

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager



Michael E. Traynor
Chief Development Officer
Executive Office of Economic Development

Gregory J. Baker
Director
Neighborhood Development Division

**Community Development Advisory Committee
City Hall, Room 401
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA
Wednesday, February 3, 2016
6:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

CDAC present: Edward Moynihan (Chair), Mark Borenstein (Vice Chair), Martha Assefa, Ariel Lim, Tracey Pakstis, Dana Strong, Paula Stuart, Daniel Whalen, Matthew Yalouris

CDAC absent: none

City Staff: Greg Baker, Steve Hill, Anthony Miloski

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Moynihan at 6:00 P.M.

2) Review and Approval of 1/13/16 CDAC Meeting Minutes

There were no changes suggested to the 1/13/16 CDAC meeting minutes, and a motion was seconded and passed to vote for their approval. The CDAC voted 6-0 for their approval.

3) De-brief on Year 42 / FY2017 CDBG Applicant Presentations

There was a de-briefing among CDAC members regarding the 1/27/16 session of applicant presentations. Members were in agreement that the session ran smoothly.

In response to a question from CDAC, City Staff reported that there was no change in the administration's decision around the status of the RFP's that had been received after the application deadline, they were not being recommended for review.

In response to questions from CDAC members regarding inquiries from RFP applicants about how the review process was going, it was recommended by staff that CDAC members do not discuss details outside of official CDAC meetings or until after the RFP application review and scoring process has been completed.

CDAC members agreed to have their RFP scores submitted to Ariel Lim, the CDAC Recorder, no later than February 15th for her tabulation of the totals.

4) Discussion and Evaluation of Public Service Applications #1 thru #14 from CDAC Yr. 42 CDBG Application Binder Table of Contents

CDAC discussed and reviewed the following 14 Public Service applications:

- African Community Education – After School Program
- Centro Las Americas – Case Management
- Centro Las Americas – Emergency Food Pantry
- City of Worcester – Afterschool Recreation Program
[CDAC member *Martha Assefa* recused herself from discussion]
- Dismas House – BAR None Program
- Ethiopian Dream Center – African Immigrant & Refugee Outreach: Basic Needs
- Family Health Center – Emergency Dental Services
- Friendly House – Case Management
- Friendly House – Quinsigamond Village Services
- Friendly House – Youth Development
- Latin American Health Alliance – Una Vida Buena
[CDAC member *Mark Borenstein* recused himself and left room 401]
- Main South Community Development Corp. – Youth Service Corps
[CDAC member *Mark Borenstein* recused himself and left room 401]
- Pernet Family Health Service – Youth Service Program
- Rachel's Table – Children's Milk Fund

As a result of the above reviews, there were several general discussions between CDAC members and staff.

A discussion was had around potentially re-examining the measurement of outcomes for public service case management programs. Some agencies funded to provide case management are reimbursed largely for one-time assistance and interaction with clients, and do not always provide sufficient documentation of client follow-ups as they relate to outside referrals that are made. The general sentiment was that strengthening case management outcomes to emphasize and measure more long-term improvements in client's living situations was something that needed to be looked at more closely, but it was also recognized that an emphasis on the quality and nature of outcomes related to case management and other social services would require a discussion with case management providers on how to programmatically accomplish those types of objectives in the context of the City's Five (5) Year Consolidated Plan which for Public Services requires high annual outcomes for the number of clients to be serviced.

There was also considerable discussion on the merits of funding existing established agencies and programs versus new proposals from agencies that might also be new to CDBG funding. Staff acknowledged that more established agencies with experience managing CDBG grants generally have greater administrative and staffing capacity. Staff discussed how the scoring system generally favors agencies

with experience administrating CDBG grants as well as those with more established programs, whether CDBG funded or not, since both are indicators of capacity and potentially less risk through the ability of such agencies to implement programs that are more likely to achieve their grant outcomes and benchmarks while also ensuring programmatic and financial compliance. Greg Baker emphasized that HUD guidance requests that City's administering CDBG funds carefully scrutinize potential grant Subrecipients before making awards, and that changes mandated under the recently adopted 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (also referred to as the "Super Circular") now require risk assessments and customized Subrecipient Monitoring Plans to be developed for all agencies receiving federal grant funds. Greg discussed how it would worthwhile to revisit the CDBG RFP scoring system and process with CDAC members sometime after program Year 42 in order to make potential changes before Year 43 that might make it more feasible for any future new programs or agencies with no prior CDBG experience to be funded. Greg cited the example of other programs across the country where a monetary cap is placed on the maximum CDBG award amounts that can be given to new programs, both overall, and as it relates to each agency, thereby helping to minimize risk.

Staff and CDAC members also discussed the "fiscal agent" model whereby smaller or less experienced agencies work in tandem with more experienced agencies to apply for and deliver CDBG funded programs. Under this format, an agency with more staff capacity to administer CDBG grants oversees the financial compliance and grant administration while the smaller entity delivers the program outcomes. While the fiscal agent and interagency sharing of staff on CDBG grants was seen as a potential solution to making CDBG more accessible to smaller or less experienced entities, staff reported mixed results from recent efforts towards such collaboration and asset sharing on behalf of grant Surecipients.

As one of the RFPs reviewed involved a proposal to use CDBG funds for cash stipends for clients served through a job training and apprenticeship program, staff said they would need to seek further clarity on this issue from HUD or the City's grant compliance officers, since generally this use of CDBG funds is ineligible, depending the type of program and other criteria.

There was a brief discussion around ensuring non-duplication of administrative staffing and services provided through CDBG funded youth after-school programs, as it was noticed by CDAC members that there appeared to be an increasing number of youth programs that were being applied for, and that some were being offered in the same City of Worcester public schools as other existing programs.

5) Adjournment

As there were no more items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.