



OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY
Office of the Mayor
CITY OF NEW HAVEN
TONI N. HARP, Mayor



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Memorandum

To: Tyisha Walker, President of the Board of Alders and Board of Alders Finance Committee

From: Mendi Blue, Director of Development and Policy

Subject: Office of Development and Policy Operational Update and Clarification on Grants Processes

Date: April 7, 2016

Dear Honorable Tyisha Walker and Board of Alders Finance Committee,

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to update the Finance Committee [“the Committee”] on the work of the Office of Development and Policy [“the Office”] during the March 29, 2016 budget workshop. Over the past 21 months since the Board of Alders [“the Board”] made the responsible fiscal decision to approve the position of Director of Development and Policy effective July 1, 2014, the Office of Development and Policy has achieved significant successes in both the development and policy initiatives it was created to advance. (See Appendix A for the job description of the Director of Development and Policy, which speaks to the nature of work performed.) I am very grateful for the Board’s partnership in making these successes possible.

I write today to respond to the Board’s requests in the March 29th and March 30th budget hearings to receive a current operational update on the Office of Development and Policy as well as an explanation of how grants “work in the city in its entirety”. As the Director of the Office of Development and Policy and the city administrator with primary responsibility “for leading development and policy activities for the City in partnership with the Mayor and department heads,” I believe I am in the best position to respond to both inquiries.

I. Office of Development and Policy Operational Update

The Office of Development and Policy has undertaken a variety of grant and policy initiatives to benefit the City of New Haven. The work has included traditional grant project management and writing, special funding requests, as well as essential start-up activities related to information management and recordkeeping; policy and procedure development; and internal and external communications for the Office. To lay a solid foundation for future development and policy work, during the Office’s first year of operation significant time was invested in the start-up activities described above.

It is worth noting that all of the Office's accomplishments have been achieved through the efforts of a single city-funded employee (the Director) with no full or part-time city-funded support staff and zero expenditure of contract dollars on grant writers or consultants to assist in any of the Office's responsibilities, including securing federal and/or philanthropic funds, establishing effective and accountable processes to ensure that the Office is achieving expected results, or implementing any of the programmatic or policy initiatives that the Office has led. A deliberate and concerted effort has been made at all steps to limit the financial burden on taxpayers in achieving development and policy results.

Nevertheless, the Office has not performed in isolation and has engaged in tremendous partnerships with various other city departments and external organizations. Effective partnership engagement has been the bedrock of much of the work described below and in the attached appendices, which reflect collaborative efforts for which many inside and outside of City Hall deserve credit.

Although a concerted effort has been made to ensure that all information is accurately captured on the attached spreadsheet, it should be noted that because the city does not currently have an IT grants management system (no money has been allocated for a system, so the Office of Development and Policy is currently working with other city departments to figure out the best way to purchase one), relevant information may not be reflected. For example, the Office of Development and Policy has provided numerous support letters on behalf of the City of New Haven to catalyze city-wide fundraising efforts. The Office has also submitted numerous Letters of Intent to funders as part of pre-application readiness assessments for highly competitive grants. Lastly, the information shared today should supersede any approximations provided to the Committee in the Mayor's Office's March 29, 2016 budget workshop.

A. Development Summary

- Secured approximately \$15.1M in readily quantifiable grants, special funding requests, technical assistance and in-kind contributions from state, federal, philanthropic and corporate funders, **representing 130x the Office's budgeted salary line item.**
 - Appendix B details the above-referenced development achievements, specifying the role of the Office of Development and Policy on each opportunity and partners as relevant.
 - Appendix B also reflects hundreds of thousands of dollars in additional resources that are either pending or not readily quantifiable. To the best of historic knowledge, all but two of the development successes reflect new opportunities for the City of New Haven.
- Aided community organizations in securing at least \$50,000 in direct funds through creation and dissemination of the first city-generated funding guides for community nonprofits.
 - The estimate of dollars raised is based on a survey of guide recipients conducted in spring 2015. As it has been a year since organizations were surveyed, the actual number of dollars raised is likely much greater.
 - More than 100 individuals and community partners subscribe to the weekly Children & Youth and Arts & Culture guides.

B. Policy Summary

The Office of Development and Policy also carries out many policy initiatives. These initiatives are primarily in three categories:

- 1) Implementation of grants/donated resources that have been secured and for which other departments do not have capacity or responsibility to implement, e.g. Microsoft Digital Alliance;
- 2) Implementation of grants that require Mayor's Office leadership as a term of the grant agreement, e.g. Summer Meals Program; and
- 3) Special policy initiatives as requested by the Mayor, e.g. Blue Ribbon Commission on Reading.

All of the Office of Development and Policy's policy initiatives have been implemented with **no additional support staff and zero expenditure of consulting contract dollars.**

Appendix B reflects details of the above-referenced policy initiatives. See highlights below:

- Implemented Microsoft Digital Alliance DigiCamp for more than 80 New Haven Public Schools students. Students spent three days on-site at Southern Connecticut State University, interacting with Microsoft executives and community leaders, as well as learning a variety of computer skills such as HTML, Visual Basic, product design, graphic design, robotics, video game development and app development. Students visited Microsoft offices in Hartford, CT
- Served as primary contact with the National League of Cities and key personnel on implementation of the 2015 Summer Meals Program
- Conducted multiple senior staff trainings on establishing positive workforce culture and effective management, communication and teamwork
- Launched Mayor's Brown Bag Lunch Series to build city-wide employee morale and team engagement (2015 series completed July 2015)
- Mayor's Office Representative and/or lead implementer for Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Reading and Community and Police Relations Task Force

II. Clarification on Grant Processes in the City of New Haven

In addition to inquiring about the operations of the Office of Development and Policy, the Committee has requested an explanation of grant processes in the city in general. One such request was made at the conclusion of the Community Services Administrator's ["the CSA"] March 30th budget testimony. Admittedly, the CSA's testimony, which I have reviewed in its entirety, contributed to understandable confusion on the part of Committee related to the Office of Development and Policy and grant processes in the city. While I too was confused by many parts of the testimony, in the spirit of the guiding principle of "full transparency" articulated by the Community Services Administrator, I will do my best to clear up misunderstandings in the course of this memo. I am also happy to answer any follow-up questions should the Committee find further discussions helpful in achieving a better understanding.

A. Explanation of Grant Processes

First, it should be noted that a sound and strategic work process related to the pursuit of funding opportunities has been established in the city (please see Appendix C – memo from Mayor Harp outlining the processes for pursuit of grants in the city and engagement with the Office of Development and Policy). This system, adhered to the vast majority of the time, was designed to achieve centralization of grants management (a key purpose of the Office of Development and Policy) as well as to ensure that funding is pursued in the most strategic way possible, thereby maximizing the city’s chances for successful grant outcomes.

Nevertheless, despite best efforts, there are times when the process stumbles. In one unfortunate example, the Office of Development and Policy was working on a highly competitive federal application to the Department of Education’s Performance Partnership Pilot program with the Department of Youth Services. Simultaneously, the Community Services Administrator was pursuing the same opportunity in isolation of the Office of Development and Policy and the Department of Youth Services that reports to her. These parallel processes resulted in the unfortunate submission of competing Letters of Interest from the City of New Haven for the same opportunity. While the application ultimately submitted by the Office of Development and Policy and the Department of Youth Services made it far in the selection/vetting process, it was unsuccessful. We are only left to wonder if the early communications and management misstep described above contributed to the unfavorable grant outcome. Though rare, these are the types of unnecessary strategic blunders that the Office of Development and Policy works diligently to avoid and/or circumvent. The Board of Alders can assist in this effort by helping to keep grant resources centralized (more on this point below).

B. Clarification of Community Services Administrator’s Budget Testimony

The Committee’s confusion about grant-related budget requests elicited by the Community Services Administrator’s testimony is understandable as 1) it would be indefensible and inconsistent with the purpose for which the Office of Development and Policy was created to add grant-specific resources – dollars or staff – to other departments and 2) no justifiable, authentic or verifiable case was made to support the CSA’s various grant-related budget requests. I will address the latter point first by providing insight into each of the CSA’s grant-related budget requests.

1. Contractual Budget – Fund Development

The Community Services Administrator requested approval of \$50,000 in contract funds for the purpose of “fund development,” **which is 5x the amount of contract funds available to the Office of Development and Policy that has primary accountability to the Mayor’s Office and Board of Alders for fund development.** Notwithstanding the gross interdepartmental inequities and misalignment of grant resources in which approval of this request would result, the CSA’s testimony before the Committee to justify an increase of funds for grant contract services consisted of a series of hyperbolic and unverifiable statements related to “sleepless nights and weekends spent writing grants” and alleged grant successes. The Community Services Administrator stated, “We know we can write grants... I’ll just give examples of the grants we’ve written in 2015.” While no clarification was offered on who the proverbial “we” is to which the Community Services Administrator was referring, one can assume the Office of Development and Policy was not included in the reference as the Office was not mentioned once in CSA’s budget presentation.

In light of the above misrepresentations as well as the guaranteed return on investment of “more than 1000 percent” that the Community Services Administrator promised the Committee, it is critical that the Committee have a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the CSA’s three alleged primary “fund development accomplishments” (see Appendix D).

a. Cities Financial Empowerment Fund Grant (CFEF)

Statement of Facts:

- This grant opportunity came to my attention from a community partner, Annie Harper of Yale University (see Appendix E).
- I shared the opportunity with the Economic Development Administration [the “EDA”], as it seemed like an appropriate fit for the department (see Appendix F).
- After receiving feedback that the EDA did not have capacity to implement the grant, I shared it with the Community Services Administrator (see Appendix F).
- At the point at which the opportunity was shared, the community partner had already volunteered (unpaid) to assist with a significant portion of the grant production (see Appendix E).
- The Community Services Administrator decided that she wished to pursue the opportunity and assigned Deputy Director, Rick Kaiser, to work with the Office of Development and Policy and the community partner on production of the grant application (see Appendix G for a history of work processes).
- The Community Services Administrator’s individual contribution to the grant application was limited to provision of a few “edits” made to a near final version of the application that was prepared by the Office of Development and Policy (see Appendix G).
- Per the CSA’s own, documented words (see Appendix G), “word count, and other submission requirements [were left] up to [the Office of Development and Policy] to address as [it] finalize[d] and submit[ted] the proposal”.
- The Office of Development and Policy made the final grant submission, which it ultimately shared with the CSA (see Appendix H).

Given this series of verifiable and documented facts related to the production of the CFEF grant, I’m unclear how the award of this grant, which involved no paid contract grant writers and was initiated and led within the city by the Office of Development and Policy, can be considered a CSA “fund development accomplishment” or more specifically an example of a “grant the CSA wrote”. I am further unclear how the CFEF grant provides evidence of a “track record” of the Community Services Administration’s independent success, justifying the siphoning away of funds from the Office of Development and Policy, where they would be most efficiently deployed, to the Community Services Administration. I am least clear on how the Community Services Administrator’s minimal, documented individual contributions resulted in “sleepless nights and weekends”. Perhaps the CSA can better explain this to the Committee.

b. Second Chance Re-Entry Grant

I am particularly confused by the Community Services Administrator’s assessment that the Second Chance Re-Entry Grant, which the city received in 2015, represents a “fund development accomplishment,” justifying an increase in the Community Services Administration’s budget for contractual grant services given the highly controversial history surrounding the grant’s application process. Though the grant application was successful, it was achieved through the CSA’s violation of

every city policy (formal or informal) related to the production of grants and the procurement and payment of vendors. Though the city desperately needs more funding to support re-entry activities, taking extreme (and unnecessary) measures that expose the city to legal liability/culpability is not a reasonable price to pay to achieve that goal.

Statement of Facts:

- On March 6th I shared the Second Chance Re-Entry grant opportunity with the Community Services Administrator (see Appendix I). When the Office of Development and Policy shares a grant opportunity with a city coordinator or department head, it is done so with the purpose of giving the administrator the opportunity to determine if he/she wishes to pursue the particular opportunity in partnership with the Office of Development and Policy.
- On April 7th, more than a month after the opportunity was shared, the Community Services Administrator informed me that she intended to apply for the grant using the services of Farnam Associates, a non-specialized, non-exempt vendor that had not engaged in an RFQ/RFP process to bid for the work. This unilateral decision was made without consulting the Office of Development and Policy at any point during the month after which the Office had shared the opportunity with the CSA. Thus the CSA never even attempted to curtail and/or reduce the amount of taxpayer money that needed to be spent on external vendors by first determining if there were sufficient free, internal resources to complete the application (see Appendix I).
- Nevertheless, despite the month that was lost, which limited the Office of Development and Policy's ability to contribute to the grant application, in the interest of advancing the work, I offered to assist the Community Services Administrator by either
 - 1) Working with Farnam Associates, pending review of the consultant's response to an RFQ/RFP to bid for the work and review of an executed contract specifying the agreed upon work terms or
 - 2) Helping to co-fund another consultant who would be selected through the required procurement processes to create a team capable of completing the grant application in the truncated timeline available (see Appendix J).
- Despite the fact that Farnam Associates had already been selected as the vendor for the project and begun the work (see Appendix J), the Community Services Administrator produced no executed contract in response to the Office of Development and Policy's request, as none existed.
- Similarly, no evidence of initiation or completion of an RFQ/RFP process was produced.
- Despite serious, expressed reservations about the way in which Farnam Associates had been selected and compensated, the Office of Development and Policy agreed to assist in completion of the grant application. However before beginning work I memorialized my reservations and concerns in several emails sent to the Community Services Administrator on April 20, 2015 (Appendix K). Similar admonitions were given to the Community Services Administrator from the Corporation Counsel (in a memo given to the CSA); Chief of Staff; City Controller; and City Purchasing Agent among others.
- Relying on the support of the Office of Development and Policy, Farnam Associates completed the Second Chance Re-entry Grant on behalf of the Community Services Administrator. (See Appendix L for examples of communications and work between the Office of Development and Policy and Farnam Associates on the Second Chance Re-entry Grant application.)
- To the best of my knowledge, Farnam Associates was paid tens of thousands of dollars to complete the grant application.

In light of the facts above I am confused by many elements of the CSA's budget testimony related to the Second Chance Re-Entry Grant. First, I remain perplexed as to why this particular grant application, which was project managed by an external consultant with the assistance of an entire "WRITING TEAM" (per his own words – see Appendix L) and supported by the city's Office of Development and Policy, resulted in "sleepless nights and weekends" for the Community Services Administrator. I am unclear as to what individual work the Community Services Administrator completed. Furthermore, if the Community Services Administrator's colorful claims of "sleepless nights to write the grant" are in fact true, then compensation of Farnam Associates was a profoundly flawed investment for the City of New Haven. As someone who has previously worked in management consulting, I can assure the Committee that while I may have had sleepless nights on intense project engagements, my clients, who were paying me to complete the work, never did.

I encourage this Committee not to reward repeated, willful and knowing violations of city policies and questionable consulting services investments with an increased "fund development" contract budget for the Community Services Administration.

c. US Conference of Mayors Childhood Obesity Grant

As previously evidenced, the Community Services Administrator has persistently engaged in a systematic refusal to update and consult with the Office of Development and Policy in the ways in which Mayor Harp outlined in an instructive memo (Appendix C). As such, there are likely numerous grant-related activities in which the Community Services Administration has engaged of which I am unaware or not fully versed. The USCM Childhood Obesity Grant is one such example.

Refusal to seek and/or use the internal grant resources the Board of Alders has approved, i.e. the Office of Development and Policy, should not be rewarded with additional contract funds to arbitrarily engage preferred external vendors.

Statement of Facts:

- I was not made aware of the USCM grant for which the Community Services Administrator has claimed writing credit (see Appendix D) until after it was awarded to the City of New Haven.
- However the grant came to my attention after the funder, who was seeking but not receiving post award follow-up was directed to me from the Mayor's Office. (When the Mayor's Office receives grant-related inquiries it directs them to me as the Director of Development and Policy.)
- After speaking with the funder, who expressed frustration with the city's lack of post award follow-up, I deduced that the grant was likely pursued by the Community Services Administration. I informed the funder that I would investigate the issue and reach out to the Community Services Administrator, who had presumably applied for the grant (see Appendix M).

As it is outside of the Office of Development and Policy's purview, generally the Office is not pulled into post award/implementation issues, particularly for grants for which the Office was not involved from the outset. Nevertheless, coordinators and department heads may at times be too overwhelmed to keep up with all of their responsibilities. **In light of this reality, it is important that the Office of Development and Policy be adequately resourced and staffed in order to be able to free up the time of coordinators and department heads to focus on implementation and management, e.g. filling open positions, training and guiding staff, ensuring statutory compliance, which are the key responsibilities of the city's operational departments.** This was one of the original purposes of

establishing the Office. Enabling the Office of Development and Policy to do what it was intended to do will contribute to fewer implementation anomalies like the one described above.

Further on the point of city departments' capacity to implement grants, I do not believe that "all money is good money". For this reason, before initiating work on any grant, the Office of Development and Policy engages in some form of pre-application readiness assessment (for an example, refer to Appendix F regarding the pre-application assessment undertaken with the Economic Development Administration for the CFEF grant). Though the City of New Haven is in fact financially underresourced, we cannot solve that problem by blindly throwing darts at all funding opportunities that come our way. As evidenced by the US Conference of Mayors' frustration with the city's inability to effectively engage in post award compliance that I encountered, we do the city more harm than good if we apply for and receive funds we are not prepared to manage, monitor or report on. We also open the city up not only for reputational damage with funders, but for legal risks associated with failure to satisfy grant terms and reporting compliance requirements.

A centralized and well-resourced development Office can help protect against these risks by ensuring that coordinators and department heads consult at least one other individual who can provide a degree of oversight in terms of ensuring that not all but only strategic grant opportunities that the city is prepared to implement and sustain, if applicable, are pursued.

For these reasons, I am unclear on how an award that ran into very early post award implementation problems offers a compelling example of the Community Service Administration's "fund development accomplishments". Perhaps the Committee can seek insight into exactly how the CSA assesses the Community Services Administration's readiness to implement, monitor and report on the grants for which it independently applies.

2. Contract Budget – City Transformation Plan

The Community Services Administrator has requested \$165,000 for a consultant to implement the "City Transformation Plan" (see Appendix N). While I'm not entirely clear on the expected tangible output of this plan or the utility of paying external consultants \$165,000 (more than the salary of any individual city employee of which I'm aware) to work on a single project, it is not my role to assess this request. Nevertheless, I feel obligated to respond to the portion of the line item justification that requests support to "facilitate cooperative partnerships between the providers of services and the community management teams, alders, and the residents to inform future community Promise Zone grants".

Statement of Facts:

- Under the Community Services Administrator's leadership, the City of New Haven applied for a Promise Zone designation extensively utilizing the grant consulting services of Farnam Associates, a firm whose non-specialized, non-exempt services were not selected through any RFQ/RFP process. (The Office of Development and Policy originally intended to lead a Promise Zone application, but in the process of initiating the project learned that Farnam Associates had already been enlisted to lead the work out of the Community Services Administration.)
- Nevertheless, in my capacity as the Director of Development and Policy, I carefully assessed the federal government's selection criteria and strongly felt and expressed that the strategic direction in which Farnam Associates and the Community Services Administration were taking the

application – lack of focus on economic indicators such as poverty; failure to select a defined Promised Zone – was logically flawed, rendering the application itself flawed and unlikely to be successful.

- The application that Farnam Associates was paid tens of thousands of dollars to produce was unsuccessful, scoring very poorly in the areas on which I’d suggested more focus be placed.
- The City of New Haven did not receive the Promise Zone designation.
- Although there would have been no money associated with the designation, had the city’s application been successful, a few additional points would have been awarded on a limited number of future federal grant applications.
- Following the unsuccessful 2014 Promise Zone application, Farnam Associates was **again** paid tens of thousands of dollars by the CSA to try to submit an improved application in the 2016 Promise Zone selection round.
- The outcome of that pursuit is still pending.

Given this history of facts, I am unclear on why the CSA would seek “funds to inform future community Promise Zone grants” (see Appendix N). Certainly, we are all hopeful that Farnam Associates’ second attempt to achieve the Promise Zone designation will result in a more positive outcome than the first. But at this time, the City of New Haven is not a federally designated Promise Zone. As such, it seems premature to seek funds to support the future pursuit of grants for which the city would receive no preferential treatment.

As an aside, as a grants management operational policy, I believe that before the city reengages any consultant for repeat work, there should be some form of “Results Based Accountability”. An objective assessment should be made as to whether the original work completed was of the best possible quality. It would be a profoundly bad investment for the city to pay a consultant for repeat work if there is reason to believe the consultant could have produced better results in his/her first attempt at completing project.

3. Registration, Dues & Subscriptions – Grant/Research Publications

The Community Services Administrator’s request for funds for grant-related research publications and printing and binding is duplicative and wasteful (see Appendix O).

Had the Community Services Administrator ever inquired of the Office of Development and Policy regarding registration dues and subscriptions, the CSA would be aware that the Office subscribes to numerous “grant/research publications” on behalf of the City of New Haven that all city staff are welcome to use. Moreover, the Office of Development and Policy has requested and received in the past \$5000 for office supplies; the Office would be happy to avail the Community Services Administration of printing and binding resources from this budget for grant production.

III. Importance of Centralization of Grants Management

As stated at the outset of the discussion that attempted to clarify the portions of the Community Services Administrator’s budget testimony related to grant work, it would be indefensible and inconsistent with the purposes for which the Office of Development and Policy was created to add grant-specific resources – dollars or staff – to other departments. I’ll conclude by emphasizing this critical point.

As was true when the case for the creation of the Office and Development and Policy was made in the 2014-15 budget process, almost all major cities have dedicated grants offices. New Haven's peer cities in Connecticut, including Bridgeport, Stamford, Waterbury and Hartford are aligned with this trend. Recognizing the importance of the grant function and the need for centralization of processes and resources, the Board of Alders made the responsible decision to approve the City of New Haven's Office of Development and Policy in the 2014-15 budget cycle. In fact, the Board went a step further than some peer cities and had the foresight to approve the combining of the development and policy functions in a single office, recognizing the critical importance of ensuring that funds are not pursued in isolation of policy.

A. Appeal for Additional Centralized Grants Staff

I am proud of the many accomplishments the Office of Development and Policy has achieved since the Office's founding. However, it has not been easy to achieve what has been accomplished without support staff and with restricted financial resources. In the Office's 2014-15 budget request, four full-time positions were requested. Reflecting the predicted and now realized need for more support, I sought to have a Grant Writer and a Policy Analyst for the Office of Development and Policy included in the 2016-17 budget (see Appendix P). **Though these positions were not included in the proposed 2016-17 budget, I appeal to this Committee to fund those positions.**

The combined total of the salaries for the two full-time positions requested by the Office of Development and Policy is much less than the Community Services Administration's total grant-related budget requests: \$165,000 "to inform future community Promise Zone grants" + \$40,000 "to improve overall performance and monitoring of all funded grants and contracts" + \$50,000 "to obtain more federal government funds and philanthropic grants" + \$5,500 for printing and binding grant applications + \$2,000 subscriptions to "grant/research publications," representing a bargain for taxpayers. To better understand the comparative value of full-time employees to contractors, I encourage the Committee to compare the overall productivity/contribution of the Office of Development Policy's single employee (the Director) to that of contract consultants such as Farnam Associates that have received approximately the equivalent of the Office of Development and Policy's salary line item in contract payments.

The Office of Development and Policy's request for new positions is particularly important this year. Through my own efforts and funder relationships, I secured funding (salary and benefits) for a single full-time fellow in both the 2014-15 and 2015-16 budget years. Although the fellows have been invaluable to the operations of the Office of Development and Policy, as they are in a development and learning program, they do not replace or do the work of regular staff. Moreover, the fellowship program that has served as a lifeline to the Office of Development and Policy is permanently ending on July 15, 2016.

Although I've demonstrated the ability to get much done with very limited resources, some support is needed and I appeal to the Board of Alders for it. To that end, should a full-time Grant Writer be added to the city budget (a much needed addition), I request that the position be added in the Office of Development and Policy so that the individual's contributions to the city can be maximized and diversified as much as possible.

B. Appeal for Additional Centralized Grants Contract Dollars

While I strongly believe that every contract dollar spent should be warranted and scrutinized, I do not intend to suggest that there is no need for funding for external support for development efforts,

particularly if no grant staff positions are added. It is true that there simply aren't enough bodies in City Hall to pursue all of the worthy funding opportunities available to the city. **As the Office of Development and Policy has no track record of exploiting the use of grant contract dollars (zero consulting contract dollars spent to date) or of violating city procurement policies in vendor engagement, I request that should the Committee approve any increase in grant contract budgets, the increase be allocated to the Office of Development and Policy.**

The decision to allocate additional grant contract funds to the Office of Development and Policy would not only make the most responsible fiscal sense in light of the facts presented above, but would also make the most organizational sense from the perspective of strategic management. Three generations of my family were born and raised in New Haven and I have well over 100 family members who still live in the city, so I take my role as the Office's Director and a steward of taxpayer dollars seriously. I would spend any money allocated to the Office of Development and Policy with that personal lens always in mind.

As the Director of the Office of Development and Policy I would be exceedingly grateful to the Committee and ultimately the full Board of Alders for support on either request that would greatly help the Office sustain and scale its work. While it is possible to attempt to justify budget requests with any number of creative claims, I have attempted to provide factual data and objective evidence to support all of the Office's requests. I am hopeful that should different perspectives, accounts or justifications be offered to the Committee, the Committee will not accept them as factual without first seeking similar evidentiary support.

I hope that I have adequately responded to the questions the Committee posed. If there are outstanding questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your continued valuable input as the Office of Development and Policy progresses in contributing quantifiable, tangible and beneficial outcomes to the City of New Haven.

Respectfully,

Mendi Blue