

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

10/26/2017

City Hall, Esther Howland Chamber
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA
6:00pm

MEETING MINUTES

CDAC present: Paula Stuart (Chair), Doug Arbetter (Vice-Chair), Nicola D'Andrea, Susan Graham, Danaah McCullum, Edward Moynihan, Michael Murphy, Arline Rosario, Dana Strong.

CDAC absent: none

City Staff: Greg Baker, Steve Hill, Tony Miloski

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Paula Stuart at 6:01pm. A file containing the following items were distributed to each CDAC member:

- Agenda
- Minutes from 10/12/17
- Yr. 43 / FY18 CDAC CDBG Proposal Ranking System
- City of Worcester CDBG Program FY 18 Yr. 43 Application Scoring Sheet
- City of Worcester CDBG Interdepartmental FY 18 / Yr. 43 Application Scoring Sheet

2) Review and Approval of 10/12/17 CDAC Meeting Minutes

A motion was seconded and passed to vote approval of the 10/12/2017 minutes. The CDAC voted 8-0 for their approval.

3) Discussion of Proposed Changes to annual CDBG RFP and process

- **Set aside for agencies new to CDBG**
 - **System of scoring/evaluation of new agencies**

Several CDAC members reiterated past concerns raised with regard to the large proportion of the annual CDBG funds being used to fund a few, established agencies

at the potential opportunity of CDBG newcomers. In response, Greg Baker noted that the City has funded several new applicant proposals over the last few years, and while the city was supportive of the concept of a set aside as a potential way to attract new and competitive applicants, there was a desire to not fund brand new programs from newly emergent agencies whose lack of experience has in similar past cases often resulted in subpar performances and insufficient grant spend down rates that have compromised HUD mandated timeliness expenditure expectations. He also reiterated that with respect to the application scoring and final Action Plan recommendations, while CDAC does play an important advisory role, the CDBG program is a City administered program with the City Manager and his administration ultimately being responsible for its final recommendations and content.

A lengthy committee discussion ensued with regard to the design and parameters of a proposed set aside to fund new organizations or programs using CDBG. The discussion was framed by a desire to provide transparency to potential new applicants and promote clarity of how any new evaluation and award system would function. Consensus eventually emerged around elements considered to be important for the RFP process.

A motion was seconded and passed and the CDAC voted 9-0 to endorse a set aside of \$20,000 under CDBG to recommend funding for up to two agencies new to CDBG, with a \$10,000 maximum cap for each new applicant. Any used funds would revert back to the regular CDBG public services applicant funding pool.

It was agreed that two clearly delineated application options would be available through the revised RFP process— one for established and already funded agencies regardless of their grant funding amount request and in addition, those not funded by CDBG in the last five (5) that are requesting more than \$10,000 in funding, and a second pool of competition and evaluation for applicants new to CDBG and requesting \$10,000 or less in funding. All applicants would use the same RFP document and be subject to the same scoring rubrics, however, applicants would compete among like programs within the two aforementioned funding categories, thus, agencies that had received CDBG funding in the prior 5 years would compete against similarly experienced applicants, while the applicants new to CDBG funding would likewise compete against the other new applicants (unless they were requesting over \$10,000 in funding, in which case they would be reviewed against more experienced organizations and programs).

It was recommended that an existing question already contained in the current RFP which asks if an agency had been funded by CDBG prior be changed to ask instead if the agency had been funded through CDBG within the past five years. The administration also agreed to increase its promotional outreach efforts to all applicants at the beginning of the CDBG RFP process in order to provide greater awareness of these changes and spark additional interest in applying.

City staff agreed to bring forth the proposed changes to the scoring system at the next CDAC meeting that accounts for both the need to better evaluate prior non-funded organizations, as well as allowing for the “extra” discretionary points that had been prior endorsed by a committee through a motion at the May 10, 2017 meeting.

4) Subcommittee Discussion and Formation

- **Defining the types and roles of committees**
- **Defining membership and members**
- **Schedule of meetings**

After some discussion, a motion was seconded and passed and the CDAC voted 9-0 to re-affirm its commitment to establishing two (2) subcommittees to be implemented during the post-RFP evaluation time period. The administration was asked to develop a concept based upon the proposal voted by the CDAC (in May 2017) in which subcommittees comprised of 3 members each (with an alternate 4th “ex officio” member) – one to focus on CDBG funded Public Service activities and the other to focus on Affordable Housing and Public Facilities and Improvements would be established and scheduled to meet between March and September of each year.

The CDAC was also reminded by City staff that the subcommittees would be subject to all of the open meeting law requirements that govern the larger committee such as the need to post meeting agendas through the City Clerks at least 48 hours ahead of the meeting time, the need to have a quorum in order to conduct business, and the requirement that all meetings be video-taped by the City’s Cable Services Division and be archived and available for future public viewing.

5) Discussion of Next Steps and Next Meetings

For the next CDAC meeting scheduled for November 2nd, members agreed that the City staff would propose for their review an updated RFP scoring rubric that would include changes needed to accommodate the Public Services set aside for new applicants as well as the prior agreed upon discretionary points.

6) Adjournment

As there were no more items for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53pm.