



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101 Phone: 406.657.8281 Fax: 406.294.7595 Relay: 711 www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev

Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board March 1, 2022

Board Members Present: Rebecca Noell, Jim Corson, Bret Rutherford, Shane Noble, Joe Stockburger, Hannah Olson, Katrina Kruger, Jessica Schmidt, Councilperson Denise Joy

Board Members Excused: N/A

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Dina Harmon, Carly Collins

Welcome / Introductions / Announcements: The Community Development (CD) Board met in the 6th Floor Conference Room of the Miller Building. Board Chair, Rebecca Noell, called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

Public Comment: None.

Meeting Minutes: Board member, Jim Corson, moved to approve the minutes from February. Board member, Shane Noble, seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

CDBG-CV Applications: Applicants for CDBG-CV funding provided background information and project proposals. Presenters included Brian Dennis (Boys and Girls Club of Yellowstone County), Amanda Stonerock (Alternatives, Inc.), and Scott Reiter (School District 2). Staff discussed that funds cannot be expended on these projects until final HUD approval, which is likely July 1 at the earliest.

Brian Dennis provided information on the Boys and Girls Club of Yellowstone County's proposed project including a redesign of the entrance and foyer in order to increase social distancing.

Amanda Stonerock presented about impacts of the coronavirus on Alternatives Inc.'s facilities and operations. The organization's application includes a funding request for the development of software and a mobile app. This will increase access to technology for telehealth and case management services for income eligible clients.

Scott Reiter reported on School District 2's application to fund HVAC repairs and upgrades in order to improve indoor air quality at Washington Elementary, a Title I school in Billings.

Staff Reports:

- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** Staff has funding available to continue assisting additional households.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Staff is modifying the agreement for HomeFront's application to extend project deadlines at the Western Hotel, previously named "Off The Streets."
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** The program remains on hold while staff works through processes for additional funding allocated to the City. No new applications were received in February.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** No proposals were received for the Steffanich property. There was initial interest last month, however no contractors submitted an RFP. Staff revised the RFP to remain open until a contract can be executed. Staff is also assessing other options for development of new construction or purchase of a modular home on the property next fiscal year.
- **CDBG-CV:** The Salvation Army and DBA-BID projects are still progressing. Additional funding requests for the DBA-BID downtown bathroom and handwashing station are needed due to supply cost increases. Parks improvement projects, Heritage Trail, and Parks Wi-Fi projects are moving forward accordingly.
- **HOME-ARP:** Staff is working through program regulations and developing timelines for processes. A survey for local service providers must be created and distributed in order to develop a required

comprehensive needs assessment. In addition, staff must develop policies and procedures prior to the release of an application. The Board will eventually assist with funding priorities based on service provider data.

- **Billings-Metro VISTA Project (B-MVP):** ServeMontana Symposium will be held in Helena next week and VISTA members will be traveling there to participate in professional development training. Staff is revising VADs and position listings for July / August recruitment. There are several open positions that staff will share with the Board to help promote. Current VISTA members will be presenting at the City Council Meeting during AmeriCorps Week on Monday, March 14th.

Fast-Track Public Service Applications for Coronavirus: Staff continues to process applications for the CDBG-CV Fast-Track Public Services grants. A few organizations have been approved for funding including Chinook Horses, Head Start-Explorer's Academy, Alternatives Inc., and Family Promise of Yellowstone County. Several applications are still pending.

Staff Recommendations for Funding Allocation & Annual Action Plan: HUD allocation recommendations are still pending. Staff will be able to provide prioritizations of allocations, however final allocations can only be made following HUD's determination. Staff provided information on current balances for each program and discussed options with the Board including moving funding around to assist additional organizations with CDBG funding, and dedicating HOME funds to a Steffanich housing development in the future. VISTA training needs will be reviewed and discussed to determine appropriate funding needs for next year. Staff will provide updated information on remaining funding so that the Board can make their final allocation recommendations at next month's meeting.

Site Visit Discussion: Jim Corson, Hannah Olson, and Shane Noble each reported on their site visits to Washington Elementary, Boys and Girls Club, and Alternatives Inc. Each Board member reported that they were in support of funding each of the CDBG-CV project applications in full.

Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings: Councilperson Denise Joy reported that she attended a preliminary meeting about housing strategies with stakeholders in the community last month. Meetings are expected to continue. There have been some new Council approvals of new housing developments, but they are not necessarily affordable units for income eligible community members.

Next Meeting: Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:55pm. The next regular meeting will be held on April 5, 2022.