



HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

February 8, 2021

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Clarksville Housing and Community Development Committee was called to order by Chairperson Wanda Smith on Monday, February 8, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. in the Housing and Community Development Conference Room, 1 Public Square, Suite 201, Clarksville, Tennessee. This meeting was conducted via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

The following members were connected to the meet:

PARTICIPATING VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM:

Council Members Wanda Smith, Wanda Allen, Trisha Butler, and Travis Holleman, Housing and Community Development Staff members Lisa Walker and Deborah Johnson, and Internal Audit Director Stephanie Fox

PHYSICALLY PRESENT:

Housing and Community Development Staff members Dennis Newburn and Brittney Cates

APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC MEETING

Chairperson Smith read the notice for the approval of the electronic meeting due to current COVID-19 concerns.

Councilperson Holleman made a motion to approve meeting electronically. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Allen and passed unanimously.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Chairperson Smith asked for any questions or concerns regarding the minutes of the January 26, 2021 committee meeting. Hearing none, Chairperson Smith entertained a motion and second to adopt the minutes. Councilperson Butler made a motion to adopt the minutes of the January 26, 2021 meeting as read. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Holleman and passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

2021-2022 CDBG Application Process

Chairperson Smith turned the floor over to Mr. Dennis Newburn to discuss new business. Dennis Newburn shared what would happen during the 2021-2022 CDBG Application process and what this committee's involvement would be with regard to reviewing proposals and other information.

Councilperson Allen asked if Council members would be able to attend the training sessions for non-profit agencies on the application process. Mr. Newburn stated that Council members would have been welcomed to attend but the last training was held at 3:00 p.m., today before this committee meeting. Mr. Newburn stated he would be happy to meet with any committee member to answer any questions.

Mr. Newburn explained the application process would open on February 9, 2021. There were two pre-application workshops held on February 5th at 10:00 a.m. and February 8th at 3:00 p.m. The purpose of those workshops was to explain the application process this year. Mr. Newburn again stated that on Tuesday, February 9, 2021, the annual Housing and Community Development application would be open at 8:00 a.m. to interested parties and the general public. Proposed projects must be limited to the following types of activities: Public Services; Public Facilities and Improvements; Residential and Commercial Rehabilitation; Economic Development; and Accessibility Projects. The application deadline for submitting these projects to Housing and Community Development would be February 26, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Applications will be submitted through a system known as ZoomGrants. The Housing and Community Development office has been using this particular system for a few years so most organizations are familiar with this software.

Mr. Newburn outlined the proposed application process schedule and the committee's involvement with the understanding that this schedule could be subject to change. The Pre-Application Workshops were held February 5 and February 8, 2021. The application period will open February 9, 2021 and the application period will close on February 26,

2021. The Advisory Board Public Review will be on March 15, 2021. This committee will complete a public review of the applications received. Committee members review all applications electronically. The committee will be given access to ZoomGrants to review applications. The committee's review process will begin on March 15, 2021 which means between February 26th and the week afterward, Housing and Community Development staff will be reviewing proposals. After the staff review, the proposals will be given to the committee electronically so they may begin the process of reviewing applications. The regularly scheduled meeting for March 8, 2021 will be changed and two meetings will be held in March on the 15th and the 22nd. These meetings will be open to the public and applicants can attend these meetings. The Advisory Board Recommendations will be held on March 22, 2021. The One-year Action Plan will be available April 8, 2021. The One-year Action Plan requires a 30-day comment period and at least two public meetings. This will represent the activities that are proposed to be funded for fiscal year 2021/2022. A Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to file application will be presented to the full City Council on May 27 and June 3, 2021. The public will have two more opportunities to comment on the proposed activities at this time. The application will be submitted to HUD by June 7, 2021. Again, this proposed schedule is subject to change at any time.

Mr. Newburn explained the City had not yet been notified of the fiscal year 2021/2022 funding allocation. The estimates are based on the current grant amount. For fiscal year 2021/2022 the CDBG estimated entitlement amount is \$1,021,544. 20% of this amount (\$204,309) can be used for program administration. For the most competitive category which is public services, 15% of the grant (\$153,237) can be used. These two caps are established by federal law.

Eligible applicants include: Public or private non-profit 501(c)(3)(4) agencies; for-profit agencies assisting with microenterprises; institutions of higher learning; County departments, working within the City, or other public or quasi-governmental public agencies such as the Housing Authority; and faith-based organizations (non-religious purposes). Every proposed activity must serve City of Clarksville residents.

Ineligible activities for CDBG funds include funding to private individuals; individual homeowners or landlords; individual businesses; religious institutions/churches for religious purposes; and political activities.

All organizations involved have been informed there is a three-step process. The first step involves eligibility. CDBG activities must meet a National Objective, in this case assist persons of predominately low to moderate income, elimination of slums and blight, or meet an urgent need. The second step, which will involve this committee, are project evaluations of each application submitted and the review of a risk assessment of the organization. This will determine whether or not the organization has the capacity to carry out the work. The third step will then be the committee providing funding recommendations. The Housing and Community Development staff will not provide funding recommendations. Mr. Newburn stated the committee recommendations will be given to Mayor Pitts and he will provide his own funding recommendations. Mr. Newburn will then come back to the

committee with the Mayor's recommendations and then proceed to the full City Council for review and recommendations. From that point, the application process then goes to HUD.

As a department, Housing and Community Development will consider the following factors as to whether an activity would be in the City's best interest to fund. Does the project/activity meet a National Objective? If it doesn't, it cannot be funded. Is the activity eligible per CDBG guidelines and the Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan? If it doesn't, then it cannot be funded. The Consolidated Plan is the 5-year planning tool that determines which type of activities should be undertaken. If it doesn't meet that requirement, it possibly cannot be funded. If it's a capital improvement activity and there are negative effects on the environment, that could hurt a project being funded as well. Which of the Consolidated Plan priorities (as identified in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan) does the activity address (may be more than one)? What is the extent of public benefit achievement relative to the project cost? For every public dollar that is spent, what type of public benefit will be derived by funding the activity. This is new this year to the applicants so it will be interesting to see what type of information comes back for this question. Past performance (for organizations requesting continued funding) will be a factor. When describing a service to be provided, does the proposal define the anticipated outcomes and measurement of those outcomes? Does the project leverage other funding sources to the greatest extent possible, demonstrating cost sharing opportunities and in-kind contributions? Leveraged funds could allow more benefit to the community. Collaboration is extremely important. Evidence of collaboration with other partners to help increase the level of participation in CDBG funds is being requested this year. Does the organization have the administrative capacity to successfully carry out the project? What are the organization's practices concerning financial management and capacity? This year all proposals must include a minimum of three support letters and a maximum of five. This will help to gage the community support for an organization's idea. This will also provide full understanding that an organization has spoken to the community they are intending to serve and it is supported.

All of these factors will be what the committee is evaluating this year. There will be emails sent to the committee about the process and procedures. The second part of the process will be the actual software that is used. An email will be sent from Brittney Cates after the application period has closed granting access to the software and directing the committee to the proposals and all of the other pertinent information as well as the score sheets. This year the score sheets have been included in the proposal so organizations will know exactly what the committee and staff will be reviewing. There is also an informational booklet that sets forth in more detail everything associated with the application process. The slideshow that was presented to the organizations will be posted online as well as ZoomGrants.

Currently, there has been a new process implemented concerning calls from organizations with questions or seeking information. These organizations will be directed to prepare an email with their questions and Brittney Cates will be responding to those emails. By going to an email system, this will help every organization. If there is a question by one

organization, the question and response will be forwarded to every organization so it hopefully will help everyone have a better application. ZoomGrants is an easy application to use and the part to be utilized by the Committee is very simple. Mr. Newburn stated that the committee may need to access ZoomGrants through a PC to be able to view everything that is being provided in the system.

Brittney Cates stated that each committee member will receive an email with their ZoomGrants user log-in information and password. Committee members will click on the application tab to view a list of the submitted applications. The committee would then click on the application they want to view which opens up to the application summary. The application questions tab will provide the organizations answers to all the application questions. The committee would also need to click on the documents tab to view all the required documentation and actually view each document submitted. The committee would also be able to view whether or not the organization actually submitted the required documentation.

Councilperson Allen asked how many applications are normally received and how many are normally approved? Mr. Newburn stated that he would have Brittney Cates send an email after the meeting as to how many applications were received last year and how many were actually approved. Mr. Newburn stated that the slideshow presentation regarding the application process and the application manual will be posed on the City's website under Housing and Community Development.

PUBLIC COMENTS *(five minutes each)*

In accordance with the Alternative Public Comments procedure, requests must be made no less than 48 hours prior to the meeting.

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Councilperson Allen to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Holleman and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.