

CITY OF FORT WORTH, TEXAS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024

Present:

Mayor Mattie Parker
Mayor Pro tem Gyna M. Bivens, District 5
Council Member Carlos Flores, District 2
Council Member Michael D. Crain, District 3
Council Member Charlie Lauersdorf, District 4
Council Member Jared Williams, District 6
Council Member Macy Hill, District 7
Council Member Chris Nettles, District 8
Council Member Elizabeth Beck, District 9
Council Member Alan Blaylock, District 10
Council Member Jeanette Martinez, District 11

Staff Present:

David Cooke, City Manager
Leann Guzman, City Attorney
Jannette S. Goodall, City Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum of the City Council Members present, Mayor Parker called the Special Called City Council Work Session on Homelessness Issues of the Fort Worth City Council to order 11:06 a.m. on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, in the City Council Conference Room 2020 of the Fort Worth City Hall, 200 Texas Street, Fort Worth, Texas.

1. Opening Remarks - Mayor Mattie Parker

Mayor Parker provided opening comments on the goals of the workshop.

2. Introduction - Fernando Costa, City Manager's Office

Introduction to the homelessness issues was provided by Fernando Costa, Assistant City Manager.

3. Short-Term Strategies - Assistant Chief Robert Alldredge, Police Department

Presentation was made by Assistant Chief Robert Alldredge, Police Department.

Council Member Flores requested heat maps of homeless camps be shared with Council.

4. Long-Term Solutions - Tara Perez, Neighborhood Services Department, and Lauren King, Tarrant County Homeless Coalition

Presentation was made by Tara Perez, Neighborhood Services Department and Lauren King, Tarrant County Homeless Coalition.

Council Member Flores requested information on how homeless residents were counted during the 2020 Census.

Mayor Pro tem Bivens recommended that homelessness issues need to be incorporated into the City's neighborhood improvement strategies.

Mayor Pro tem Bivens suggested looking at how information for landlords and the voucher program could be incorporated into landlord training provide by Code Compliance.

Council Member Nettles requested information how the City plans to budget for future affordable housing projects.

Council Member Beck requested information on what other cities are doing to help prevent evictions.

Council Member Beck requested staff prepare an ordinance on preventing eviction of veterans.

Council Member Beck requested information on options for modeling Houston's approach of using federal funds such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds.

Council Member Beck suggested including the need of increased federal funding on the legislative agenda.

Mayor Parker recessed the meeting at 12:40 p.m.

Mayor Parker reconvened the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

Presentation by Lauren King, Tarrant County Homeless Coalition.

Council Member Crain requested a list of policy recommendations.

Lauren King provided the following policy recommendations:

- Expedite permits required for affordable housing and permanent supporting housing projects.
- Waive any fees that could be waived.
- Include housing in the Bond discussions.
- Prioritize funding for homelessness needs.

Council Member Nettles asked for recommendations on a reasonable amount to request of voters in a bond election dedicated to affordable housing projects.

Council Member Williams recommended identifying incentives designed to help distribute affordable housing across the City.

Council Member Beck asked for information on what other cities offer as incentives to target housing.

5. Community Partner Perspectives - Steve Montgomery, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Mary-Margaret Lemons, Fort Worth Housing Solutions, Susan Garnett, My Health, My Resources of Tarrant County, Toby Owen, Presbyterian Night Shelter, Bruce Frankel, DRC Solutions, Kim Robinson, Tarrant County Samaritan Housing, Artie Williams, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Council had the following questions for the Community Partners:

Steve Montgomery, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce

- Mayor Parker asked what additional assistance is needed from Council for their members.

Mary-Margaret Lemons, Fort Worth Housing Solutions

- Council Member Beck requested information on options for adopting an ordinance to require housing developers seeking incentives from the City to access vouchers issued by the City's Housing Authority.

Susan Garnett, My Health, My Resources of Tarrant County

- Council had no questions.

Toby Owen, Presbyterian Night Shelter

- Mr. Owen recommended to Council that streamlining the permitting processes within the City would be beneficial to moving affordable housing projects forward.

Bruce Frankel, DRC Solutions

- Mayor Parker asked for recommendations on assisting employee retention within the partner organizations.

Mr. Frankel recommended adopting programs that provide a certification pipeline for social workers, increasing living wages and wages of employees and recognition of social workers.

Kim Robinson, Tarrant County Samaritan Housing

- Council had no questions.

Artie Williams, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

- Council had no questions.

6. Next Steps - Fernando Costa

Council will look at scheduling a follow-up meeting to discuss next steps.

7. Discussion

Council will look at scheduling a follow-up meeting to continue the discussion.

8. Closing Remarks - Mayor Mattie Parker

Council Member Crain requested the issue of children who experience homelessness be included in future discussions.

Council Member Hill requested the issue of poverty, mental health and prevention be included in future discussions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Parker adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.