City Council Agenda Item
Staff Report

CITY OF SAN BRUNO

DATE: January 11, 2011

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Connie Jackson, City Manager

SUBJECT: City Council Donations Subcommittee Recommendation

Since the September 9, 2010 explosion and fire in the Glenview neighborhood, the City has received a number of unsolicited donations, both large and small, now totally approximately $395,000 in response to the Glenview Fire. These donations were received from corporate and individual donors all over the world to help the victims of the fire. Since the City has fiduciary responsibility for the disbursement of these funds—an uncommon activity for any City Council to be involved in—taking the time and going through a thoughtful process and also engaging the public is the right thing to do.

The Mayor appointed a Council Subcommittee, comprised of Vice Mayor Salazar and Council Member O'Connell. The Subcommittee solicited public input at the Subcommittee's public meeting held on January 5, 2010. There were about 75 attendees at this meeting and the speakers' comments were recorded on flipchart as well as solicited with comment cards. The summary of these comments shows that the strong opinion of the neighborhood residents, as well as contributors, favored the City Council's immediate distribution of the donations to the victims.

Based on all the comments and input received, the Donations Subcommittee developed the following recommendations:

- Distribute the funds per formula to assist victims with costs associated with recovery and rebuilding their lives:
  $6,000 to residents whose properties are demolished (38 properties; 58% of total funds).
  $4,000 to residents whose properties sustained moderate damage (17 properties; 17% of total funds).
  $1,000 to residents whose properties had minor damage (45 properties; 11% of total funds).
- Set aside an amount of $58,000 of funds to be allocated for extreme and unexpected needs.
- Provide a waiver for those who may want to choose to "opt-out".

Other issues that were considered by the Subcommittee included:

- If only renters resided in the property at the time of the fire, the renters should receive the disbursement.

- If the property owner resided in the property and also had renters, the property owner would be expected to share the disbursement with the renters.
- The disbursement would be a "limited time" offer, that is residents would be notified of the disbursement and be required to respond by a date certain otherwise the funds would go back into the set-aside fund.
- There will be a process for distribution of the balance of funds.

Enclosures:

Attachment 1: Summary of all comments received
Attachment 2: City Council Glenview Fire Donations Subcommittee Public Meeting January 5, 2011 (Blue Suggestion Cards)
Attachment 3: Flip Chart Notes from Subcommittee Public Meeting January 5, 2011

Summary of Comments
From City Council Donations Sub-Committee Meeting
On January 5, 2011

1. **The City should distribute the donations immediately among the impacted residents.** (42 out of 65 comments received)
    - Divide the money by the amount of damage incurred – those properties with the most damage receive a larger amount, or
    - Divide the money equally by the number of homes lost, or
    - Divide the money equally by the number of people in homes that were lost, or
    - Divide the money equally to all residents in the impacted area, or
    - Divide the money giving ¾ to red tagged homes and ¼ to yellow tagged homes, or
    - Divide the most money to those who lost their homes, lost family members / roommates, or where seriously and the least to those who were able to move back the week after the explosion, or
    - Divide the money using percentage-based system for red tag, yellow tag and green tag homes, such as 75% to red tagged, 20% to yellow-tagged, and 5% to green-tagged homes, or
    - Divide based on most need, or
    - Divide based on percentage of property loss and physical injuries, or
    - Divide to families who lost loved ones or sustained injuries, then to people who lost their homes, then to those whose homes need repair, or
    - Divide the money equally between each of the 38 destroyed homes, or
    - Divide the money to residents with unmet needs, or
    - Give ½ of the money to those who lost their homes and ½ of the money for a park, or
    - Divide the money equally among all residents who were evacuated, or
    - Divide the money to people involved in the fire and who were out of their homes for three days, or
    - Divide the money by 100 homes ($3800 per share); those whose home was totally destroyed would get 2% share; those whose home was destroyed and there was a death involved, 3% share; those whose home were 50%
    - Provide a way to "opt-out" of receiving anything.

2. **After needs not covered by insurance and PG&E are met, use the remaining money for other resources for the affected neighborhood.** (8 out of 65 comments received)
    a. Beautify the neighborhood to enhance the value of the properties, such as
        - Create a memorial park, or
        - Build a library, or
        - Plant trees, or
        - Enhance security in the neighborhood, or
        - Install new street lights, or
        - Additional home repair not covered by insurance, or
        - Widen streets, or
        - Build something for the children on Estates Drive lot
    b. Create a long-term recovery program for children
    c. Assist with medical/counseling costs not covered by health insurance
    d. Create a scholarship fund for the kids in the neighborhood

City Council Glenview Fire Donations Subcommittee Public Meeting
January 5, 2011
Audience Suggestions
(Blue Suggestion Cards)

The money should be divided by the amount of damage each household had. Those with the most damage receive a larger amount, etc., people only.

A memorial where the little park was on Glenview after needs (not covered by homeowners or medical insurance or PG&E) of residents are met. Communication be with homeowners, not tenants.

Divide by number of homes lost or divide by number of people on those homes lost.

Give to the victims; they will know how to use the money. Renters or not, we are victims and lost everything.

The money was donated to the victims and nothing more. Give it to the victims. Some lost everything – some were traumatized, some were injured and some died. All victims! Come up with a formula and distribute the donations. We weren't hurt but lost all!

1) Long-term recovery program for children; 2) Additional home repair not covered by insurance; 3) medical/counseling cost not covered by health insurance.

Money should not go to things PG&E or insurance should pay for. City should not retain any. All residents of impacted area should benefit.

Put some money to beautify the neighborhood to enhance value of the properties, such as planting trees, light in the streets; security in the neighborhood.

¾ to red tagged homes; ¼ to yellow tagged homes.

To distribute the money to the San Bruno residents whose homes were given green, yellow or red tagged. Among that group, I think the most money should be given to those who lost their homes, family members/roommates, and to those who were seriously injured or hospitalized. I think the least money should go to those who were able to move back to the neighborhood the week after the explosion.

Distribute money to victims using the red tag, yellow tag, and green tag system. Use percentage based on this system.

Donation should go to the most need.

Divide the money to the homes based on loss 75% to the 38 red-tagged homes. 20% to the yellow-tagged homes and 5% to the green-tagged homes.

To distribute the fund like what PG&E or the Lions Club did. The red zone gets more, the green gets less. We really appreciate if you can speed up the process asap. It has been almost four months.

Funds should go directly to those who lost their homes, had severe damage to homes and suffered physical injuries. Fund percentage should be determined on loss of property and physical health.

Distribute cash funds to all victims of this disaster immediately.

To give the money to families that have lost loved ones or injured. Then to people who have lost their homes. If there is money left to the homes that need repair.

1) Divide total dollars between each of the 38 destroyed homeowners equally. (applies to residence only.) 2) Total the number of each persons in the 38 destroyed homes. Give each person (many women and children) an equal share of total dollars. 3) Funds should not be used for our City park or infrastructure improvements. Note: Persons in 1 or 2 who suffered greatest/serious harm, therefore, should be granted best relief possible. Any funds given must be tax-free.

I was told the donation was specifically earmarked for the fire victims, and that is where it should go and no other place. My feelings are these people should have received the money by now and have the City hold on to it.

Give dollars to residents for unmet needs. Allow residents to make suggestions.

The money must go to the people in need, not for parks, monuments or trees.

Evenly distribute funds to impacted neighbors so they can decide if they want to donate to various funds (i.e., memorial/beautification.

Give the money to the victims.

To assist families who have lost everything, particularly those with young children. Also those who were severely injured and need special assistance. It has been sitting too long!!

Money should be given to victims; especially those who need help to rebuild. Some of us need no financial help, but others are desperate for help. It should not be divided equally among residents.

A memorial at the park. A scholarship fund for kids in the neighborhood.

Divide the money amount the victims – red, yellow, people in the homes or household. Until we are done, we don't know what we will need. Until we are done with insurance and PG&E, we don't know what we need. We are now coasting. If anyone wants to give it back and it reallocated, that's fine. Let all the victims vote. Only the victims should decide, their loss = victim. I am not upset.

Divide into victims who occupied the home that was lost or unlivable. Larger percentage give to families with death or hospitalization.

To give the money to the victims who lost their homes or half the money to the victims and other half for the park.

Make sure whatever you decide, you give victims the opportunity to "opt-out" of receiving anything if the victims want to "opt-out."

Focus on the displaced families and divide the funds between them.

Divide the funds between all residents who were evacuated, starting with those who lost life then homes regardless of PG&E or insurance issues, tax free (include all residents). Don't make people have to ask, just do it, not just homeowners.

To give to those homeless people who have lost structure and belongings.

To give the money to people that were involved in the fire (people out of home for three days).

Why not ask the victims of the fire what they want done with the funds? I think that you should simply divide the funds up into different amounts, depending upon the amount of damage that each household incurred.

Here is an example:

1) If there are 100 homes involved, then that would amount of $3,800 per share.
2) Now if a home was totally destroyed, then they should receive 2% of the shares.
3) If their house was totally destroyed and there was a death involved, then they should get a 3% share.
4) If their home was 50% destroyed, they should get a 1.5% share, etc.
5) This way the monies could be distributed quickly and efficiently to us the victims.

I lived at 1641 Claremont Dr. with my girlfriend and our home was completely destroyed to the ground. We have nothing left except memories; memories don't buy things you need to start all over. We need money and we need it immediately.

City Council Glenview Fire Donations Subcommittee Public Meeting
January 5, 2011
Audience Suggestions
(Flip Chart Notes)

Questions

- What do other cities do in similar situations?
- Is the City money going to be taxed like the PG&E funds?
- Do you know how much has been raised by the other organizations and what they are doing with those donations?
- How long will this process regarding City funds take and who will make the decision?
- What is the difference in taxing the donations if they are given directly to victims or if they are first given to the City?
- Who are the victims? Property owners, residents or both?
- What do you do with renters (in regards to donated funds)?

Comments

- Four months have gone by, the funds should be given to the victims by now
- PG&E funds have tax questions and cannot be spent; we need money now to spend
- The Burlingame Mothers' Club and Lions Club members went door to door asking about needs
- PG&E has agreed to pick up the tab, so the City should act now
- The park is the City's responsibility and donated funds should not be used to restore it
- The Red Cross has funds for medical needs
- Our neighborhood is a ghost town, please open up the roads
- It is not fair to attack the City – I am glad that the donated funds have not been spent – they need to be spent appropriately
- If someone insists on giving the money now, give them their donations back
- PG&E has already agreed to rebuild the park
- Thanks to the City for holding back in order to make the right decisions
- Adjust payments to victims based on several factors
- We do not want to be reminded of the event with a memorial
- A small memorial may be ok, but the money should go directly to victims
- Why should the Council decide what happens to the donations; let the victims decide
- Those who lost the most should get the most
- The funds can be used to fill the gap between our needs and funds from insurance or PG&E

Recommendations

- Put options to a vote of the public
- Use the funds to plant trees, widen the streets and long-term recovery care
- Residents submit a list of their needs
- Build something for children on the Estates Drive lot
- City should contact the residents to determine their needs
- Hire an advocate for the Glenview fire residents
- Divide the money equally by the number of victims

- Build a better park or a library in the neighborhood
- Use the funds for uncovered medical bills
- Have residents submit claims
- Build a memorial park
- Establish a scholarship fund for the children