

Youth Budget Commission Meeting

09/14/21

Minutes

Commissioners in attendance: Co-Chair Shaver, Commissioner Huelsmann, Commissioner Cates, Commissioner Thompson, Commissioner Krauss, Commissioner Villa, Commissioner Kazmi, Commissioner Crabb

Others in attendance: Eric Mayo, Paula Corrigan-Halpern, Ali Schoon, Curt Clemmons-Mosby, John Gordon, Kelly Sparks, Nikki Wegner, Larry Thomas, Michael Barajas, Treyvon King, Daja Coleman, Sema J McGruder, Jakeria, Justin Brown, Yamali Rodas, Victor Gardner, Nekhi Phillips, Carly Ogletree, Gary Shettlesworth, Gabrielle Jethro, Tony Raden, Paishrynce Prude, Jazmine Quinones, Faith Townsell, Isaiah Haynes, Zoey Bishop, Delerina Mclemonns, Malcolm Pinkston, Grace Glass, Hannah Jackson, Dannica Davis, Terrance Jones

1. Welcome: Co-Chair Shaver

Co-Chair Shaver welcomed the Commission to the September meeting and welcomed the young people who were attending the meeting. He stated that he knows the work of the Commission will benefit from all of the participation of the young people at this meeting. Co-Chair Shaver stated that he hopes their feedback can provide insight into how Illinois should be spending their funds to invest in youth. He reviewed some of the procedural things that the Commission has to do in order to hold the meeting and thanked any guests for their patience while they conduct regular business.

Co-Chair Shaver turned it over to Eric Mayo to conduct the roll call of Commissioners present at the meeting. Mayo asked that all Commissioners state they could see, hear, and consented to doing a voice vote for the meeting. Commissioners Shaver, Cates, Crabb, Villa, Krauss, Huelsmann, and Thompson were present for the meeting. A quorum wasn't present for the meeting, so Mayo stated he will watch to see if more Commissioners join the meeting later on to take votes on agenda items. All Commissioners stated they could see, hear, and consented to doing a voice vote for the remainder of the meeting. Commissioner Kazmi joined after the roll call.

2. Approval of the Minutes: Co-Chair Shaver

Since there wasn't a quorum during the meeting, the minutes were not voted on for approval.

3. Fiscal Year 2020 Presentation: Commissioners Krauss, Cates, and Kelly Sparks

Co-Chair Shaver extended thanks again to youth who are on the call and appreciate any feedback they may have. He stated that he knows our large systems have difficulty engaging youth in the processes and he hopes this is an opportunity for them to ask questions, provide feedback, and get involved. He reviewed some of the purpose of the Youth Budget Commission for new people on the call and then introduced Commissioners Krauss and Cates and the Commission's consultant, Kelly Sparks to do a presentation of the fiscal scan.

Sparks then did an overview of the fiscal scan for the young people on the call. She explained what the fiscal scan is that it helps the Commission know how the state of Illinois is investing in youth. Sparks reviewed who the Youth Budget Commission was and their purpose of impacting how the budget gets spent. She then did an overview of the developmental goals and the types of programs that fit into these goals. For example, she talked about child care services fitting into the developmental goal of stable or that violence prevention services fits under the developmental goal of healthy. She also went into detail to explain the service models that are involved in those services. Sparks then asked if anyone had questions before turning it over to Commissioner Cates.

Commissioner Cates made a joke that she should not be the person giving this portion of the presentation because she isn't great at math. She asked youth to think about their day at school and the things that don't really impact their learning or development but needs to be there like the building, or keeping the lights on, etc. Commissioner Cates stated that those are not the things we're talking about in the fiscal scan. She asked the youth on the call to say things that would directly impact them that funds could be spent on. Youth in the chat or speaking up during the meeting said things like books, computers, sports, uniforms, etc. Commissioner Cates agreed that all those things are examples of the types of things that the Commission is looking at when it comes to the fiscal scan.

Commissioner Cates then reviewed how state investments in youth in Illinois have changed over time. She stated that the state spends a small portion of the total budget on youth. For example, in fiscal year 2020, the overall state budget was \$74.4 billion while \$6.3 billion was spent on youth. Commissioner Cates stated that the spending on youth in Illinois has stayed mostly the same over the last several years even though the total state budget has increased. For context, she asked the young people on the call if they could think of something that costs a billion dollars and asked them to speak up or put it in the chat. Youth said things like a space shuttle or fixing all the roads in Illinois. She then asked how much people think the Chicago Cubs are worth to buy the team. Youth mostly said things close to the millions for the cost to buy the Chicago Cubs. Commissioner Cates said that the Cubs are worth \$4 billion and she compared that to the money spent on youth investments in Illinois. Youth stated that they didn't think that was enough spent on youth.

Commissioner Cates then reviewed budget and how money is invested in youth by their developmental goal. She then provided examples of what each developmental goal might look like for youth and how much money is invested in each goal. For example, stable is the highest invested developmental goal followed by educated, healthy, employable, safe, and finally, connected.

Commissioner Cates and Commissioner Krauss stated that if the total investment in youth is broken down, the states spends around \$2,000 per youth in Illinois ages 8-25. Yamali Rodas chimed in and stated that the money isn't equitably distributed by youth. She stated that she is from Englewood and that she doesn't see that many investments in her neighborhood, especially compared to Hyde Park which is nearby. Commissioner Cates agreed and stated that she has a friend from Englewood who had gone to jail for a few years and had assumed that Englewood was getting better with the changes they had seen on the news. But Commissioner Cates said that they didn't see those changes when they were released from join. Rodas stated that the lack of investments has contributed to the rates of violence in her neighborhood and that things need to change for the safety of youth. Commissioner Cates thanked Rodas for her feedback and agrees.

Commissioner Cates reviewed the general idea on the budget is that the investments in youth is small when compared to the entire budget. She stated that this small slice of the pie only gets sliced up more to give to other things. She then turned over the formal discussion portion of the presentation to Commissioner Krauss.

4. Q&A and Public Comment, Co-Chair Shaver and Commissioner Krauss

Commissioner Krauss stated that a visual in the PowerPoint shows that spending on youth is being very reactive rather than preventative. He asked youth to think about if funds are equitably investing money in youth across the state. Commissioner Krauss stated that the Commission is really focused on learning how money is spent on youth and that the Commission wanted to gain feedback and insight from the young people on the call.

Commissioner Krauss asked youth what stood out to them about the presentation and what did they learn from it. Faith Townsell spoke up and stated that it was helpful to see how little of the entire budget is actually allocated to benefit youth in the state. Townsell also stated that it was great to learn more about how the budget is split into different programs for youth and thanked the Commission for the presentation.

Additional youth on the call said that it would be helpful for the state to focus funds more on prevention, have programs in place to support youth who have their own business, make sure youth know how to budget and pay bills, and have programs that help undocumented youth. They also stated that having more programs in high school that are directed towards teaching technology, life skills, conflict resolution, American Sign Language, etc. rather than only college as a path for them to pursue a career. Commissioner Krauss thanked them for their feedback.

He then asked if they or people they know benefitted from these types of programs or what the Commission should be keeping in mind as of interest to youth in the state. Rodas stated that there are a lot of issues facing undocumented young people and that more investments need to be made into evidence-based programs for them. In addition, she talked about prevention programs that provide support and safety for youth to get off the streets and prevent gang involvement. Dannica Davis spoke up and stated that it would be helpful for more after school programs with diverse curriculum for students who don't have a safe home. Davis stated that having diverse programs would be more interesting to youth and keep them off the streets. Additional young people in the chat stated that programs that teach life skills like budgeting, how to pay taxes, etc. are really needed.

Commissioner Krauss then did a Menti survey asking youth on the call what types of investments are most important to them. This Menti survey then created a word cloud in real time of the responses. Some of the things that were included in the responses were: gun violence prevention, job programs, job investment, youth internships, mental health supports, child care services, diversity clubs, sports, safety, black student unions, safe recreation, entrepreneurship, after school programs, programs for undocumented, mental health supports, and books. Commissioner Krauss read through many of the submissions for the Commission and thanked the young people for their time and participation this afternoon. He stated that their feedback will be a compass of sorts for the Commission when making recommendations to improve on how the state invests in youth.

Co-Chair Shaver asked for a screenshot of the word cloud for the Commission to have. Commissioner Krauss stated that he had a copy of the word cloud and placed it in the chat for participants to have. He then went on to discuss some of the other opportunities for youth to participate beyond their connection with the Commission. Commissioner Krauss talked about getting in touch with their elected officials to let them know how they're meeting the needs of youth. He included a link to www.elections.il.gov for youth to find out who their elected officials are.

Rodas thanked the Commission for organizing the presentation because a lot of times governmental bodies don't include youth in the conversation for budget things. She appreciated being able to participate. Co-Chair Shaver thanked her for her feedback and participation.

5. New Business

Co-Chair Shaver thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting and for their feedback. He stated that the Commission heard the themes of prevention and increased support throughout the meeting. Co-Chair Shaver thanked Commissioner Thompson for scribing for the group of youth that she had present on-site and for passing along their feedback. He stated that anyone who wanted the slide deck and the word cloud to email Eric Mayo at emayo@childrenshomeandaid.org. Commissioner Krauss also included the word cloud image in the chat. Co-Chair Shaver reviewed that the next Commission meeting will be Friday, October 15th at 1:30pm. He then did a special thank you to the Commissioners who presented during the meeting and all of the youth that participated.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5pm.