have a question pertaining to the County side of this. These three percent interest and loans that the County is proposing, are these forgivable loans? Do we know and are they voting on this tomorrow, do we know that? I guess what is happening tonight we are having a conversation rather than specifically moving forward on an item. Is that what is happening tomorrow night or are they voting as well, do we know?

Mr. Jones said before I turn it over to Kelly, I just want to make sure that the Mayor and the Council understand where we are right now. Dena and I talked about looking at some type of loan program so, we've let our staff's work together and Kelly has been working with some folks from the County to make sure that whatever occurred in terms of some type of program that both the City and the County would understand or better yet, make sure that this is something that actually works. What we just pulled down is what is available publicly Kelly and in terms of what will happen tomorrow night. We just know it is on the agenda. Is that fair?

Ms. Flannery said just to address your question about a loan versus a grant, the North Carolina General Statute is really clear that you cannot use general fund dollars as a cash grant or loan for a low prime interest rate. It is expressly forbidden, and it is not allowable so, that is why they've used the three percent, which is really kind of below market, but I think justifiable. It has to be a loan, can be paid off early so you wouldn't have to pay the interest, but every entity in North Carolina that is using general fund dollars to be required to charge a prime interest rate.

Mr. Newton said so CDBG dollars are general fund dollars, is that right?

Ms. Flannery said CDBG could be a grant, but any sort of public dollar would have to be a loan.

Mr. Newton said I guess I was under the impression that their \$5 million was CDBG. The dollars that we are talking about for us, we are talking \$1 million CDBG, does that mean that our dollars need to be a loan? It sounds like you are saying they are not coming out of the general fund. The CDBG could be considered separate from the general fund?

Ms. Flannery said the County has two programs it is contemplating; the larger program is \$5 million and it is general fund dollars; the \$350,000 micro-business is CDBG dollars.

Mr. Newton said with these SBA loans, there is only so much money there, right. Are those in perpetuity? These are loans for the entire country, aren't they? Even for businesses that can get that money, is that money that is always going to be there, or is that eventually going to run out?

Ms. Flannery said the disaster loan, EIBL loan would be an unlimited pot that was administered by the SBA and it all has to be paid back, none of that is forgivable. The paycheck programs, that has only been appropriated for \$350 billion and there is already talk about the fourth phase of the stimulus including an increase to that allocation. Yes, right now it is \$350 billion and when it is gone, it is gone.

Mr. Newton said we have lots of small businesses, I think somewhere upwards of 30,000 small businesses within the City and they aren't all located on corridors. Is the reason why we are keying in on corridors is that we are required to with our CDBG dollars?

Mr. Jones said in terms of the CDBG funds they are related to low mod areas, but as we talked about earlier we don't have all of the information related to some of the newer funds that are coming in from CDBG and how we could use that \$3.5 million and as that comes in we will see what kind of flexibility we have.

Mr. Newton said it was my understanding earlier that we were talking about helping individuals with their housing needs and that is where that \$3.5 million was going to go. Are we saying that is flexible and that is not the case? I'm a little confused there.

Mr. Jones said we did mention earlier that the \$5.25 million between the Emergency Solutions Grant and the CDBG would be focused in this proposal on people, but in terms of that \$3.5 million CDBG funds, I'm not sure that the guidance wouldn't make that broader than what we've talked about tonight.

Mr. Newton said so we are talking about \$1 million right now, for small businesses that are CDBG and more specifically identifying a gap for micro-businesses in the City of Charlotte. Is there a proposal in front of us tonight; is that what is happening here or are we just kind of giving a thumbs up? What is the plan I guess is what I'm asking because I'm not hearing a proposal? I don't know what the timeline is here, is there one?

Mr. Jones said it is not a proposal per se tonight. What we've been trying to do is give you information so that we could bring something back to you on the 13<sup>th</sup> for a vote and before we started the discussion related to small businesses, I did say as Pam left, that outside of the new CDBG funds that are coming in we do have the capability of a balance of about \$1 million in those current CDBG funds.

Mr. Newton said what is the turn around on a micro-business grant or forgivable loan here? If we were to vote on this, accept a plan for \$1 million for our City micro-businesses how soon could that money be applied for and allocated?

Mr. Jones said I will T it up for Kelly, but the quickest way to do this we believe would be through LISC that we already have a relationship with. We've already spoken with them to see whether they could administer this, and my understanding is that it is yes. So, I guess the question is how quickly, Kelly?

Ms. Flannery said I would just add, they have already begun technical assistance component and education with the businesses in the corridor. I think they have identified a group and that would be easily ready to do the application, and because it is not loan origination, it would be just grant funds. It would be however long it took for us to get a program created and, on the street and HUD approval for the change in the consolidated plan.

Mr. Jones said I think that is the key and Pam may have said this before she left. We have our five-year plan that we would need to amend, and I believe that our desire is if that is where the Council would like to go but try to amend that as early as the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Newton said if this is where we would like to go does it stand to reason that the sooner we do it the sooner the funds are available to micro-businesses in our community?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Mr. Newton said it is something I'm supportive of and I know that if we were to move forward tonight it would require a unanimous decision. At the same time, I think there are other stakeholders that probably would be interested in weighing in here, but from a majority vote standpoint, this is something that could be placed on the agenda, just this item on the agenda before next Monday. So, I would motion that we do that. I would motion that we put this on the agenda as of next Friday. I don't know if I have a second to that.

Motion was made by Councilmember Newton, that we put this on the agenda as of next Friday.
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Without a second, the motion was not considered.

Mayor Lyles said let me make sure Mr. Newton; you are saying you would like to see the micro-grant on the agenda for Monday for approval?

Mr. Newton said no, it is going to be on the agenda for Monday anyway. I appreciate and understand the need in our community and I would actually like to see a broader proposal here, but we don't quite know what is going to happen with the County tomorrow so, understanding that, at least we do know that this is a proposal that we like and that this money is available to our small businesses and our micro-businesses in the City sooner if we decide upon this sooner, and understanding the need, I think it is prudent for us to consider it and potentially vote on this later this week before we turn the corner into next week.

Mayor Lyles said for us to have a meeting, how many hours of notice do we have to give?

**Patrick Baker, City Attorney** said at least 48 hours.

Mr. Jones said one thing that is important; we would have to amend our plan so, I just don't know what doing that this week would do.

**Ryan Bergman, Strategy and Budget Director** said beyond amending our plan, I believe there is a five-day notice for amending that plan with CDBG. I just want to be careful about that. We would want to check that with Pam.

Mayor Lyles said I think the source of funds is what is driving the timing for the action more than us taking the action right now. We will get some information about that and find out.

Mr. Newton said I guess my question is how long does all that take?

Mayor Lyles said he went to ask someone how long it takes now; he just stepped out of the room.

Mr. Newton said I will keep my hand up for later.

Mr. Mitchell said staff, first of all thank you for convening all the meetings we have with the citizens in the community and the business leaders. I think that was very helpful to get input and to get a feel where the gaps are. I think it pretty evident in our discussion today that we are in fact the second phase or what I call the action phase. Let me ask a question and see if we can get around this CDBG barrier that is in front of us. How much funding do we have left in the Business Corridor bucket?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Mitchell; I don't know exactly how much we have in the Business Corridor bucket; I know we started off the year with \$1.8 million over a two-year period and that we will figure out in the next couple minutes what we have in that.

Mr. Mitchell said my point is we have identified collectively on the phone and through staff that the micro-business is a space where we want to play in, and I agree with Mr. Newton that the business community is wanting us to take action immediately. I do think if we can use the business corridor funding or some of that; as people said, let's be cautious, take action but think forward as well. \$1.8 million is a lot of money that we could use; I'm not saying use all the money, but then we wouldn't have to worry about trying to amend our CDBG Grant Plan and we can take action as early as April 13<sup>th</sup>. I want to make sure we have the same urgency we have on housing because we do know all our citizens need housing, but more importantly, all our citizens need a job as well. If they have a decent job and we can keep them employed, we can at least put them in a position to be successful when it comes to housing. If we can have some discussion about using the Business Corridor funding immediately as a micro-business, I will join in with the rest of my Councilmembers saying April 13<sup>th</sup>. Then Tracy; I do think we need to use some of the input we received from [inaudible] and the Business Advisory Council and some of the information we received from Councilmember Bokhari's Town Hall Meeting. I want to echo Ms. Watlington; at the Airport we have small businesses out there that are in dire need because our biggest employer, American Airlines has cut back 85% of traffic. We need to provide assistance to those businesses there. I think there is the entire small business community, how can we perform or give them some assistance. One thing we need to be clear on, as Mr. Graham said, I know the spreadsheet kind of scared you a little Mr. Manager, but we need to be sure that we are not confusing the community even more with our program. I don't want to worry about what the state is doing. We need to take action on the funds we have. If the County has identified the micro-businesses that are going out of the County businesses, what can we do for the City businesses? I want us to be as direct in helping small businesses, but let's be committed to taking action now. We've got a Council Meeting April 13<sup>th</sup>; there is a Business Workforce Meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup>, we've got another meeting April 27<sup>th</sup> and this Council needs to be committed that we are going to take action and take serious action to help our small business community before the end of this month.

Mr. Jones said Mr. Mitchell; I don't disagree with you at all. So, the Business Corridor money or anything that we take out of PAYGO, too many terminologies; anything that is general fund dollars, as Kelly said earlier, cannot be great, it has to be a loan. So, we were trying to go down the CDBG route because we believe we can use those as grants.

Mr. Mitchell said Mr. City Manager; I would agree, most of the small businesses I have spoken with prefer grants, but I'm saying let's make sure, to your point, do our homework, but let's not go either/or. Let's look at this as an and. What are all the tools we can use right now to provide assistance?

Mr. Jones said okay, understood.

Ms. Eiselt said Mr. City Manager, how is our current micro-grant program funded?

Mr. Jones said the current micro-grant jumpstart grant program is PAYGO.

Ms. Eiselt said so that is not a general fund; that is PAYGO?

Mr. Bergmann said no, PAYGO is also funded by taxpayer dollars so, the same rules would apply.

Ms. Eiselt said but those are grants that we give away?

Mayor Lyles said it is a service; they have a contract for a service; they have a service that they are doing. Those are more like the financial partners.

Mr. Bergman said I did talk to Pam, and as I mentioned, there is a five-day notice, there is no public hearings or anything, but the way this would have to work is tomorrow or Wednesday we would announce our plans to change the CDBG Plan and then you guys would formally vote on it on Monday. Then HUD, and they have committed to try to expedite things right now, would approve that change as soon as you guys did or soon after and that is when the money would be available. So, there is really no scenario where you could do it tonight.

Mayor Lyles said is that HUD in Greensboro or HUD in DC?

Mr. Bergmann said I'm not sure.

Mayor Lyles said it must be Greensboro if it is [inaudible]. Does everybody have that five-day notice to the public and then approval and then we can adopt?

**Councilmember Bokhari** said I'm just going make a quick update comment on the small business forum and then I want to build on what Mr. Mitchell was talking about. As was said we had hundreds of small business owners and people in the community come together last week to do something very, very valuable for us, which helps us gather information. We are learning very quickly from that. We could only a couple of dozen speak, but we got raw information from hundreds of them and what their challenges are and then in particular what we could do to help them, which I think is the place the City needs to be in playing right now. And while much of that centered around the access to capital and frozen kind of credit markets as they exist, of course, we understand a lot of it was in other areas that we hadn't explored or even necessarily been talking about. It is things that we can be doing on our Legislative Agenda for folks in Raleigh; thing that we can look in our own ordinances or regulations to enable the innovation that we are seeing. Things that we can do from a community in leading, bringing non-profits together, bringing the faith community together, just making consumers that want to support small businesses in Charlotte know that they have pivoted their models and they are doing these things. We learned a lot of really valuable information and this is step one in a multi-step process. We've done that and the Mayor and I and others joined, and we had this focus group calls and we learned there so, we've done a lot of gathering of information. I think this is extremely critical if we are going to play our role in helping, and this is just where I'm going to make a soft comment and hopefully, this will resonate and will make some change happen over the next week because if it doesn't, next week's comment is going to be more directed and more firm.

I believe we are in a spot right now where I don't see the level of urgency from staff that I would expect. It is just a matter of we have blocking and tackling from an organization perspective that needs to be done. We've got staff and first responders that need to be protected. We've got to make sure that transit continues and things like that, but when you look at our proactive things in our wheelhouse, in our lane there are two major items arguably that we have to be doing something on from COVID perspective. One is housing; we've talked about that a lot tonight, and unless we get really creative and think out of the box, the housing stuff is a mid-term thing at best. We will try our best to move things around and maybe we can get involved and partner with the County and others that find immediate solutions, but deploying these Housing Trust Fund dollars for things, that isn't going to happen over-night. We've got to get on that and stay on that hard, but secondly, in my mind almost most importantly right now, small business. Small business is dying out there right now. They are literally getting crushed and every day we are losing more and more than just aren't going to come back. I expect a level of



urgency from our organization, which literally that is in our wheelhouse more primarily than almost anything else we've talked about on any calls together as a group over the last week or two. I just expect more urgency, I hope for more urgency [inaudible] things that we are building and vetting our programs from all of this raw information we were able together. I have a level of frustration if you can't tell, but I'm trying to pause for a second and just make this point heard so that we can make that change and by next Monday we have a different tenor and a different approach there, because it is the most important, in my opinion, the thing we can be doing right now, and I don't sense the urgency we need. I just hope you take that feedback Mr. Manager and figure out a way to incorporate it into the next week.

Mr. Jones said will do.

Mr. Winston said we as a city, as an organization, we are major customers in the labor market through our robust contracts that we enter into. How are we looking into what we have had planned to see how we can be good stewards in terms of how we spend our dollars? Are we reprioritizing some contracts, are we thinking about not going forward; how are we communicating with the vendors that we participate with to see what kind of position we can put them in to make sure their employees are paid? I have a follow-up to that.

Mr. Jones said I will have to get with procurement and also with Phil Reiger, and I know he sent something out last week to the Council, but I would like to have a much more in-depth produce for you around what we are doing in that area.

Mr. Winston said I would also like to think about this as something that Mr. Graham alluded to or spoke about something that we had brought up in conversation. As we take a look or change the way we need to purchase items and labor, I think we as a City need to take a look at our MWSBE Program and see what type of adjustments can or need to be made, even if they can't be, what do we need to advocate for to make sure that our MWSBE businesses are able to get prioritized within this kind of new reality as procurement I'm sure will be changing in the short and mid-term? Do we have any thoughts about that or any conversations around that internally?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Winston; that goes in line with the first questions you ask. Phil did send something out last week and again, I just want to make sure that we give you the most robust conversation. I will say that right now, part of what we are doing is, like any other city right now, staying afloat. There are a lot of things that we are looking at on the expenditure side as well as the revenue side, and we also have a group of our employees that I think are going exactly where you want us to be, is thinking what are we doing as we emerge out of this. There are so many folks on a day to day basis that are doing, this being our first responders, but we do have a think tank that is saying what are we supposed to be doing 60-days from now, 90-days from now, 180-days from now.

Mr. Winston said we know, for instance, we have to procure different things like, for instance, we weren't thinking about PPE two months ago or a month ago, so we are going to presumably be spending our money differently. Things like the MWSBE programs, those things need to change now. Are we looking to do that? When is the Economic Development Committee going to meet and consider these things?

Mr. Jones said I believe all the Committees have meetings scheduled for this month, all of the Council Committees, and I'm not sure if that is on the agenda, but that should be an item to be discussed.

Mr. Winston said I have one more question, I asked this earlier and I was told to ask this when this group was in the room. For the Airport, we know that there has been a relief and we have our own money to provide for Charlotte City workers as well as relief for Airline employees, but we know that our Airport is responsible for a lot of jobs that don't fall under those two categories, probably the majority of those jobs over there. So, what are the resources that we have from an economic development standpoint to offer

support for those contract workers surrounding the Airport, for example, food service workers, janitors, again, folks that provide services but weren't directly included in that Airline bailout?

Ms. Dodson said to date I have been working and talking to Brent Cagle on a daily basis. We have not discussed individual contractors out there. What we have been discussing is more of the concessioners that are out there and how to work with them. We have not gotten down into the independent contractors.

Mr. Winston said so, our focus has been on the businesses, but not the workers that are at the Airport?

Ms. Dodson said it has been to the businesses and some of those businesses focus on their workers.

Mr. Winston said what kind of agreements are we getting those folks to agree to, to ensure that their workers are getting the type of support that they need?

Ms. Dodson said I will have to check with Brent; the main thing that everybody we've heard about with the Airport is rent deferral programs and things like that and trying to work through that with the concessioners in the hopes that they do keep some of their employees. We know that Host had laid off a lot of employees, but we are working with some of the other ones that are trying to keep and not lay off employees. I will talk to Brent about other specific initiatives that he has been working on to individuals and let you if there is anything that.

Mr. Winston said to be clear to this point, we have not, from senior staff standpoint, talked about or figure out relief for those contract workers that don't fall under the City worker status of Airline worker status?

Ms. Dodson said I have not been a part of that conversation, no.

Mayor Lyles said I kind of see that as the industry or restaurant workers. I think when we talked with some of the people in the hospitality industry, they said there are 2,500 businesses that are in the concession and food business and restaurants, and so when you look at that and they are saying an average of whatever. They've been talking about how do we address those issues, but the biggest thing has been how do we get people back to work because businesses are made up of people and if we can get people back to work, but we've got a clear challenge here and I think as much as we talk to some of the people in the hospitality industry, they talked about how do we get some of what the federal government has done more quickly in their pocket so, they could have the PPP Program. I think that is really difficult for them because it is part of what is included in some of airlines bailout, but I think we need to ask our team to look at what is included in the airline bailout because there are some restrictions and I don't know if they address the question that you've been raising, but we need to look and see has it been addressed and where?

Mr. Winston said I just want to point out that the answers I have been getting have been concentrating on concession businesses, but we know that the Airport supports over a quarter-million jobs overall and most of those are not going to be in the concessions. I would like to have a plan or an answer that speaks to the wider kind of employment-population that supports our Airport.

Mayor Lyles said let us get some data about that, I think that is an important number, how many people and what the categories of people are? That would be important to know.

Ms. Ajmera said someone had asked a question about SBA funding; Congress has approved funding for EIBL and the PPP loans, but those are going to run out pretty soon considering the need that is out there and with our Emergency Grant I want to make sure that we are being strategic. Do we know if the County is voting on this

tomorrow, what is the funding source they are using for their loans? Is it the CDBG funding they are using or is it coming out of their general account?

Ms. Dodson said for their \$5 million loan program they are using general fund dollars and for the micro-business program it is CDBG funding.

Ms. Ajmera said Mr. Manager; you had mentioned that we have \$1 million left in our CDBG funding currently; can those funds be used to speed up the process for small business grants to assess what Mr. Newton had mentioned earlier that we really need to get those resources out sooner rather waiting until the end of April?

Mr. Jones said this is the plan I would like to put out in front of the Council right now. We have this \$1 million that we identified in the second half of this discussion. We need to have a notice, which is five-days and there are some things that need to be approved from HUD. We believe that the best way to utilize that \$1 million is through grants working through our partner LISC, which is already our partner, having you approve this on the 13<sup>th</sup> and then deploying the funds for micro-businesses in the corridors. So, we just don't believe you can vote on this tonight, but it seems like everybody is fine with it, we are just into a procedural thing where we need to do a notice, and we don't want you to vote on something tonight and find out that we have run at odds for what the procedure is. So again, it seems like you are all on board with doing this. We've identified the gap, we have a partner with a vote on next Monday we could be off to the races.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. So, the five-day notice, is that something that is required by public meeting laws or by the state; I'm not sure on that?

Mr. Bergman said it is required by the federal government under the CDBG Program.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, thank you.

Ms. Johnson said I just want some clarification regarding this \$1 million that you talked about Marcus. Is that for CDBG dollars?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Ms. Johnson said so that means the individual has to be 80% or below AMI?

Mr. Jones said no, I'm sorry Ms. Johnson; the way this work is that it would be in a low mod area. All of our opportunity corridors are in those low mod areas so, by definition, it would be addressing, not only a gap but an area that the Council started off in January saying it is very important to them.

Ms. Johnson said I love the idea; I'd be willing to for you to proceed tonight. I don't know who all would, but I certainly would be. My question is, earlier Ms. Eiselt talked about artist and there are other entrepreneurs or sole proprietors who need assistance as well. So, this proposal would be specifically for individuals in the corridors?

Mr. Jones said businesses, yes.

Ms. Johnson said businesses in the corridors, is it a grant?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Ms. Johnson said but the grant is not specific to just non-profits, right? It is for-profits as well?

Mr. Jones said for small businesses.

Ms. Johnson said okay, so would there be a plan for businesses outside of the corridors?

Mr. Jones said for this pot of money CDBG funds, the low mod areas would be the focus of the grants.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and the [inaudible] and LISC already have a grant that was distributed, but this adds to that, or is it separate?

Mr. Jones said I believe the grant you are talking about is nationwide. I think it was \$2.5 million so, this would be a grant specific to Charlotte's corridors that is \$1 million.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and then this is sort of off subject; we expanded potential childcare for City workers, not just first responders and healthcare workers; is there potentially a plan for childcare for essential workers who are potential grocery store workers or service workers, especially those in a certain income range. If you think about it, if an employer does not allow people to work and they are able to get social security, potentially with this stimulus individuals are going to be getting a raise, but the ones that are essential and have to go to work, I think we should look at assistance for those folks as well. So, if there is an opportunity, and I know we've talked about this before, but for childcare for assistance and that might be a County CRC Program, but childcare assistance for all essential workers.

Ms. Watlington said this horse has been beaten to death. Let's get creative in how to fund these things, and I appreciate what Mr. Mitchell said, in regard to the vote, and if they can get the money out quicker, that's all.

Mr. Driggs said I have a question about the SBA; we've been hearing a lot about how they are struggling to deal with all the responsibilities that have been placed upon them. Are we kind of monitoring the situation there or are we able to give advice on what in practice people can expect in terms of the SBA's ability to administer the federal program?

Ms. Flannery said the challenge for the SBA was they didn't actually produce any guidance until Thursday night for a program that went live on Friday. So, Friday a lot of the banks weren't prepared to take loans. Bank of America was really the champion, and really only ones that were able to get it done were the large bank. Today, we saw Chase and I think Wells was able to get on board. I think it was a bumpy start, but I think it will be smooth for here on out.

Mr. Driggs said the other point I wanted to make was I would have for this meeting to end tonight leaving the impression that staff did not understand the urgency of a lot of what we are talking about. We are all very concerned and we are impatient, and we feel the pain of the people who are being affected by what is going on, but we are being affected too, and we are operating within certain constraints in terms of the activity of others, in terms of legal requirements, the nature of [inaudible] it is provided. I don't think there is any issue about a shortcoming in the staff's understanding of urgency here and in light of what they've been doing for the last two weeks, I think it would be unfair to give that impression to the public. We are doing, in fact, everything we can, and as reality, you can't create an army when a war starts in two days and you can't do all the things that we need to do and that we want to do in three days. I would join everybody else in saying that we want to move as quickly as possible to make cash available, and I made one suggestion tonight for that, but we can't just sit down and start writing checks. It has got to be done in a way that is accountable to the people that provide the funds we are working and that is fair in terms of who the beneficiaries are for the needs that we provide.

I did have one question that I sort of asked before and that is Mr. Manager; is there any action that we could take tonight, any decision we could make, any authority that we could give you tonight that in your opinion would enable you to get money out sooner than if we wait until the 13<sup>th</sup>, and if you don't think so I am perfectly willing to be guided by that.

Mr. Jones said not in the grant program that we've talked about tonight Mr. Driggs.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Driggs; do you mind if I ask the Manager that in a different way? If we gave you the authority to run the ad for the Community Development Block Grant, would you have enough material to put into the public advertisement if you got it in on Tuesday or Wednesday so that we could look at the five-days?

Mr. Jones said I don't think I would need the authority to put the ad in, but if you want to vote on something, we can vote on it.

Mayor Lyles said I don't know that we have to vote on it, but what I'm just saying is the thing that I've heard most out of this conversation is to move forward with the advertisement for the \$1 million in Block Grant CDBG fund.

Mr. Jones said I think that would be a great idea.

Mayor Lyles said I also heard Mr. Mitchell say come back with a recommendation from the Corridor Fund, but that doesn't work unless it is a loan because of that general fund money or property tax base. I think we could definitely start running the ad if that is everybody's agreement. I haven't heard anybody disagree with that, we just have to wait for five-days and I'm assuming that would qualify by Monday to adopt. So, is everybody in agreement on that? Unless someone objects, we should do that. Raise your hand if you are okay with running the ad to modify the block grant funds to get the micro-grant started for Monday.

Mr. Driggs said those were my questions; I just look forward next week to getting quick actionable proposals and wanted to say I do appreciate everything you are doing to try and keep the situation in the City under control and also to assist those on the outside that are in hardship.

Mr. Newton said my tablet is about to run out of battery here. I'm still a bit confused about the procedure that we are engaged in because I thought I heard a motion and I heard a second on moving forward tonight with the CDBG funds, \$1 million towards micro-business. We know the gap exists, we know this is what we want to do. Ryan, can you tell me again; you said we have to do five days' notice, what that is specifically for? You are talking about restructuring the CDBG that we've already allocated, is that what that is?

Mr. Bergman said the CDBG is a federal program and you have an existing plan, and each Council would periodically approve a plan to use the funds. So, there is this balance and, you would essentially like to use the balance a different way than your current plan. So, by federal rules, you have to do a five-day notice and then change the plan.

Mr. Newton said there are other CDBG funds that aren't allocated to anything yet aren't there?

Mr. Bergman said only the ones that we will get at the end of the month.

Mr. Newton said so, what prevents us; I'm just wondering out loud here, can we not identify other funds that would be reimbursed with what we know we are going to be getting?

Mr. Bergman said no, because of the federal supplanting requirements where you have to do something after you receive the award. You can't use funds that you receive to reimburse something that you did before the award period. That is a federal rule on grants, and we've seen no indication that has been waived for this round of grants.

Mr. Bokhari said at some point can we accept that the people who do this every day might know what they are talking about?

Mr. Newton said I know the need that exists, and I want to do everything in my power to meet that need and I know that a motion and a second just happened as well, and I think procedurally that means we go to vote. I don't know what that means from the standpoint of because what we heard from the Manager was that this could [inaudible] embarrassment, but I don't know if that is something that after the fact. If we make the commitment now and it takes five-days, then it is sooner, isn't it? We don't have to come back on this item, even though we still might have to wait a few days.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton; I'm confused about the motion.

Ms. Eiselt said I don't think there is a motion.

Mr. Newton said I heard Renee make a motion and I heard Victoria second that motion, so we might want to bring Renee up.

Mayor Lyles said I think what we are really doing is we are just giving the Manager the understanding that we all support this, we want it to happen quickly, and take the first step tonight and that should require a vote to go ahead and get him to do that, but I wanted to make sure everyone agreed with it, and I think everyone indicated agreement and Mr. Newton wanted to address it. Right now, I guess the question is everyone still in agreement that he will go ahead and put that ad in the paper and write it up so that we can proceed with that.

Ms. Johnson said Sounds like we are good because it looks like everyone put their hands up.

Mayor Lyles said everyone has their hands up so, Mr. Jones goes ahead and gets the ad in so that we can have the program designed and ready to adopt on Monday. I don't have anyone else to speak right now. There are lots of follow-up things that are being asked for, but for Monday, I think we will have a program to show for the Housing CDBG Funds, the ESG funds, the consideration of looking at the corridor funds as well as for, it would have to be a loan program. Mr. Mitchell; did I get that right?

I think we are going to come back with a small business look at loans from the corridor money, we are going to look at a microloan from CDBG funds, the housing program will be coming in for both the CDBG and the emergency services funds as well as some other follow-ups if we can get to those and get them all designed.

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## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m.



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Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 4 Hours, 32 Minutes  
Minutes Completed: April 24, 2020