Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

RESOLUTION #4B-21-0703

Requesting Centralized Funding and Support for Advisory Neighborhood Commission Technology and Printing Needs
Adopted July 26, 2021

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B takes note of the following:

- DC law provides for a Technical Support and Assistance Fund for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions. DC Code § 1-309.13a(c). The DC Council proposed this legislation following persistent requests from Advisory Neighborhood Commissions for centralized support, specifically for technology needs. *See, e.g.*, Letter re Ensuring Adequate Resources for Successful Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (Jan. 25, 2021) (calling for improved centralized support for technology services from the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions); Letter re Administrative Support and Infrastructure for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (Sept. 24, 2019) (requesting "centralized technology services necessary for meeting accessibility and communication of information to residents, including microphones and speakers, audio-visual equipment (e.g., projector and screen), and recording services (with captioning)").

- Money in the Fund must be used to support the following services and supports for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, subject to limitations or prioritization based on limitations in funding:

  - planning, development, or procurement of a mobile or computer application to assist Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners with outreach and engagement with their constituents;

  - supplementing any funding allocated for communications access services, including sign language interpretation, computer-aided real-time transcription, and other services and supports, for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions; provided, that the funding allocated for this purpose proves insufficient;

  - ensuring that Advisory Neighborhood Commissions have access to remote meeting technologies necessary for their operations;

- providing or procuring audio-visual technology and services to support Advisory Neighborhood Commissions;

- providing or procuring printing services for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions; and

- providing or procuring website assistance for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions.

DC Code § 1-309.13a(c).

- In a July 19, 2021, email newsletter to Commissioners, the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions noted initial funding of $100,000 for the Fund and indicated Advisory Neighborhood Commissions should send individual requests – via official Commission action requiring a vote – to the Office and that such requests would be "evaluated on factors such as transferability to other ANCs, innovativeness and need."

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has never received a survey or other inquiry from the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions regarding the Commission's priorities with regard to the Fund. One Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B Commissioner received a survey from the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions regarding a possible mobile or computer application, which the Commission has never requested or supported due to other pressing technology needs. *See also* Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A, Opposition to the Mobile application to assist ANCs with Constituent Outreach and Engagement (July 10, 2019).

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B prioritizes the following aspects of the Fund: ensuring that Advisory Neighborhood Commissions have access to remote meeting technologies necessary for their operations, DC Code § 1-309.13a(c)(3); providing or procuring audio-visual technology and services to support Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, *id.* at § 1-309.13a(c)(4); and providing or procuring printing services for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, *id.* at § 1-309.13a(c)(5). Meeting technology is particularly crucial to the Commission's efforts to offer hybrid (virtual and in-person) meetings. *See* Resolution 4B-21-0509, Calling for Legislative Changes and Supports to Allow Hybrid (Virtual and In-Person) Meetings for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (May 24, 2021). *See also* Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner Sign-On Letter, Calling for Hybrid (Virtual and In-Person) Meetings for Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (June 10, 2021).

- Functional government websites are also essential. Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has repeatedly expressed that one of the "biggest challenges [has] been the lack of sufficient centralized website

support" for Commissions. *See, e.g.*, Letter re Ensuring Adequate Resources for Successful Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (Jan. 25, 2021). While Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has dedicated significant resources to meeting the basic website needs for our local community without centralized support, other Commissions have been less successful. The Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions should prioritize ensuring that every Commission has a modern, functional website with hosting and a relevant domain name. Awarding individual funding grants to Commissions will not provide the necessary infrastructure for modern, consistent websites that promote accessibility, constituent trust, security, and ease of use, and increases costs by failing to take advantage of in-house governmental technical expertise and economies of scale.

- Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B believes administering the Fund (consisting of $100,000 for 37 Advisory Neighborhood Commissions) based on individual Advisory Neighborhood Commission requests via approved Resolution is inefficient, inequitable, not inclusive, and lacks transparency. By way of an example, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B would greatly benefit from printing services. While the Commission could request funds to purchase a printer, a centrally held account (or accounts) with a print shop or several high-quality printers in a centralized location (or locations) for Commissioner use might be a more efficient and farther reaching benefit. Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B, however, is not in the position to assess other Commission's printing needs or how best to meet them in the collective.

- While individual Commissions can certainly consider "transferability to other ANCs, innovativeness and need," Commissions may not be in the best position to assess what services might best support multiple Commissions and offer economies of scale. In addition, Commissioners may not be experts who can assess what technologies will meet the needs of Commissions, particularly with regard to hybrid meeting technology. The ability to consider these factors and provide solutions rests squarely with the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, the entity that (at least in theory) monitors, advises, and engages with every Commission and has staff with expertise in these areas.

- The Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions should survey all Commissions as to priorities related to the Fund to assess overall needs. Such a survey would allow the Office to determine how best to maximize a limited amount of money for the maximum benefit to Commissions across the District. The Office should communicate transparently about how it collects information and makes any determinations about how the Fund will be used.

RESOLVED:

- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B expresses its Technical Support and Assistance Fund priorities to include meeting technologies – including those necessary for hybrid (virtual and in-person) meetings – and printing.

- That Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B calls on the Office of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions to survey all Commissions as to their priorities under the Technical Support and Assistance Fund; assess how best to meet Commission needs across the District in light of funding available; and communicate openly and transparently with Commissions about funding provided under the Fund.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Commission designates Commissioner Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02, Commission Alison Brooks, ANC 4B08, and Commissioner Evan Yeats, ANC 4B01, represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, in the event the designated representative Commissioners cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, the Commission authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, consistent with DC Code § 1-309, only actions of the full Commission voting in a properly noticed public meeting have standing and carry great weight. The actions, positions, and opinions of individual commissioners, insofar as they may be contradictory to or otherwise inconsistent with the expressed position of the full Commission in a properly adopted resolution or letter, have no standing and cannot be considered as in any way associated with the Commission.

ADOPTED by voice vote at a regular public meeting (notice of which was properly given, and at which a quorum of __ members was present) on July 26, 2021, by a vote of _ yes, _ no, _ abstentions.

DRAFT