

Health and Human Services Committee Meeting

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[10:17:49 AM]

all righty. So good morning. I am Austin city councilperson Natasha harper-madison and we are meeting virtually today for the current stay-at-home orders on Wednesday, December 9th, 2020. This is the health & human services committee meeting and it is now 10:17 A.M. And I call the meeting to order. We start this meeting out with general citizen communication. So we will take up citizen communication each speak her have three minute to voice their concerns regarding items posted on the agenda. Is there anyone who would like to speak? I have a list of speakers but not the order in which they will speak. So if you just want to announce yourself.

>> Chair, I believe we do have a set order which would be helpful.

>> Okay. So I didn't realize there was a set order. It appears as though our first speaker is Ellen Jefferson.

>> I believe she should be unmuted.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you.

[10:18:49 AM]

>> Can you hear me okay?

>> We can. Thank you, Ellen. You have three minutes.

>> Okay. Great. I am Ellen Jefferson, executive director of Austin -- asking for your support to the transform animal support services into the animal support services to Tran form the way government

serve animals into a new way of serving community as a whole. It is allowing our industry to act on what we now know beyond a shadow of the doubt that foundation of traditional animal

-- has been tone-deaf to equity, up until the pandemic we have believed that vast majority of animals needing sheltering are unowned, abandoned and/or neglected. However, recent studies have shown the vast major difficult of pets, even those that are loose are owned and loved as a family member. It it is shows that those with animals go home at night and often within one city block of their home. However, once brought to the shelter the chance office being reunited become abysmal largely due to accessibility issues for the people who love them and we

[10:19:50 AM]

know that because the vast majority of people separated from the pets through the shelter service model are already struggling with accessibility issues. It is showing if we can keep stray pets in the neighborhood for just a couple of days we can dramatically increase the number of animal whose can get home, reducing the burden on the shelter system and freeing up funding for supporting people and pets differently. Now when you consider the following stats on top of that you can see that even though Austin is a leader in -- and we need rethink how we operate as a local service model. 90 percent of animals entering hospital center are quote unquote normal, no noted behavior or medical problems. Yet greater than 40 percent of animals leave Austin animal center as quote abnormal behave year or medically, separation is causing damage. Austin has been, the average dollar per capita on animal services and the advisory commission and center have been planning to ask for 2 million more to care for animals in

[10:20:52 AM]

shelter, on of that, Austin animal center is, cash by council even though Apa takes 20 percent of the city's animal as and we add another 3 million to the money spent on animals entering the shelter. The city shelter. As councilmembers I imagine you are thinking is Al lined with Apa when we ask how the city could be spending that money more equitably, efficiently and effectively as we are now. Our city can absolutely keep spending an inordinate amount of money trying to save lives that we don't need to be settle nerg the first place, and makes microimprovements to how you serve people in the way that they need it most or you can take a giant leap forward and change the way you operate so that you can free up the bandwidth and known help people who need it. I think -- I can tell you at the city of Austin's largest animal partner it is frustrating and disincentivizing help in the way we have help when we watch the city lose money, time and efficacy when so much more could be happening to help ininvestigate people of Austin. The bottom line Apa wants our

[10:21:52 AM]

city to be the best and wants to help -- with -- thank you.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. We appreciate your contribution. Our next speaker is Lana Leslie.

>> Hi, I am Lana Leslie, I live in district 3. I have been a volunteer for Austin -- for over two years, it is well past time for Austin to resume our national leadership position in animal welfare by joining -- as a tier 1 pilot city, as Ellen said most animals end up on the street because the person who cared for and loved that animal ran into an obstacle, medical crisis, eviction, job loss, behavior issues, we know that root causes of pet relinquishment center around people, and that is exactly why this new movement in animal welfare, human animal support services is focused on

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keeping families together. And recognizes that no two families are alike, as a tier 1 pilot city we can identify the needs and the assets of each neighborhood in Austin, not each district, but each neighborhood, and set up animal services tailored to those unique and individual communities. Austin is committed to combating discrimination and inequity in animal services and to working with communities to break down barriers to pet retention, adoption, and fostering. We can form coalitions of service organizations, city departments, community groups, and volunteers to help people learn about and attain resources they need to keep their pets. Plus this is your opportunity to create new pathways for people to gain access to the many resource it is city of Austin already offers. Haas can be an information hub at the intersection of people in need, social services, nonprofits and animal welfare services.

[10:23:53 AM]

Let's take full advantage of modern technology altruism and human support networks that are already in abundance in our city. Once all of the animals that are needlessly sent to the shelter are instead rehomed or diverted to foster homes or reunited with their families before they ever see shelter, then we are freeing up animal care staff, volunteers, facilities and medical services for the animals that urgently need that kind of care. Everybody wins. Human animal support services is the way forward for animal welfare. Everyone has the right to and deserves to enjoy an animal companion. Thank you.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Lucy Fernandez.

>> Hello. My name Lucy Fernandez and I am a resident of district 5. I am currently a pet adoption

[10:24:54 AM]

councilor for Austin kept alive and trapper and moderator for Apa Facebook group.

>> From the beginning of the pandemic created the human support services model. It wasn't perfectly outlined and no plans set in stone, but it did have a passionate drive created with a sense of urgency to do something. Now a powerful coalition of comprised of 600 animal welfare staff and advocates and volunteers from all over the country and Canada, in Austin, 38 pilot cities and not about achieving perfection, not about implementing a one size fits all approach to every city but a commitment for leadership, experts and animal welfare advocates to collaborate on effectively serving residents in and their animals and about time that Austin is finally officially joins that collaboration. Using the city's open data can portal and it has proven what most animal advocates in the city already know, there is a direct correlation between limited animal resources, such

[10:25:55 AM]

as clinics, boarding facilities, trainers and supply stores and in regions with with the highest intake numbers. Austin west of I-35 is well stocked, while east of I-35 is a resource desert. Similar findings were confirmed in Dallas who joined the Haas coalition in July who felt extreme disparities in resources, since then animals services launched a pet support call system designed to help struggling owners keep their pets and established a partnership with home to home sway service that provides shelter supervisor ordered home and community, they also deployed veterinary telehealth services similar to those provided for humans -- there is also developing partnership with prominent veterinary corporation to provide medical care to own animals in major pilot cities and potentially, potentially no cost to the city. On top of that, the fund recently issued \$50,000 grant to each of the largest pilot CI

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cities, decentralization of health and resources has significantly deferred intake and meets people where they are. Thank you for your time.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Kayleigh Matheson.

>> Yes. Can you hear me?

>> Harper-madison: Yes.

>> Great harm harp you have three minutes.

>> Great. I am candy Matheson and I live in district ten. I would like to suggest that public health covid policies for your future agenda items that will relate to businesses that are allowed to remain open because of state mandates that their operations may not reflect the high rate of community spread in Austin. Just as the city has mandated that each business have a plan, both in finance and enforcement I

am proposing they also pose the current staging level of the city prominently on their doors. This would work similarly to how

[10:27:55 AM]

the fire department shows the threat level of wild fires outside of their station. I personally checked the staging levels in the dashboards daily but I know that many people do not and may not realize the risk level involved in going out in public. Particularly in a place where mitigation measures such as masks cannot be used 100 percent of the time. From my viewpoint, only businesses that allow mask removal like restaurants, bars or sporting events would need to follow this. Something like a shop or a grocery store may not because people can reasonably have their masks on 100 percent of the time. I am happy to work with anyone regarding this or bring it to a different audience if this is not the place, please let me know and thank you for your time.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, Ms. Matheson. Our next and final speaker is Dorothy Reno.

>> Hi.

>> Good morning.

>> Harper-madison: Good morning. You have three minutes.

>> Thank you. My name Dorothy Reno and I work

[10:28:56 AM]

with survivor to thrive. The mission of our organization is to provide a safety net for those that are affected by domestic violence and require immediate shelter and security. We have partnered with local hotels to provide a safe haven from abuse when shelters are at capacity, especially during this current pandemic. I am specifically speaking today on equity in the intersectionality of being displaced due to domestic violence or other reasons such as covid, the overall meaning of -- equity means the affordability, accessibility and safety of menstrual products and menstrual education without shame or stigma. Periods do not stop when a person is displaced by domestic abuse. However, the survivors often find that period products are not one of the essential items they think to grab when they have to leave their home due to violence. Menstrual equity is a serious issue for marginalized populations, in, and Austin studies have shown half of the people experiencing homelessness

[10:29:59 AM]

their current state is as a result of abuse or trauma. Poverty are most affected to lack of access to menstrual products and often cannot afford sufficient period care and may disproportionately suffer the medical and psychological impact of not having these hygiene products readily available. At about \$50 per year, every menstruating person deserves to have access to products that allow for a hygienic period and continued productivity in their daily life. Survive to thrive seeks to model advocacy and empowerment, participation and inclusion for a goal of normalizing periods. Survive to thrive supports and hopes councilmembers support the initiative that seeks to improve the menstrual equity across Austin by improving access to menstrual products along with removing the ca chat from these essential hygiene products. Thank you for your time today.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony. For the record, my colleagues

[10:30:59 AM]

and I are actively seeking some solutions around distribution and the procurement of those products, so there will be more to come in the coming weeks and months. This is the -- still on the line, by the chance, is Dorothy stilton line?

>> Yes, ma'am. I am still here.

>> Harper-madison: Did you say more than half of people reported their introduction to homelessness was by way of abuse or trauma? Did I hear that correctly?

>> Yes, ma'am. Based on studies that I -- I am so sorry. I -- my computer has just froze and I don't have that report that I reviewed the study from buzz appeared in an article and statement showed that more than half of the people that were interviewed showed that abuse or trauma was the reason they were facing homelessness at the time.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. I appreciate that. And then the other, question as

[10:32:01 AM]

a statement, if I remember correctly, Donna Howard tried to introduce to the legislature a bill that would refocus tax for period products and it died. So I know that survive to thrive is very active in advocacy at the state level. I would just encourage you all to encourage that creak situate because that's where we are going to actually be able to make that achievement.

>> And we will continue that point. Thank you.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. We appreciate your time. Okay. So next up item 1 is the approval of the minutes. Do I have a motion to approve the minutes for the October 14th, 2020 meetings?

>> So moved.

[10:33:02 AM]

>> Harper-madison: Moved by councilmember kitchen and seconded by councilmember tovo. All in favor. And that is a unanimous vote. Councilperson kitchen, tovo, harper-madison with -- off the dais. Item number 2, discussion and possible action. We have three items for discussion and possible action. Our first item is discussion and possible action regarding a recommendation by the animal advisory commission, that's the city of Austin's animal services office, participate in the human animal support services, also known as Haas, pilot program as a tier 1 city. Colleagues are we ready to take action on this item for animal services to participate in the Hass program or need to hear from staff first?

>> I think it would be helpful to hear from staff, if that's

[10:34:02 AM]

okay.

>> Harper-madison: Absolutely. I agree. Thank you. I am not sure we have available to us this morning.

>> I am don Wagner, chief animal services officer and our deputy chief Jason Garza, we are both on the line.

>> Good morning. >>

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. We would appreciate any information you can provide us to help us make a sound decisions on this item.

>> Absolutely. One too much things that, you know, was -- we want to point out is a lot of this data that we have done for years, the biggest part of the Hass model, we know animals are picked up -- at home. That is something we track that for many years. We have gone into neighborhoods that are underserved and reduced our intake from those areas and now moved to other neighborhood sos we do have prevention

[10:35:02 AM]

services. We -- a lot in this coming year, in this bucket this year, our prevention services is \$1.3 million in prevention services already. You know, we help over 10,000 people is a stay, with spay and neutering and bay advantage neighbors that cannot afford that, and one of the things that, you know -- why -- assistant city manager shorter and myself, we have talked about this, and we did not want to participate

originally is because the pushback, when we closed for the pandemic and animal finders or -- are asked to take -- the neighborhood which they found -- to help try to find its home rather than bring it in because of the covid concerns the public outcry was enormous. I think you all expended e-mails accordingly and so we didn't have public input, and he felt that we needed to investigate it more, look at giving more public

[10:36:03 AM]

input and, you know, try some of these programs and get buy-in from the community before we started making major changes during the pandemic. One of things that, you know, we also, in the Hass model, there will be some costs involved in that, because, you know, they talk about taking the calls and following, you know, through the whole process, creating a plan, currently, 311 takes over 50,000 calls for us, 35, over 35,000 this year have been directed to us after they prescreened them. And to have people to be able to follow that call through the whole process, we would have to have additional staffing. And currently, we are very thin staffed and we wouldn't be able to move folks around to handle that. That would be some additional staffing that would be required for that.

>> Harper-madison: If you don't mind, did you say 35,000? I am having a little bit of a

[10:37:03 AM]

hard time hearing you.

>> Okay. Yes. For the first 50 weeks this year, since January 1st, we have taken 35,379 calls and that is after 311 screens out a good portion of those they can handle on their own without coming to us. One of the things that we would have to do also in the Hass model is veterinarian services

-- handled by a third party by Texas state laws, shelter veterinarians cannot treat the public animals so we would have to outsource that, and that is a very costly endeavor. We currently spend in excess of \$300,000 with emergency clinics helping pets that get hit by cars when we are not open or things like that.

[10:38:04 AM]

Do you have anything to say, Jason?

>> Good morning, councilor. Just to tag on to some of Mr. -- earlier comments. Yes, we have been taking a lot of endeavors over the year to try to keep animals in the neighborhood, we have built in our fencing

program. Rather than take -- punitive measures on individuals we are animal protection officers, we will have a conversation with dog owners, find out why their animal is getting out, if it is

-- and we will provide those materials that we can help them, because ultimately we want them to keep their pets and -- other items where we have conversations with our community members to find out what are things they may need and we -- there are issues -- vet care and things of that nature, access, just to get to the pet supplies they need, so we have teams that will go and deliver dog food to them, deliver other things they

[10:39:04 AM]

may need. We have our friends group who have been instrumental with helping us get, provide veterinary care for individuals so that it is an incentive to keep their pet instead of --

>> We also, we have an employee that deals with the homeless, and their pets assistance needs, he spends 20 hours a week in the community working with those homeless to give them the resources they need to be able to keep and maintain their pets safely where public safety is one of his concerns. He just wants to make sure they are all vaccinated and they do have -- so that everybody is protected. So like I say, you know, this is the -- city manager is not opposed to that he felt it needed more community input, since we had such pushback at

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the beginning of the pandemic and that was our main concern. Do you have any questions for us?

>> Thank you, Mr. Glenn. Just I wanted to get a little bit of clarity, you said there is a dedicated fte who spends 20 hours weekly for homeless pet assistance. Is that part of a specific initiative or --

>> That is our neighborhood level programming.

>> Just for clarification councilor, it is a grant funded position that is at our neighborhood level program. We are able to obtain some -- to go. We have been able to, at first we were able to do it targeted stipulate codes but we expanded it to other zip codes as well, especially high intake areas and then, you know, with the pandemic and other areas we were seeing some concerns we sort of modified that to address it and address those concerns. So we notified the grant, the grantee or the grantor they are

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like whatever you all can do to ensure to get the pets back to their owners.

>> Harper-madison: Awesome. Thank you for that clarification. I really appreciate it. I will have some questions. Specifically to that. Component but I would like to open it up for my colleagues to ask any questions they may have. Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Yes, thanks for that additional information. I had gotten an e-mail from someone about that outreach program and indicated -- indicated some of the resources that are provided are dog food, leashes, things of that sort to individual whose are experiencing homelessness with their pets. Or to their pet. Homelessness for their pets, are those the kind of resources that fte -- or that part-time assistant is --

>> Yes. He does provide those kind of resources as well as we have gone out and done vaccinations at homes where animals needed to

[10:42:10 AM]

be vaccinated. If an animal needs to be spayed or neutered he will help coordinate that to get them spayed and neutered, so it is more than just, you know, food, collar and leashes,.

>> That is great, I wasn't sure where the vaccinations were taking place, if they were actually taking place on sight site. So that is very helpful information.

>> Tovo: There is a really important element to this program that makes a lot of sense to me. I am wondering, some of the -- about how implementation of this program could impact shelter -- the shelters ability to be a place of open intake. It would seem to me just, you know, as an outside observer, obviously this isn't my line of work, but that there is some opportunity to balance both of these efforts, maintain, to make sure we have an animal center that is open for pets -- for

[10:43:12 AM]

which that is the main option or for pet owners who have that option, while also enhancing the level of community supported -- it really has been a helpful conversation do learn more about the kind of neighborhood level support that the animals have already provide but there do seem to be some important elements and ways to support appeals facing evict hundred and other dire situations, and the pets are members of their family. Can you just address --

[indiscernible] -- I hear what you are saying about the number of calls you are receiving, but it would seem to me there is a way to balance these two different initiatives and I wanted to know if you could respond to that or what you think about it too similar police CLI.

>> One of the, simplistically.

>> One of the things since we have been doing since I have been here and prior to coming on

[10:44:15 AM]

board is when animals are found out in the community by someone, they try to get that person to foster than animal and help find its home without coming into the shelter, a when even when someone comes in with a stray at the shelter we always asked them with will you help mind animal's home because we know if it is picked in within 1,000 neighborhood, will you walk it around and see if you find its home, and there is a percentage of people that will do that, and there are a high percentage of people that won't do that. And so we always work with that. But when someone calls us to -- wants to owner surrender we have an individual that will, you know, that individuals in our prc that will speak to them and try to help solve their problems, because we want to keep those pets in those homes where they are loved and we can help, if we can help in some way we are going to try to achieve that so that is part of our 0

[10:45:17 AM]

program already. I don't know if that answers your question.

>> Counsels Lohr, .. Idea to add to what he said. We have some efforts to get oaks to continue to help us out in the community, right before the pandemic hit it was great typing, you know, before we were putting microchip scanners all of our stations and in our park and rec centers that way we could have find pets to go to one of those -- within their community to go get it scanned, we had it set up with the microchip companies the they would call the owner and the owner and hopefully then set up a meet and pickup and meet and drop off with the owner of the pet. So we are already looking at ways on how we can start, you know, a -- we want to do the best and they have this -- I will take it to the shelter. But if we can figure out ways so that way it increases the

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likelihood of that type of reuniting, in other words try to make it easier for folks whos get them into that percentage to know, to get that pet back to the owner.

>> And we know from taking 311 service requests when people have found animals and we have talked with them and they kept it in the neighborhood, the animals have a much higher percentage of being returned to their owners by staying in the neighborhood rather than coming to a shelter, and, you know, I guess one of the Biggers things here is everyone microchipped their animals, we wouldn't have the issues we have, and with \$3.75 per microchip, you know, so many -- anyone can get a micro chip for free so there is really no excuse that dash and I think we can do that in the field also, the microchipping.

>> Tovo: Great. Thank you so much.

>> Councilmember kitchen, did you have any questions?

[10:47:19 AM]

>> I am sorry. I didn't see whether or not your hand was raised.

>> Kitchen: No. I am okay. Kathie asked the question.

>> Harper-madison: Okay. Excellent. So I believe it was Mr. Lopez, you mentioned the grant funded position for homelessness, pet for homeless pet assistance.

>> Yes. We have our neighborhood level programming that is grant funded. The grant funding expires in may and Austin public health has agreed to fund that through the end of fiscal year and we will put it in our budget request as a full-time position the following year.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you for that clarification. I think you M have anticipated what my questions would be. So the the aph will fund through the end of fiscal year '21?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Harper-madison: So you said that you will put it in your budget request. Is there any anticipation that

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you will also apply for the grant again?

>> The grant is -- we used it for several years and won't be offered. They switched directions so that will not be something that they would be funding. Actually place it in a budget this past year and didn't get approved. But I think if we show -- we didn't show -- we talked about neighborhood level program which a lot of people I don't think understood and if we concentrate on the amount they are doing in the homes and what is important, because this plays in that, I think dash make it strong they are time.

>> Harper-madison: I do have some additional questions about the fte position, but I think what we will do is, my office will connect with you and Mr. Blend and ask some additional questions just to get a clearer picture.

>> Absolutely.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you.

[10:49:21 AM]

So I have a question about -- so there was a statement, there will be added costs. But I didn't hear a number. Estimated costs for those additional --

>> And we haven't been a part of the Hass program since the very beginning so I don't know what changes they have made. But the very first things they have made at, the very first outlines they provided, if we were to handle all of the paws that came in and all of the staff we needed to run all of these programs the way they were originally anticipated, we would be looking at 1.4 million for additional staff and benefits.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. I appreciate that. It is helpful. And then do you happen to know what the net financial impact was in Dallas?

>> O I do not. I am not privy to that information but I did hear they actually hired a third party call center to handle their calls.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you.

[10:50:21 AM]

I appreciate that. Colleagues, I am inclined, as we dig into this more, I am inclined to request that we postpone this item, just so I can get a few more questions answered and feel fully informed and confident as we move into making a decision here. Some of the things that gave me pause for reference have to do with costs obviously, so especially as it pertains to third party veterinarian services. I just don't really have a clear picture like what are the parameters? I certainly don't mean to sound insensitive but at what point are we doing harm in not offering some of these animals the best in the way of potential quality of life and why we subsequently, you know, use limited financial resources to do so. So I could like to ask more

[10:51:22 AM]

questions, so I would like to propose that we postpone the item, if there aren't any objections.

>> Awesome, thank you. So I think what we will do is, we will postpone this item for future consideration. Lucy, I am not sure if you are on the line, but procedurally do I have to give a specific date for when we propose to postpone the item to?

>> This is Lucy Thompson. I did check in with animal services on this item and I was told there wasn't a rush to forward it to council, once we have the approval. But I can work with their office. Our next meeting is February 17th. I can work with their office, if to put that, procedurally I am not aware, no.

[10:52:25 AM]

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. Councilmember tovo.

>> Tovo: Having panels available at settle tore provide for animals if individuals are experiencing homelessness who are guests of the setter and I am interested, the last time I checked in, it was a new program, relatively new, so I am interested to know how that is

-- and also if that is something that a level that can be expanded to some of our other shelters.

>> I would just invite our animal center staff if they have any information, I will contact

--

>> House animals when homeless people have gone into the hospital or care, and we held their animals here until they could get out, and for a length of time, that is not a service we just offer, you know,

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generally. Normally when they are picked up at the hospital their animal is brought here --

>> That is.

>> Tovo: Had the that is good to know.

>> I was saying, we have limited kennel space. We are at capacity. Where we were at before covid shutdown. The community is not very forthcoming in helping keep animals naah their neighborhood and we -- they drive all the way across town to bring them here. It is very difficult to convince them to take it back. There are some that will, but most of them, it is now our problem because they don't want to have to deal with it once they made their trek across town. So we are full and what -- there is no problem getting them in, but it is hard to get people in the shelter due to the covid restrictions to adopt and get them out, so we are very limited, so more coming in than getting out and we actually had to reach outlast week to Apa and other rescue partners to help

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pull animals to make space because we were critical.

>> Yes. I mean, before the pandemic, I visited the animal center pretty often. It is one of my daughter's favorite places to go to walk dogs and visit with the animals. So I have seen that very often you are beyond capacity, at capacity, beyond capacity, so I understand, I understand those challenges. And just would encourage, I know some years we have done the council has participated in helping bring attention to that, especially around the holidays around about the wonderful joys of bringing a pet into your family, my family is an example, we have a wonderful people from the animal center who is just,

you know, we can't imagine our lives without, so any support we can offer you as -- to help get the word out, again, I know the animal center did nice t-shirts and little videos and things of that sort to help promote remote

[10:55:33 AM]

animal leaving the center and to families.

>> Back to the issue of steps, I think that is information we need get from friend steps but I think it is an important piece to this wholes conversation about how we meet people where they are and do the best we can to keep, to keep their animals with them, and so I really applaud front steps to taking actions that convert add little room to one that has KENS so dogs and other pets can be put in there. I am just, again, would just be, I will reach out to them and get an update on how successful that has been and how wildly used it has been. Widely used it has been. >>

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, councilmember tovo. I along that lines I have one additional question. I heard you say that -- listing the services including spay and neuter and microchip and food, et cetera. I am just curious, what that -- what that looks like as it extends to people who are not

[10:56:33 AM]

unsheltered. What does that look like for people who are just experiencing financial hardship and can't afford food or veterinary care, et cetera? >>

>> That is, we have run spay, neuter microchip, ray by clinics throughout, ray by clinics rain by clinics throughout the .. And, you know, public areas .. Where it is advertised and those people that need that assistance can go to those locations. We contract that out through -- emanci pet, and the county finances \$140,000 a year for clinics like that in the county. Unincorporated areas. So those resource there is are available. And if someone, you know, -- we get lots of donated food and that is what we use when people, you know, are experiencing issues, and they have an issue, you know, they can't feed their

[10:57:34 AM]

animals, and we also -- when someone wants -- an animal and needs some veterinary care we can't provide, our friends of Austin animal center will provide vouchers for those folks to go out and seek assistance and I think in the budget this year that is like \$20,000 that has been in their budget for assistance when people need it.

>> And also people that are experiencing behavior issue, they need to rehome their animals because they have a behavior issue, between friends of and Austin animal center we have about \$75,000 this year that we can give them vouchers to seek training, to help keep those animals in their homes.

>> What is the funding for that \$75,000, the vouchers come from?

[10:58:35 AM]

>> The Austin animal center side, is that --

>> That came out of and that's about \$35,000 out of our donation budget.

>> Harper-madison: And then the remaining \$40,000, that's friends of Austin animal center?

>> Yes, ma'am.

>> Harper-madison: And it says the kind of financial contribution you depend on regularly to where there's some sort of -- I guess a perpetual donation or is that inconsistent or unpredictable?

>> It is unpredictable. Our donation budget that is donated like this fiscal year we won't be able to use it until next fiscal year and we have public input. The donors that donate, they

[10:59:37 AM]

give us input on the programs that they have that they would like to spend those dollars on and we take advice from that. And with our needs and their advice, we put the plan together and training dollars was something that was big on their agenda last year.

>> Harper-madison: So out of curiosity, how have those donation dollars shifted during the covid?

>> We have actually not seen any shift. We received as many donated dollars this past year as in the previous year.

>> Harper-madison: I guess I mean the expenditure, the use of the dollars. Certainly there's been some shift in operations.

>> We saw less because we had less spay and neuter clinics being used out in the community because we could not gather mass amounts of people and a lot of our clinics were closed while

[11:00:38 AM]

the facilities were closed and emancipet has scaled back also. So we're seeing those, we're ramping those back up. And as more parks open up and more facilities for us. So, yes, we didn't spend as many in spay and neuter dollars this year as we have in the past. And those will carry over and be applied to this year's spay and neuter. And we'll try to get more clinics to help utilize those dollars. Once we can open up safely.

>> Harper-madison: And you don't have to answer today but when we have this conversation again, I would like to get some information around parameters in which we use emergency veterinary care to save animals who have been in auto accidents.

>> Okay. I can just tell you the way it works now. We are closed. If a citizen sees an animal hit

[11:01:39 AM]

by a car or in distress. They take that animal to the emergency clinic. The emergency clinic will stabilize that animal and wait for us to open and then will transfer over to us. We always, if it's an animal that's reclaimed, we ask the owner to help pay those costs. But I can tell you that 99% of the time that doesn't happen and we absorb the cost for those.

>> Harper-madison: Do you have a general idea of an estimated cost that we incur as a city?

>> It was less than \$300,000 last year. It was like 270. We can verify that for you.

>> Harper-madison: That would be helpful. Thank you. Just to be clear, what I was asking for in terms of parameters, what's the protocol? I mean, I guess what I'm trying to figure out is how does the vet go about determining

[11:02:41 AM]

viability for, you know, having a quality of life after recovery? I'm just trying to figure out do we try to save every single pet that comes in after an accident or are there parameters where we make the determination about cost benefit.

>> It's not cost benefit. The veterinarians, their oath is to save animals and do life-saving measures that will get them a good quality of life. If there are some things that they feel that no matter what they do that this is not going to work, they would make a decision accordingly, but those are very few. They try to save every animal that comes in.

>> Harper-madison: Regardless of cost?

>> Regardless of cost. They don't make any decisions on cost. It's whether they can save the animal or not.

>> Harper-madison: That's complicated, but thank you very much. I appreciate that information. If none of my other colleagues have questions, I think we can probably let you all go. Council member kitchen or tovo,

[11:03:41 AM]

any additional questions?

>> Kitchen: Thank you, council member harper-madison. I appreciate the questions you have been asking. I've been listening. I'm fine.

>> Harper-madison: I think council member tovo is being a teacher right now so we're going to wait just a moment.

[Laughter]

>> Tovo: I'm hearing both of you out of each year.

>> Harper-madison: I'm an educator by day also. Hi, scholar. Okay. Did you have any additional questions?

>> Tovo: I didn't, but I really appreciate yours, especially those that are probing the level of financial support in some of these areas. And I was not aware of the emergency care with accidents and things like that, so thank you, chair, for those questions. I think that's really important as we move into what we know is going to be more and more challenging budget times, just to be aware, especially as we contemplate taking on new costs for the animal center.

[11:04:41 AM]

>> Harper-madison: I agree. That will be all. We appreciate your presence in answering our questions this morning.

>> Thank you. Feel free to send over any questions you may have afterwards.

>> Harper-madison: Absolutely. So in order to postpone the item -- if we're ready, I need a motion to move forward with the board's recommendation to postpone the Hass item, I'm going to say indefinitely but let's presume until least the February 17th meeting. We have a motion by council member tovo, seconded by council member kitchen. All in favor. All right. That passes 3-0 with mayor pro tem Garza off the dais. Moving on. Our second item is discussion and possible action regarding the appointment of members to

[11:05:43 AM]

the central health board of managers. This item will be taken up in executive session. Our third scheduled item is discussion and possible action regarding the process for the selection of the joint appointee to the sobering center local government corporation board of directors. All right. So it appears as though Julie weaver, Travis county intergovernmental relations officer will provide an overview on what the process will look like for the sobering center vacancy, since this is a joint appointment with the city and the county. We do appreciate our partnership with the county on these appointments. Once we hear from Julie the committee can take action regarding the process. Julie, are you on the line?

>> I am. Can you all hear me?

>> Harper-madison: We can. Thank you.

>> Perfect. Thank you all for letting me present to you today. I'm Julie wheeler, the intergovernmental relations

[11:06:43 AM]

officer for Travis county. And I'm here today to discuss the process for addressing the current vacancy for the joint appointee to the sobering center board of directors. Andy brown resigned from his post, leaving an unexpired term that runs through 2022. By virtue of that position he is actually still a member of the board. Typically, in this situation, we would issue a joint call for applications creating a shared applicant pool. Similar to what we just did for the central health joint appointment. However, in this case both the city and the county have issued calls in the past year. So in order to expedite this process county staff and city staff met and discussed a possible workaround and hopefully something that will expedite this process. So we're hoping to share from both calls so that will create one candidate pool that we can look at.

[11:07:45 AM]

The next step would be two members from your committee to meet with two members from the commissioners court, look at those applicants and come up with a slate of candidates to be interviewed separately by each entity. So, again, similar to what we just did with central health. At this point, each entity would hold interviews, come up with a candidate. If there's consensus, that would be fantastic. If there's not consensus, the subcommittee will meet again, try to come to one, and then make an appointee. I am hopeful if we can follow this process we should be able to have an appointment in place by no later than April. Possibly sooner, depending on what scheduling can look like for both the commissioners court and your committee. I'm happy to answer questions about this process.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you for that. Colleagues -- oh, council member tovo.

>> Tovo: I just have a couple of thoughts.

[11:08:45 AM]

I'm trying to determine whether I need to ask them in executive session. We did a very recent search and I came out of that executive session thinking that we were -- that we had another potential candidate who we might recommend for this joint appointment. And I think it's terrific to have a process in place and to approve the process moving forward, but I also would like for us to have -- would like -- you know, April -- I sure hope we can do it before April because April would be a six-month delay and this is such a small board that that's really significant. We need to figure out how to move more quickly through our joint and individual appointments. I guess I will throw that out there and ask for suggestions on how, one, am I remembering that conversation correctly or could we figure out -- I guess wondering whether the city feels the need to do our interview?

[11:09:57 AM]

>> Kitchen: Kathie, I can't hear you.

>> Tovo: I was talking with my hands and in doing so hit my button. That's the downfall of talking with your hands, I guess. I was saying I wonder, one, I guess am I remembering that discussion correctly that we were thinking about working with our existing pool and making that suggestion to the county? And if we are reinterviewing, how quickly could we get that process up and running so that we can really make the appointment soon.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, council member tovo. I actually recall that conversation and I have the same takeaway that we were making our consideration from the applicant pool that we had already interviewed. In which case, Julie, I'm not sure how we make the determination as to whether or not the county is comfortable moving forward with the current applicants as our pool of

[11:10:59 AM]

candidates to select from?

>> So the commissioners court has not taken official action on this process yet. They are scheduled to do so on Tuesday. I know it would make sense to share the candidate pool since it does seem like both entities received a number of well-qualified candidates. I understand that the commissioners court has several applicants that they interviewed that they would love to recommend for this process, similar to you all as well. But I think in fairness it would be fair to give both entities the opportunity to look at that combined candidate pool, just in case there's somebody that you all like from our list and there's

somebody that we like from your list. So, again, there may be candidates that both entities already have in mind. It might be useful to at least look at that global list of candidates.

>> Harper-madison: That makes sense to me. Colleagues, do you have any opinions one way or the other on combining those lists and then

[11:11:59 AM]

moving from there to take into consideration? Council member kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Well, I'm okay with that approach. I'm hearing Kathie's concern about the timeline so I don't know what this does to our timeline. So that would be my only question.

>> So the timeline that I've given, it is much longer than I think anyone would prefer. It will just be a matter of when we can get things scheduled between both entities. So if there is an appetite to do so, I believe that the two members from your committee could meet with the two members from the commissioners court before the end of the year and come up with the slate of candidates you all want to interview. And depending on what it looks like for scheduling on your end, we could begin conducting interviews in January if that's what you would like to do. If that's the case, we definitely could finish this up well before April. I wanted to be mindful of scheduling considerations between the committee and the commissioners court.

[11:13:01 AM]

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. Council member tovo.

>> Tovo: Thanks, Julie. Thanks, chair. I think if we're merging our pools it would be good to get that merge list kind of soon. And the county did interviews recently and we did interviews recently, so maybe coming back together as our committee and determining whether or not we want to have interviews would be a starting place. But realistically I'm not sure that we could even have that conversation before. We probably won't be having it before the next year anyway. Yikes.

>> If the committee could name two members amongst yourselves as part of the subcommittee. So, again, what we did with the central health appointment where both entities didn't reach consensus initially but we had the breakout and you guys did

[11:14:03 AM]

finally come to a resolution, which thank you. I know that was a very long process and we're trying to avoid that long process again with this one. That could happen before the interview. So I think the next

steps, after looking at the candidates, would be -- I imagine for your process that it needs to come back to the full committee for approval of that list and then a secondary meeting to actually conduct the interviews. Correct me if I'm wrong with that process.

>> Harper-madison: I'm sorry. Was that a question?

>> It is. Just clarification at least for putting together the timeline. I think if you all could take action today to name two members with the two commissioners before the end of the year that would be the first step. The second step would be -- it's my understanding you all would need to come together as the group again to formalize the selection and then to set a date

[11:15:03 AM]

to do interviews. Is that the normal course of action?

>> Harper-madison: Council member tovo.

>> Tovo: I'm sorry. I wasn't trying to answer that.

>> Harper-madison: I saw your hand.

>> Tovo: I'm sorry. Yeah, I have a thought but --

>> Harper-madison: You'll have to forgive me if I don't have the frame of reference to say whether or not that's the normal course of action. I would be comfortable with moving forward with that as our process. So in the past what we did was it was council member kitchen and myself, and I'm perfectly comfortable with reconsidering what that subcommittee looks like. I would just encourage us to take into consideration that mayor pro tem Garza won't be with us next year. In which case it leaves the three of us to select from for the two-person subcommittee to make that -- to take those considerations.

>> Tovo: I --

[11:16:06 AM]

>> Kitchen: I will do whatever y'all need if y'all need me to participate, I'm going to be around and I have a fairly flexible schedule. Again, it's up to what you two would like to do. Kathie, if you would like to be on it with Natasha, that's fine with me.

>> Tovo: What I was going to suggest is a way of speeding up one step. What if -- and there are two ways this can go. Either the three of us meet with the county reps and narrow down the list and conduct the interviews together. Or if there's some reason why they can't be on it, we do a subcommittee. Just to skip the step of the subcommittee having to come back and have all of those check-ins. If we could at

least eliminate that on our side that would be a time saver. And if we could actually do the process with the county at the same time in realtime, that

[11:17:06 AM]

would also stop the need for coordination. There may be some rules on the county side that prevent that, so I don't know. So I just throw that out there. I don't know of any rules on our side that would prevent or just participating with the county reps. I'm happy to do whatever we need to to make that happen. If the two of [indiscernible] If that helps the process move more quickly, I'm happy to not be a part of it. I'm also happy to be a part of it. I love doing the review of the sobering center candidates, especially, but, again, my interest is in doing whatever we need to to get the process efficient.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you for that suggestion. I actually really like it. I don't know who is on the line who can help us to determine whether or not the three of us is permissible.

[11:18:06 AM]

Do we have to select two members or can we move forward with the three of us as a part of the selection and joint consideration process?

>> This is Stephanie with the city clerk's office. I have something in my throat. That's not really a problem. The only concern that we would have on our end is if you did interviews that way and we would have to go into executive session. So if you just want to meet to discuss the pools, that would be no -- oh, chair, can you not hear me?

>> Harper-madison: No.

>> You said you could not hear Stephanie?

>> Harper-madison: I cannot. It's very, very low. I guess I was squinting. It's very low.

>> I'm in chambers so it's echoing in here. But let me switch mics. Sorry about that, chair. Is that better?

>> Harper-madison: Much better. Thank you.

>> Great. This is Stephanie with the city clerk's office. There's nothing that really prevents us from doing that on the city side. The only thing I would be concerned about is the

[11:19:06 AM]

interviews, which if we do interviews we would want to do that in executive session. And I think that poses a problem if we combine that with the county because we can't really do executive session with them. So I think that's the only struggle. Other than that, the three of you collaborating on that is not really a problem.

>> Harper-madison: So the three of us collaborating on that can happen outside of an official hhsc meeting, correct? Or do we need to call another meeting in order for us to go through that process?

>> I think if the three of you wanted to officially meet with the county we would have to post that. So I don't know what the county's side would be on that. But for us that's not a problem.

>> So for the county, typically the full court conducts interviews for applicants. It's not something that's left to the screening committee. And I think as Stephanie raised,

[11:20:08 AM]

it may be an issue if interviews are conducted in executive session for the city. We would not be able to participate in that. So that would be my only hesitation. Additionally, if something needs to be scheduled as a full meeting of the committee, that could create some delays in the process.

>> Harper-madison: I think there are a lot of unanswered questions here. I think we had narrowed our candidate pool down to two additional considerations, if I remember correctly. So I wonder if we could come to an agreement to do that. Either entity contribute two candidates for consideration. That way the county would only have to conduct two additional interviews and the city would only have to conduct two additional interviews.

>> That could be a possibility, if that's the direction that you all -- sorry. I'm tripping over my own tongue. If that's the direction you all would like to go into, that

[11:21:09 AM]

would negate the need to meet again, at least as the small committee between the two entities.

>> Harper-madison: Colleagues, do you have any contribution to that idea? I'm echoing council member tovo's concern around timing. I agree.

>> Kitchen: I'm okay with that. Does that work, Kathie?

>> Tovo: I think so. I'm sorry, chair, to ask you to restate it. I got hung up on the fact that I'm remembering that we only had one other.

>> Harper-madison: Was it one?

>> Tovo: I really don't remember.

>> Kitchen: It was one.

>> Tovo: And so would you mind restating the process you were suggesting?

>> Harper-madison: Well, it changes if it was just one. I couldn't recall whether or not it was one or two. But if just the one, maybe we could see if the county could

[11:22:10 AM]

narrow down their selection to one candidate for our consideration, since have the one candidate for their consideration. And then either entity interview the additional candidate and then we make the determination as a joint body?

>> Kitchen: I like that. I think that works better. That prevents us from having to go through an exercise that we really have already determined from our perspective.

>> Harper-madison: Right.

>> Kitchen: Felt comfortable with the one person. And so rather than go through an exercise that's not going to -- I don't feel like it's necessary for us.

>> Harper-madison: Julie, how do you propose we move forward? As a body do we offer the county the name of the individual that we have tentatively selected as our top candidate and then you guys do the same?

>> We could do that. I guess stepping back if the county has two candidates that

[11:23:10 AM]

they would like to recommend to you all, would you be amenable to that?

>> Harper-madison: I would. Colleagues? Yes, it appears as though that's affirmative.

>> Okay. Then what we could do, I can present that to the county that they'll select their candidates that they would like to include in the pool. They will conduct an interview of your selected candidate and then you will, when you come back, you will interview the county's selected candidates and at that point the subcommittee can get together, if there is not a consensus on a candidate, to go through and try to find one.

>> Harper-madison: Okay. I appreciate that. In which case in order to move forward I wonder if we need to -- I'm trying to figure out what is the motion. The motion is to present our candidate -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

>> I think it would be to present the candidate to the

[11:24:12 AM]

county for consideration.

>> Harper-madison: Right.

>> And then to -- I guess ahead of time approve accepting the county's candidates for interviews. And then I guess working with Lucy to find the next time that you all would do interviews.

>> Harper-madison: Okay. And, Stephanie, feel free to correct me but I think the motion is to share our candidate for the board with the county and approve accepting the county's two candidates for interviews?

>> That sounds good to us.

[11:25:12 AM]

>> Harper-madison: Okie Doke. Can I get a motion from my colleagues to share our candidate -- so council member kitchen makes the motion. Council member tovo seconds the motion. All in favor? The motion passes 3-0 with mayor pro tem Garza off the dais. Thank you, Julie, for your time and your contribution. I'll get with Lucy to figure out exactly the best way to send that information over to you.

>> Perfect. Thank you all so much. I appreciate it.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. Have a great day.

>> You too.

>> Harper-madison: Okay. So next up, briefings. We will have one briefing today. Today we'll hear from meg Moore. Meg will be presenting a briefing on menstrual equity. Meg, are you on the line?

[11:26:12 AM]

>> I am. Good morning, if it's still morning.

>> Harper-madison: It is.

>> Thank you, city hall, for bringing up my slides. So this is just an update on the menstrual equity initiative that we have been launching over the past six weeks. I wanted to open by thanking council members tovo, kitchen, and mayor pro tem Garza for their support of this initiative. On our next slide you can see that the vision for this particular initiative is that austinities' lives are not limited or restricted by menstruation. We've been working with the community to build a group that can support this work

and we've been really heartened by the enthusiastic engagement of many stakeholders. On our next slide you'll see that we've been able to build a

[11:27:14 AM]

broad coalition across the city. In addition to the council support we had engagement from public, private, and nonprofit organizations and lots of great support and lots of great organizations have been willing to join us. We have had so much support that we have decided that it will be most efficient to work at least on our pilot project with a leadership group. So we formed a work group with participation from Austin public health, Austin independent school district, the housing authority of the city of Austin, and the Texas commission for women to move forward with a couple of pilot projects that we'll talk about later on. But we also have a larger stakeholder group, including central health, the people's community clinic, and a wide group of nonprofit organizations

[11:28:14 AM]

focused on adolescent services, focused on supplying basic needs, products to underserved communities and communities that are under -- suffering especially under the pandemic restrictions, and also community organizations. So on the next slide we're going to walk you through the two pilot projects that we have launched. We're in this tenuous situation where we want to ensure that we are building menstrual equity into our work going forward but also we're operating under the pandemic restrictions, and it's very difficult to know when the transition back to, quote, normalcy will happen and also how that will impact these initiatives. So we're focusing on an educational component that we believe will be useful and helpful during the pandemic and beyond. The staff over at people's

[11:29:15 AM]

community clinic have a particular department that works with adolescents who are approaching their first periods and they have a lot of experience. They have sort of a set talk that they give face-to-face during checkups and other emergent care visits with adolescents. They walk adolescents through menstruation, what to expect, the anatomy, period products, common symptoms, and also introduce those young people to web-based tools so that they can answer their own questions after the visit. After meeting with the adolescent in these face-to-face meetings, the process has been to speak briefly with the guardians and caregivers of those adolescents to make sure that the caregivers are prepared and can reduce shame and stigma around periods for those

[11:30:16 AM]

adolescents approaching menarchy. Those methods used to convey this information are not active. There are girls' clubs in Austin ISD schools. There are talks in girl scout meetings, there are a bunch of organizations that have in-person ways to convey this information and many of those organizations are not operating on their usual schedules and they're not operating in their traditional models. The other challenge is that we have adolescent austinities who are approaching menstruation who do not identify as girls and still need this information and may have even more shame and stigma around obtaining products and obtaining information about menstruation. So the wonderful thing about this video is that this will be a resource that can be offered to any and all austinities

[11:31:20 AM]

without needing to make it too public. So this is a resource that will be very useful during the pandemic during these sort of altered-model times but also will be very useful to a lot of support organizations as we move forward out of the pandemic. Our second pilot project is distribution of period products. We are working with a bunch of organizations. Austin is very lucky to have a great group of nonprofit organizations with the support of menstruating austinities in mind. So we have been working with any and all of those organizations to try to make sure that we are providing products at the best price point and in the best manner, in the best distribution manner for people who during the pandemic do not have access through their traditional means to period products. As an example, Austin ISD had

[11:32:22 AM]

been providing period products through some of their counseling offices but swinging by the counselor's office and picking up a period pack is a lot more difficult during these days. So we're trying to figure out ways to get products out into the community. We have been very grateful for the support of haca in helping us understand what projects they are doing that would allow us to augment their supplies with period packs. Right now there are two main initiatives that we're working with haca on. The first is incorporating period packs into covid relief packs. They have -- basically they do a pack drop with any household that has been exposed or has a positive covid test. And those packs include a lot of basic hygiene items and so we are looking at incorporating menstruation products into those covid relief packs.

[11:33:24 AM]

Haca is also preparing a ppe drop. They are looking at three of their properties with about 1,000 residents and they are looking to provide ppe packs which we would include masks and hand sanitizer

so we have an easy distribution channel to get products out into the community. We're working with Austin ISD on the weekly food packs that they are distributing to all aisd students and all families with family members under the age of 19. The scope of that project is so much greater. You know, we're talking about -- I'm going to ballpark it as 200,000 packs per week and that is not a scope that our pilot is run up to at this point. And the main restriction is we have a great distribution channel. We have warehousing. The big challenge there is funding. We just don't have the funding

[11:34:25 AM]

to get these products source. Once they're sourced, again, we have some great nonprofits in town that can help us either build out products or add those products in. We have -- United Way has offered to help us find volunteers. Flow code has been very generous in offering to run volunteer events and to help us understand what -- sort of what the process would be to build period packs. The Austin diaper bank has offered to source products at the best pricing possible. We've got all of the other pieces figured out, we just need to fund this project. We don't yet know what the total pricing would be. Austin ISD is not is small organization and finding the particular data points, finding the particular contacts who can talk us through what distribution would look like, how many products they would need, those logistical details

[11:35:26 AM]

we're still working on that so I do not have a number on the period products that we would need to fulfill that Austin ISD need, but that is something that we're working on figuring out. So that's the bulk of the briefing. On our next slide you'll see that I'm also calling out and asking for any advice or guidance. If anyone has any ideas of donors or funders that might be interested in supporting bulk period products, either through a donation of their products themselves or through funding. Any suggestions on what I haven't thought of for these two pilot projects. And then down the road as we move out of covid and into, again, our quote return to normalcy, closed quote, how we can ensure that we are moving

[11:36:26 AM]

back into a model of normalcy that accommodates the menstrual needs of all austinites. I'm very grateful for any ideas, suggestions, or unanswered questions that I've missed so far. Please let me know or drop me an e-mail but I'm ready for questions.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you very much, Meagan. I appreciate the time and effort you have poured into this initiative. I know that it's been a lot and I appreciate that you recognize just how important it is. Colleagues, do you have any questions? Council member tovo.

>> Tovo: I don't have any questions just to say thank you for your leadership on this, for your office's leadership on this and thank you, meg, for the update. This is really an important area and I'm very happy to see it moving forward with the intent to really work with the nonprofits on the ground who are able to do this so effectively.

[11:37:26 AM]

So thanks very much. I look forward to continuing to support the efforts in whatever way I can.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, Kathie. Council member kitchen.

>> Kitchen: Yes, I really appreciate this effort and want to thank you, guys for proceeding with it. I have a question that -- well, you touched on partnerships and stuff like that. Could you speak again or in more detail about central health's role or potential to partner?

>> I have been very grateful for the open support from central health staff, specifically Monica crawley has been very interested in participating to any extent that she can and to any extent she can engage central health. Right now my focus has mostly been on getting these pilots up and running as quickly as possible during the pandemic. As I'm sure all of you know

[11:38:27 AM]

there are questions about how the aid food packs will continue in the new year, given some funding questions. And we are -- so we really want to get those haca packs out as quickly as possible. But I think part of the reason I'm having trouble getting some answers from aisd revolve around those issues which you are so aware. But this is all a very long way of saying that because my focus has been pretty narrowly on those pilot projects and the broader search has been for funding and to engage stakeholders, I have not had a lot of one-on-one work with central health but I've just gotten a lot of enthusiastic support and offers of help. I just haven't taken them up on many of them yet.

>> Kitchen: Okay. I was just jumping ahead, thinking of potential partner funding sources to move forward that pilot stage. Would it be correct to assume

[11:39:28 AM]

you've got the resources you need for the pilot stage?

>> Sadly, no. I believe that we can meet the haca need. There was an initiative -- there was a pilot from Austin public health that ran last year and those products were distributed through community centers, libraries, and other support organizations. And understandably, because they had an effective model up

and running, they're not particularly interested in repurposing those funds. They're interested in reserving them for our return to normalcy, so that search is starting anew.

>> Kitchen: Okay. Well, I would be interested in understanding, maybe you could share with my office to see if we can be of help to you, you know, the order magnitude or dollar amount you're needing for resources. Because I would be thinking of,

[11:40:28 AM]

you know, some potential resources that could perhaps help you. So if you'd like to reach out to Donna in my office, we'll see if we can help.

>> I am so grateful for that and I will certainly reach out to Ms. Teenan. We have been estimating to get our pilot up and running, we're looking at about \$10,000. But, again, it's variable based on how the aid food packs go and whether we're able to get any of the products donated or subsidized.

>> Kitchen: Well, that's an order of magnitude we ought to be able to find. Kathie.

>> Tovo: I completely agree and I think -- anyway, that's good to know. Thank you so much for that information and I have a couple of ideas about where we might be able to find that pretty easily.

[11:41:32 AM]

>> Kitchen: Okay. I really appreciate all y'all's efforts on this. This is so important and it's something that gets overlooked a lot. I know, council member harper-madison, you have been championing this for a while so I appreciate all y'all have done.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you, council member. Meg, I actually don't have any additional questions. So unless there's anything else, we really appreciate the presentation and look forward to the continued effort.

>> I'm so grateful to all of you for your support. Thank you so much.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. Have a great day.

>> You too.

>> Harper-madison: All right. So it looks like the committee will now go into closed session to take up one item. Pursuant to sections 551.074 of the government code, the committee will discuss personnel matters related to item 6, the

[11:42:32 AM]

appointment of members to the central health board of managers. Is there any objection to going into executive session on the items announced? Okay. So hearing none, the committee will now go into executive session. I'll see you all over in the executive session.

[Executive session]

[11:55:25 AM]

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[12:05:53 PM]

>> Harper-madison: The time is 12:05 P.M. And the hsc is out of executive session, in closed session we took up personal any matters related to item 6 which is the appointment of matters to the central health board of managers. And I am happy to make some updates. Our joint appointment alongside the county effective immediately and for the remainder of the current term and for the upcoming term is amit -- we really appreciate having had the opportunity to interview so many qualified and phenomenal candidates, and we really, we think you are going to do a great job. Happy to make that announcement. Additionally, the city's appointment effective 12/1 of 2021 is Cynthia Brinson, again, another fantastic highly qualified candidate, so excited

[12:06:53 PM]

to be able to move forward with your participation on the board. And look too the opportunity to get to know you better in the interview. So thank you for your service.

>> Chair, this is Stephanie -- sorry to interrupt. It is January 1st, 2021 for Cynthia.

>> Harper-madison: I said that correct?

>> I think I heard 12/1.

>> I am sorry.

>> I just wanted to clarify, thank you.

>> Harper-madison: Now I don't remember. I said it two sends ago. So we are the city's appointment to the board is Cynthia Brinson effective January 1st, 2021. Thank you for that clarification. All right. So the only thing left is to identify any future items. Looks like there are none.

>> Chair, I am sorry, this is Stephanie again, could I get a vote on that, please.

>> I am sorry. Can you speak up a little.

>> Let me switch my --

>> Sorry.

[12:07:53 PM]

>> She needs us to vote.

>> Could you please vote. Thank you.

>> Oh, for future items. No, for amit and Cynthia?

>> Yes, correct.

>> Collectively or individually?

>> You can take them all up in one motion.

>> Okay. So can I get a motion to appoint amit twaney joint appointment immediately for the upcoming term and Cynthia Brinson effective, 1/1/21, yes. >>

>> So.

>> The motion is made by councilmember kitchen and seconded by councilmember tovo. All in favor. The motion passes 3-0, with mayor pro tem Garza off the da dais. Councilmember tovo.

>> Just this is can -- you probably said this I apologize if you are -- this is a recommendation to the full

[12:08:53 PM]

council and so the full council will be taking action on it, on those nominations soon.

>> Harper-madison: Thank you. Anything further, colleagues? Okay. So this is the opportunity for us to identify any future items to take up. And that's obviously always an option that we can communicate outside of this forum. Okay. And in which case -- so just a reminder the next hhsc meeting will be on February 17th, 2021, and if there is no objection to us adjourning, I would say we are adjourned at 12:09 P.M. 12:09 on 12/9. All right. Thank you.