

City of Clearwater

*Main Library - Council Chambers
100 N. Osceola Avenue
Clearwater, FL 33755*



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

9:00 AM

Main Library - Council Chambers

Neighborhood and Affordable Housing Advisory Board

Roll Call

Present 5 - Chair Peter Scalia, Vice Chair Gabby Camacho, Board Member Carmen Santiago, Board Member Kevin Chinault, and Board Member Camille Hebting

Absent 2 - Board Member Peggy Cutkomp and Board Member Linda Kemp

Also Present - Denise Sanderson – Economic Development & Housing Director, Chuck Lane – Economic Development & Housing Assistant Director, Patricia O. Sullivan – Board Reporter

Awaiting approval

1. Call To Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Main Library.

To provide continuity for research, items are in agenda order although not necessarily discussed in that order.

2. Approval of Minutes

- 2.1 Approve the minutes of the May 1, 2020 Special Neighborhood and Affordable Housing Advisory Board Meeting.

Member Hebting moved to approve minutes of the May 1, 2020 Special Neighborhood & Affordable Housing Advisory Board meeting as submitted in written summation. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

3. Citizens to be Heard Regarding Items Not on the Agenda: None.

4. New Business Items

- 4.1 Recommend funding allocations for the FY 2020/2021 Annual Action Plan, which is the first Action Plan of the FY 2020/21 - FY 2024/25 Five-Year Consolidated Plan, to implement the goals and objectives set forth in the Consolidated Plan, as required by HUD.

On July 16, 2020, Economic Development and Housing Department staff will recommend City Council approval of the FY 2020/2021 - 2024/2025 Five-Year Consolidated Plan (Con Plan) identifying the city's goals and objectives with respect to its administration of HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funds.

These funds are provided to the City by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Under the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, the City is required to create and implement a plan each year to identify the sources and uses of these funds for housing, community programs, and economic development. This plan, referred to as an Annual Action Plan,

provides HUD with the City's budget and proposed expenditures to meet the goals and objectives established in the Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

Funds are used to develop viable communities and sustain existing ones. This year's Annual Action Plan allocates federal funds to 1) provide safe, decent and affordable housing opportunities to extremely-low to moderate-income households for new and existing homes; 2) construct and/or renovate public facilities; 3) fund public service programs and 4) provide for economic opportunities.

The City of Clearwater anticipates an allocation of \$837,360 in CDBG funding and \$431,436 in HOME funding for FY 2020/2021. Funds provided through the CDBG Program may be used for housing, community and economic development, public services and facilities, acquisition, relocation, and administration. Funds provided through the HOME Program are limited to housing-related activities and administration.

The City partners with several non-profit agencies to implement the goals and objectives the City has established in the draft Five-Year Consolidated Plan. To obtain these partners, the City published a Notice of Funding Availability in the Tampa Bay Times and on its website on February 28, 2020. The notice informed the public of the resources the City anticipates receiving and the eligible uses of those resources. It also informed the public of the application period for requesting funds. The applications were originally due by midnight on March 27, 2020; the deadline was later extended to April 10 due to difficulties various applicants were experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City received 28 applications for funding.

A Technical Review Committee (TRC) comprised of professionals in the social service and grants community, a member of the City's Neighborhood and Affordable Housing Advisory Board (NAHAB), and the City Clerk reviewed and ranked the applications. The City's annual process included providing applicants with an opportunity to present their proposed projects to the NAHAB; presentations were scheduled for the April 14 meeting; however, this meeting was cancelled due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. City Housing staff reviewed each application to ensure proposed activities meet HUD requirements.

Each year the City may allocate up to 15% of its CDBG funds for public service activities. This year, the City received 13 requests for funding of public services restricted by the 15% cap in the amount of \$384,164. However, based on HUD's formula and expected entitlement, \$125,604 is available for funding.

In prior years, the NAHAB endorsed a funding matrix for Public Services applicants that established the funding ratios based upon the TRC's ranking and City Housing staff's determination of eligibility. Utilizing the funding

matrix ensures the majority of applicants are funded fairly and appropriately.

The FY 2020/2021 Annual Action Plan is due to HUD by August 15, 2020. All organizations that will be receiving an allocation will have agreements prepared and executed by October 1, 2020. Staff performs compliance monitoring with funded organizations on an annual basis.

Economic Development & Housing Assistant Director Chuck Lane provided a PowerPoint presentation.

In response to questions, Mr. Lane said staff anticipated \$200,000 TBD (To Be Determined) funding for Public Facilities that benefited low to moderate income residents or neighborhoods. Qualifying facilities in Clearwater could apply for the funds via the standard application process that remained open all year as long as funding was available. Parks & Recreation Department applications to fund recreation center improvements in the North Greenwood revitalization strategy area and Lake Belleview neighborhood were examples of potentially eligible projects.

Mr. Lane said \$180,000 in TBD funding was budgeted for Public Services. HUD increased the public services spending cap but restricted use of the additional funds to COVID-19 response. In May, NAHAB recommended approval of funding for homeowner foreclosure counseling and related services through Gulfcoast Legal Services. Staff will review COVID-19 effects over the summer and then may release a funding availability notice.

Mr. Lane reported the City Council had funded a \$600,000 rent, mortgage, and utility assistance program that complemented the County's \$75-million program. While the County's program provided funds to residents up to 200% of the poverty level, City funds were limited to Clearwater residents with incomes up to 80% AMI (Area Median Income). Clearwater's program was difficult to articulate and hard for residents to fully understand; few applicants have qualified to date. However, people were asking questions and that engagement allowed staff to direct them to the program that best fit each person's situation. The County's program expires June 30, 2020.

Mr. Lane reviewed permitted uses of SHIP (State Housing Initiatives Partnership) allocations and projects planned for SHIP funding. SHIP and HOME funds could be combined.

A resident requested additional information.

Mr. Lane said purchasing, not repairing, pool heaters for the North Greenwood or Ross Norton recreation centers could qualify for public facilities funding as the improvements would enhance access, especially during cooler months, and benefit low to moderate income neighborhoods. Housing projects were planned for the North Greenwood and Lake Belleview neighborhoods. In

response to a RFP (Request for Proposals), the City received 2 proposals for a multifamily development in North Greenwood. Development of a school board owned property in North Greenwood was put on hold after an old cemetery was discovered onsite.

Mr. Lane said while the \$21-million project at the Fire Station 45 site did not receive LIHTC (Low-Income Housing Tax Credit) approval, the affordable housing project could reapply next year. If approved, the City would split the required \$760,000 contribution with the CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency). Only one LIHTC in the County could be approved annually. The cities of Clearwater and St. Petersburg and Pinellas County were the only local governments able to make the substantial contributions required by the LIHTC program and may start working together to rotate submittals of LIHTC applications. An LIHTC application for an affordable housing development on Sunset Point Road was unsuccessful.

Mr. Lane said the CRA would release a RFP this summer for 150 units on a 3.5-acre CRA-owned site on S Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue. The project would provide affordable housing for a range of income levels up to 120 AMI; the 120 AMI rate was similar to market rate. A 2.5-acre CRA-owned site on Cleveland Street provided another development opportunity that could incorporate the successful community garden at its edge for urban farming.

Member Chinault reported a conflict of interest related to the St. Vincent DePaul funding request.

Chair Scalia reported a conflict of interest related to the Salvation Army funding request.

Member Chinault moved to recommend approval of the funding allocations for the FY 2020/2021 Annual Action Plan less funding for St. Vincent DePaul and the Salvation Army. The motion was duly seconded and carried unanimously.

Member Chinault moved to recommend approval of the funding allocation for the FY 2020/2021 Annual Action Plan for St. Vincent DePaul. The motion was duly seconded. Members Camacho, Chinault, Santiago, and Hebting voted “Aye”; Chair Scalia abstained. Motion carried.

Member Hebting moved to recommend approval of the funding allocation for the FY 2020/2021 Annual Action Plan for the Salvation Army. The motion was duly seconded. Members Camacho, Santiago, Hebting, and Chair Scalia voted “Aye”; Member Chinault abstained. Motion carried.

5. Old Business Items: None.

6. Director's Report

Mr. Lane said the City Council had approved an amendment to the Action Plan for the City's Back to Business program subsidized by COVID-19 CDBG funding to help struggling businesses and employees.

Mr. Lane said the City was considering tax credits for LIHTC property managers in the City to work together with tenants behind on their rent; it was important to protect the City's investment in affordable housing. The City did not have staff or money to organize and provide rent assistance on a wide scale.

Mr. Lane said he participated in weekly calls with the Countywide homeless working group. While the County homeless shelter had not exceeded capacity during the pandemic, homelessness increased. The City was monitoring conditions and did not think intervention was necessary at this time.

Mr. Lane reported the City has funded an organization for the past 2 months that provides weekly shower and laundry facilities for the homeless population; the services have been well received.

Mr. Lane encouraged members to attend the July 14, 2020 NAHAB meeting.

7. Board Members to be Heard: None.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Chair
Neighborhood & Affordable Housing Advisory Board

Attest:

Board Reporter