



COUNCIL MINUTES

March 31, 2020

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session via virtual format streamed into the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on March 31, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

John Giles*
Mark Freeman*
Jennifer Duff*
Francisco Heredia*
David Luna*
Kevin Thompson*
Jeremy Whittaker*

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Dee Ann Mickelsen
Jim Smith

(*Council participated in the meeting through the use of video conference equipment.)

Mayor Giles conducted a roll call.

1. Hear a presentation, continue discussions, and provide direction on COVID-19 impacts, responses, and the City's future actions, focusing on Public Safety and community resources.

Fire Chief Mary Cameli provided an update on personal protective equipment (PPE) stating it is the number one issue for Mesa and across the nation. She explained that as of today, the City has enough masks and gloves for at least one month, and an additional 18,000 surgical masks were just received. She commented the surgical masks are used on patients as another barrier and line of defense to help protect staff members from exposure.

Chief Cameli stated if the supply of N95 masks is depleted, the department has a supply of P100 masks that can be used. She added gowns are in low supply and staff is trying to preserve that supply by disinfecting them after calls for service. She indicated the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) has shipped an additional supply; that in the first shipment the City received 195 masks and 150 state packs, which are individual packs consisting of gloves, masks, and gowns, which were provided to the Police Department vehicles. She explained the distribution from the SNS is to hospitals first, long term healthcare facilities are second, essential healthcare is third, and first responders are fourth. She pointed out the daily use is monitored and reported to the County, which is how the distribution of supplies is determined.

Chief Cameli remarked members' temperatures continue to be taken every day to ensure staff does not come to work with a fever; and if a fever is detected, the staff member is sent home. She commented on how calls are approached differently; that dispatch is asking callers about signs and symptoms of the flu; that as crews approach a scene, one crew member walks to the

door; if the patient is ambulatory, the patient is asked to step outside to treat the patient in the open air to minimize the risk. She added chairs for patients are being placed in each truck to better treat patients on-scene.

Chief Cameli explained that, when possible, crews are disinfecting equipment at the scene, or at the station before vehicles are brought into the bays, to reduce the risk of exposure. She commented New York started seeing a shortage of doctors and nurses as a result of quarantines, resulting in first responders across the nation being called back to service. She added, as a result, first responders do not quarantine when exposed. She reported Banner will be providing testing for firefighters if they become symptomatic.

Chief Cameli remarked that Council will continue receiving daily updates from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and staff has started looking at locations for patients in case hospitals become overcrowded.

Chief Cameli highlighted the peak projections for Arizona, which changes daily. She commented the data shows the peak for Arizona on April 26th, which came from the University of Washington and is designed to gauge hospital bed availability, the number of ICU beds that will be needed, and how many ventilators will be needed. She indicated the peak for New York and many eastern states is early April; however, these peaks change daily.

Chief Cameli reported on social service programs that have been implemented such as visiting high utilization callers to assess needs. She explained that the average age of this group is 71, that they have felt very isolated and have been very appreciative of the outreach. She stated crews have shared the "Adopt-a-Grandparent" program, as well as other services that are available to residents.

She indicated another program the City will be implementing is two-person units with a Medic and an EMT, called the Mobile Triage Unit (MTU), which is a region-wide approach to respond to COVID-type calls in order to minimize the risk of exposure to staff. She added the program will start the week of April 13.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles, Chief Cameli confirmed the peak date for Arizona is April 26th at 4,800 cases; however, social distancing efforts will impact those projections. She explained the projections extend into June, which also reflect a need for 220 Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds and 6,000 hospital beds at the peak. She added, based on this projection, we should have adequate hospital beds, that the County estimates 20% of the patients that get the virus will be hospitalized, approximately 25,000 cases will be in Arizona, and Maricopa County will likely have the highest number since it is the largest county in the state.

In response to a question from Councilmember Whittaker related to the source of the data, Chief Cameli commented both the County and Mesa's alarm room track available hospital beds in the County, when they are available, and when they are on diversion and cannot take additional patients. She stated hospitals are currently not overcrowded.

City Manager Christopher Brady referred Council and viewers to the website COVID19.healthdata.org to view the chart and data.

In response to a question from Councilmember Duff regarding hospital bed availability in Mesa, Chief Cameli pointed out that staff tracks availability for every hospital in the city, so when a

patient is being transported the alarm room can advise the company officer if a hospital is full and where the closest facility is located.

In response to questions from Councilmember Luna, Chief Cameli explained that multiple locations were identified as alternative hospital care facilities, including Mesa General and Hacienda Children's Hospital. She added that information on those facilities will be sent to the County for further assessment.

Mr. Brady remarked while hospitals are not currently overwhelmed, planning is occurring for the next 45-60 days in order to be prepared for the peak, which is anticipated to occur around April 26th, and a hospital bed peak sometime in May.

Chief Cameli commented the national average for hospital beds needed is 2.4 per 1,000 people, Arizona's average is 1.9, and Mesa's is 2.4.

In response to a series of questions from Vice Mayor Freeman, Chief Cameli explained if a patient tested positive, the quarantine period is seven days; and if symptomatic, the quarantine would extend until symptom free for three days.

In response to Vice Mayor Freeman's question regarding federal stimulus funding for MTUs, Chief Cameli commented she would anticipate this program would be reimbursable with federal funding since it is specifically for COVID response.

Mr. Brady remarked there are numerous programs being rolled out in response to COVID. He stated these programs will be accounted for separately in order to identify activities related to COVID for possible federal funding reimbursement.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles related to the social distancing model, Chief Cameli advised that the chart reflecting the peak cases takes social distancing into account; and as a result of the Governor's stay-at-home order, the numbers will change again and will continue to be very fluid. She added the numbers will continue to be monitored and will change daily.

In response to a question from Councilmember Thompson related to the health degradation of the homeless community, Chief Cameli commented that information is tracked by the County and staff will get that data. She added that the County is only tracking positive COVID cases among the homeless population.

Assistant City Manager John Pombier cautioned the website referenced earlier is one of many modeling sites, and that many of the sites have different assumptions and show many different varying strengths of the curve. He indicated the sites do agree that the peak will be reached towards the end of April.

In response to a question from Councilmember Whittaker regarding ventilators, Chief Cameli mentioned Mesa Fire has 37 ventilators, and if needed, can be provided to hospitals.

Police Chief Kenneth Cost commented he meets with the Major Cities Police Chiefs Association every week and the common theme is a shortage of PPE. He extended his appreciation to Chief Cameli and Mesa Fire & Medical for providing additional PPE to the Police Department to ensure the minimum CDC requirements are being met.

Chief Cost explained calls for service since January are down approximately 3.7%, and staff is monitoring categories of calls and reviewing data daily to see if there is a spike in certain types of calls to better redistribute resources. He commented that officers are directed to visible areas, such as parks and neighborhoods, in order to have a visible police presence.

Chief Cost pointed out dispatch is also screening calls, which has been successful in getting people outside to help mitigate the contact that officers have with people inside their homes and to assist with social distancing. He added officers still need to touch people at times in order to conduct business, so the goal is to secure enough PPE gear to ensure safety.

Mayor Giles thanked Chief Cost and Chief Cameli for the presentations.

2. Hear a presentation, discuss, and provide direction on updates on recent federal legislation, federal and state funding allocations, process updates and considerations for Mesa resulting from the effects COVID-19, with a focus on available federal funding options, including allocating available CDBG funds toward serving Mesa's homeless, low-moderate income families, elderly, and other at-risk populations.

Mr. Brady commented on the \$2 trillion CARES Act, also known as the Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security Act which President Trump signed on March 27th. He indicated, as a local government, Mesa's responsibility is to be aware of what will be available over the next 30 days. He explained the Mesa CARES program is the local version of the federal act, and staff will be looking at the dollars coming to Mesa and how to best apply those dollars. He pointed out City staff is being organized and redirected to conduct a needs assessment based on the categories that are available from the federal dollars. He advised staff is also reaching out to community partners regarding homelessness, utility assistance, rental assistance, food distribution, as well as any other needs that will impact the community as a result of COVID that may be eligible under the stimulus plan.

Mr. Brady explained staff that would otherwise be employed in the libraries, parks and recreation facilities, museums, or arts centers, will be redirected to work with Mesa's partners in the community by directly contacting community members to identify the needs in the community and creating categories to begin working with Council to distribute the dollars in the community.

Deputy City Manager Natalie Lewis introduced Housing and Community Development Director Michelle Albanese and highlighted the efforts over the last couple of weeks. She indicated there are federal dollars that are already allocated to Mesa, and staff is working to identify some needs and put together some proposals to put that money to work in Mesa as soon as possible.

Ms. Albanese explained congress recently passed three pieces of legislation, which have been aimed at combating the virus and its impact to the community. She commented under this specific act, the states are going to receive an additional \$5 billion in funding which will be used for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and/or Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) for this fiscal year. She remarked this is the first bill that will provide direct financial assistance to aid individuals that are impacted by the Coronavirus, and will fund existing and new programs for CDBG and ESG to help prevent, prepare, and respond to the virus.

Ms. Albanese presented a funding overview, and explained the CDBG dollars can be used for public service type activities such as education, prevention, supplies, or Meals on Wheels but could also include creating more beds in facilities or renovating existing spaces to assist with the quarantine. **(See Attachment 1)**

Ms. Albanese highlighted the ESG dollars that have been allocated and explained they can be used for individuals who are either homeless, receiving homeless services, or for homeless prevention. She explained the City is an entitlement community, which means we receive funding from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on an annual basis based on a formula of population, poverty, and other socioeconomic factors. She added states will receive \$2 billion which will be based on risk and a new formula distribution that HUD is developing.

Ms. Albanese commented the \$2 billion dollars for grantees will directly affect the City within the next 30 days. She provided an overview of the last two years CDBG and ESG funding allocations. (See Page 3 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Albanese reported the CARES Act not only brings additional funding, but also relaxes some of the HUD regulations and requirements. She indicated, for example, the City is required to report CDBG spending plans to HUD by May 15th every year; however, this year that requirement is extended to August 2021. She stated the public service cap, which assists with education and Meals on Wheels, is typically capped at 15% of our allocation and that will be suspended for Fiscal Year (FY) 19-20 and FY 20-21, as well as the additional funds we are receiving through this act. She added the public comment period for the use of funds is a minimum of 30 days; however, in light of COVID, that has been reduced to five days and will be done through virtual settings.

Ms. Albanese highlighted the types of eligible programs that can be funded with CDBG and ESG funds. (See Pages 5 through 7 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Albanese affirmed staff is currently assessing needs within the community and among non-profits that deliver services, as well as working to develop preliminary ideas for programs and services that could include some of the services already administered or new programs. She added until HUD releases the funds, staff will continue working on and developing an accelerated application process rather than the 10- to 15-page application that is used annually.

In response to a question from Councilmember Luna related to the application process, Ms. Lewis indicated the federal government has made a lot of changes to give cities more flexibility in how the dollars are used. She added as staff moves forward in the process, agencies will be sought out that have experience utilizing federal dollars and have the capacity to complete the documentation that is required, which will be helpful as we try to expedite the process.

Mr. Brady cautioned that after the crisis has passed and the dollars have been spent, the real work for the City will begin with the reconciliation and audits, which can be very burdensome. He stated experienced non-profits who are sophisticated enough to process these dollars, track them, and meet the qualifications and expectations of the federal government will be the ones included in the process. He concluded by saying if not, the City will be paying back dollars to the federal government for agencies that cannot keep up with these kinds of administrative responsibilities.

Councilmember Luna expressed concern related to City staff reviewing the applications. He asked if it is possible to repurpose and redirect City employees to this task while still ensuring federal requirements are being followed.

Mr. Brady explained management is working with all of the departments who have available staff to possibly bring them on board to either assist Michelle and her group, or work on the front end helping to contact and work through the criteria with the non-profits. He commented that some of the programs may be administered by the City, as it may be faster and more expeditious to take on the responsibility, which is not normally the case. He assured Council the City has a

tremendous amount of staff that are underutilized right now, so the first objective is to engage them and then to look for other resources, if needed.

Councilmember Thompson expressed concern regarding residents that are being laid off from their jobs and ensuring there is funding to help families and keep more people from falling into homelessness. He agreed that staff needs to be working with agencies, like Mesa United Way, that understand that pathway.

Mayor Giles inquired to what extent Council's previous philosophy will be applied to the current pandemic in terms of being more proactive and less reactive in funding social services and identifying what kind of RFP model staff would move forward with to ensure appropriate services are being offered instead of waiting to see what is requested.

Mr. Brady explained staff will be contacting nonprofits, faith-based communities, and individuals directly to get a better sense of the magnitude and categories, whether it is homelessness, rental assistance, food distribution, or elderly assistance. He added this will help staff understand the magnitude of the impact to our community, create categories of assistance, and come back to Council for direction. He commented nonprofits can respond to staff so the City can provide relief in these specific areas.

Councilmember Duff offered the opinion that an important part of what Council and staff are doing with CDBG and ESG dollars is in the area of mental health. She commented that attention should be brought to that area through nonprofits, volunteers, or possibly an 800 number to provide mental health assistance to residents, especially over the next 30 days. She requested information on the dollars available for this type of assistance.

Ms. Albanese remarked that, from what she understands, this type of funding is not available; however, that may change as HUD updates the requirements and regulations. She added that staff may be able to utilize some CDBG dollars towards mental health.

Vice Mayor Freeman commented he would like to see funds allocated to the residents of Mesa and some to homelessness. He stated there are going to be families in our community that will need financial, as well as other types of assistance, and he would like to see a large part of that funding go to residents in our community.

Ms. Lewis explained that staff is currently looking for ideas and soliciting proposals from nonprofits. She added staff has identified five major areas of need in the community and one of them has to do with helping the elderly. She provided, as an example, After Aging is upgrading the downtown campus and needs equipment to assist with the Meals on Wheels program.

Ms. Lewis remarked that staff is in the proposal stage, so locations with extra space will be considered for conversion to additional emergency shelter space or for use in a quarantine.

In response to a question from Vice Mayor Freeman related to funds used to reopen parks, Mr. Brady explained the decision to close the playgrounds was secondary to the cost of cleaning; however, that is still a consideration. He stated that even if the City had the dollars available at this time, it is questionable whether it would be recommended to reopen the parks. He added the message conveyed to the general public is to encourage activities where the general public is not having shared public contact.

In response to a question from Councilmember Thompson regarding keeping parks open but playgrounds closed, Mr. Brady commented that the parks remain open, but the playgrounds and equipment have been closed. He remarked residents are encouraged to go to the parks using trails, pathways, and large fields, while still practicing social distancing.

In response to a question from Mayor Giles related to the needs assessment and soliciting proposals, Mr. Brady explained later this week Council will receive an update on the framework and categories in order to provide feedback. He explained the categories will be the basis for soliciting proposals and the goal is to have the programs in place so when funding becomes available, the dollars can be distributed as soon as possible.

In response to questions from Councilmember Heredia related to sanitizing stations in the City and State funding for housing and other services for Mesa, Ms. Lewis commented that nonprofits are looking into funding for sanitizing stations; however based on demand, these are difficult to find and very expensive. She commented that in terms of State funding for housing, there are dollars available that will apply to homeless and at-risk populations, and staff is reviewing and will provide additional information as details emerge.

In response to a question from Councilmember Whittaker related to utilizing City employees for foodbank alternatives, Mr. Brady explained the food bank has a lot of infrastructure to store and package food, distribute, and are licensed to handle food, which the City does not have; however, there are other ways we can help. He stated staff can look at nonprofits that do not have the capacity to administer a program and self-administer if the City has available staff.

Councilmember Whittaker expressed concern related to hourly employees that are not getting the hours they need to pay expenses.

Ms. Lewis continued the presentation highlighting the CARES Act, and explained through conversations with nonprofits, five need categories have been identified. She commented the need categories are composed of system issues since there are new services needed due to COVID; and are geared to at-risk populations, such as the elderly and low-to-moderate income families that might be losing jobs and need rental assistance.

Ms. Lewis referred to the five need categories and indicated staff is asking nonprofits and faith-based agencies working with nonprofits to submit proposals on how to respond to the categories. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

Ms. Lewis identified the three key criteria that will be used when making proposal recommendations. She added staff would also consider the agency's ability to provide these services in an expedited way since needs are increasing daily and funds need to get to nonprofits quickly. She stated the recommendations will be coming to Council in the next couple of weeks and staff expects implementation shortly thereafter. (See Page 11 of Attachment 1)

Councilmember Thompson expressed concern related to the homeless and elderly and stressed the need to ensure space is identified for the homeless to make sure the City is not adding to the homeless population during the pandemic.

Ms. Lewis commented on tracking the homeless during the pandemic. She explained that while those numbers are not available at this time, the Arizona Public Health Department is tracking that information and there are conversations both at a regional level and at the local level to begin sharing that data. She added the homeless population is part of the State's priority because this

is a vulnerable population, with poor health, chronic medical conditions, and behavioral health conditions. She pointed out the homeless are an aging population that tend to congregate together, with limited ability to follow public health advice, which makes it even more difficult.

Councilmember Thompson commented that the great majority of the homeless population does not want to be put into shelters, and indicated he hates to see a lot of funding be utilized for a class of individuals that do not want help when there is an entire society of residents, such as the elderly, that are tax paying citizens of Mesa that really do need help in this kind of crisis.

In response to a question from Councilmember Heredia regarding regional solutions, Mr. Brady stated regional discussions are already taking place and currently there are conversations occurring with Tempe and Phoenix on how to coordinate on the homeless issue.

Mayor Giles highlighted a Small Business Summit online web broadcast scheduled for Thursday at 1:30 p.m. for the small business community. He directed viewers to the broadcast at [Mesaaz.gov/smallbusinesssummit](https://mesaaz.gov/smallbusinesssummit) where federal sources will be discussed, as well as the stay-at-home order.

Councilmember Thompson expressed appreciation to staff for the daily updates. He explained many residents are asking what is going on statewide, countywide, and in Mesa, and it is sometimes hard to respond without going through all the websites to gather data and information, putting it together, and then making sure that the right information is being distributed.

Mr. Brady recommended that Council forward questions and inquiries from constituents so staff can address questions and topics to send out uniform messaging to the community.

Councilmember Luna stressed the importance of information for the Spanish-speaking community. He indicated that these are very difficult times and some of these issues are quite complicated, so it is especially important to make sure staff is conveying that information.

Councilmember Duff concurred with Councilmember Luna and stated the importance of providing information in plain language so when executive orders are issued, Council is not leaving constituents wondering what the order means.

Mayor Giles agreed that once the information is provided, Council and staff need to interpret the information as soon as possible and provide direction to the community in clear language.

Mayor Giles thanked staff for the presentation.

3. Scheduling of meetings.

Thursday, April 2, 2020, 7:30 a.m. – Study Session

4. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

ATTEST:

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 31st day of March 2020. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

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City Council Special Meeting

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

March 31, 2020

City Manager's Office & Community Services
Departments



mesa•az

What is the CARES Act?

CARES ACT

Funding

Overview

- 3rd federal response bill COVID-19 crisis
- 1st bill -
 - Direct financial aid
 - Additional funds to programs
 - Address homelessness
 - Affordable housing

CARES ACT

Funding

Overview

Community Development Block Grant
(CDBG) - \$5 billion

- Prevent, prepare for and respond to
Coronavirus

Emergency Solutions Grant Program
(ESG) - \$4 billion

- Prevent, prepare for, and respond to
Coronavirus to persons/families who:
 - Are homeless
 - Receiving homeless assistance
- Homeless prevention assistance

CARES ACT ESG Distribution of Funds

\$2 billion – States & Entitlementments

- Grantees - FY 19/20
- Regular formula distribution

\$2 billion - States

- States & Local Governments
- Communities at highest risk
- HUD to develop formula distribution

CARES ACT

City of Mesa Allocations

CDBG/ESG

FY	CDBG Allocation	ESG Allocation
2019/20	\$3,729,487	\$308,423
2020/21	\$4,066,246	\$327,701
CARES Act	\$2,393,197	\$2,260,007
Total:	\$10,188,930	\$2,896,131

CARES ACT

CDBG

CDBG Provisions

Provision	Historical Requirements	Cares Act (incl. FY 19/20)
HUD Plans Due	May 15, 2020	Aug 16, 2021
Public Service Cap	15%	Suspended
Public Comment Period	30-Days	5-Days
Public Hearings	In-person	Virtual

CARES ACT

CDBG

CDBG Eligible Uses

- Public Services
 - Testing & diagnosis – fixed & mobile locations
 - Equipment, supplies, materials
 - Meal delivery to quarantined individuals
- Public Facilities
 - Acquisition/Rehabilitation of facilities
 - Site improvements

CARES ACT

ESG

ESG Eligible Uses

- Shelter Operations
- Supplies, furnishings, equipment
 - i.e. cleaning supplies, bed linens, room dividers, beds, sanitizer, washers/dryers
- Transportation
 - i.e. bus passes, taxi – medical care

CARES ACT

ESG

ESG Eligible Uses

- Street Outreach
- Engagement equipment
 - i.e. staff masks, gloves, PPE
 - Hand out sanitizer, soap, masks
- Case Management
 - i.e. coordinating medical care, transportation
- Bus passes, taxis – medical care

CARES ACT

Planning Phase

Next Steps

- Pending HUD release of funds – min. 30 days
- Keep apprised of new information daily
- Assessing needs
- Develop preliminary ideas – programs & services
- Information gathering from non-profits
- Developing accelerated application process
- Inter-departmental collaboration

Short- Term

Assistance

Planning Phase

Locally-controlled federal funding
\$1.6M

Needs are expected to rise.

- As we await clarity on stimulus, other state funding, supplement existing non-profit agencies for work specific to COVID-19.

Short-

Term

Assistance

Planning

Phase

Reprogrammed CDBG funds

\$1.6M

Five High-Need Categories:

1. Quarantine space for homeless
2. Emergency shelter beds for homeless
3. Services for the elderly
4. Food supplies and assistance
5. Rent, utility assistance for low-moderate income families, with focus on L-M households who lost jobs.

Key Criteria

Short-

Term

Assistance

Planning

Phase

1. COVID-19 Need
2. Agency capacity and experience using CDBG funds.
3. Mesa-based priority; service.

Next steps

Short-

Term

Assistance

- Now: requesting proposals for consideration.
- Recommend proposals to be funded this month, or sooner if possible. *
- Implementation by non-profits begins soon thereafter; reimbursement process for \$1.6M completed.

Planning

Phase

- * Note: this will be parallel to FY 20/21 Council review of federal funding allocations.

CARES

ACT

Planning

Phase

CARES ACT

- Updates provided, as information is available.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Questions?

March 31, 2020