



Housing and Community Development Advisory Board

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Stephen Sparks – Chair
Donna Bleyle – Vice Chair

Susan Brenton
Diana Yazzie Devine
Heather Kay
Heather Landvatter
Tom Stapley

Linda Starr
Ericka Varela
Kent Westover
Kris Woolley

Thursday, November 5, 2015

6:00 p.m.

Lower-Level Council Chambers
57 E. First Street
Mesa, Arizona, 85201

I. Welcome and Introductions

- A. HCDAB members present at meeting introduced themselves. All were present except: Donna Bleyle, Susan Brenton, Heather Kay, and Heather Landvatter.
- B. Staff present at the meeting were Natalie Lewis, Liz Morales, Ray Thimesch, Dennis Newburn, Ra'Chel'Ni Mar'Na, Maurice Brundidge, Constance Bachman, and Emily Greco.

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. Linda Starr made a motion to approve the HCDAB minutes from the September 3, 2015 meeting. The motion was seconded by Tom Stapley, and was carried by a vote of 7-0.

III. Items from Citizens Present

There were no citizens present.

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IV. Discussion and Action Items

A. Overview of Proposed Consolidated Plan / Annual Action Plan Amendments

Liz Morales explained the proposal of amending the City's 2015-19 Consolidated Plan and 2015/16 Annual Action Plan to fund the Oakwood Senior Services Program and to enhance access and expand services for low-moderate income seniors. The funding would come out of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program income. Only \$45,000.00 would be awarded, as only up to 15% of CDBG program income can be used in total on projects like this.

There were some concerns from members of the board:

Stephen Sparks wanted to know if Oakwood has received CDBG funds in the past, and if their project was an overlap of services that are already provided by East Valley Adult Resources (EVAR). The City responded that CDBG funds have not been awarded in the past to Oakwood, possibly Human Services funds, and while EVAR does offer a variety of services to seniors, they do not focus on dementia and Alzheimer's which Oakwood does.

Tom Stapley wanted to know how long Oakwood has been in operation, how many employees they have, and how sustainable they are. The City informed the Board that Oakwood has been around for a number of years. There are two locations, one being in operation since 1988, the other 1999. The staffing they have is proportionate to the number of people they care for. Even though Oakwood has different funding sources, their goal CDBG funding outcomes are to increase their cash reserves and their enrollment, while decreasing costs, so that they can increase their sustainability. They are looking into partnering with Banner hospitals.

Linda Starr asked why Oakwood is not applying for Human Services funds. The City responded that there are not any Human Services funds available currently, and even if Oakwood is granted the \$45,000.00, they would have to reapply for CDBG funds in the future.

Diana Yazzie Devine asked why anyone from Oakwood couldn't be present at the meeting to represent and answer questions. Stephen Sparks then asked if this proposal needed immediate action, and wanted to know if Oakwood is aware of the more strict CDBG guidelines. The City apologized that a representative for Oakwood was not available to come, and further explain the background of why funding was being sought after. At one point EVAR and Oakwood discussed merging, so Oakwood cleaned up their records and accounts. When the merger did not occur, Oakwood had to continue on independently and is almost in the deficit. City of Mesa staff has been on-site at Oakwood, and has made sure that the information is correct. The awarding of the \$45,000.00 is a one-time funding, and Oakwood is aware of certain benchmarks that have to be made.

Kris Woolley asked a question about what other funding sources Oakwood has, but then Linda Starr commented that \$500,000.00 was awarded by the City two years ago for capital improvements.

Stephen Sparks stated that non-profit's are always competing for dollars, and asked what kind of message would this be sending to others? The City responded they have only received one other request for a project of this kind. Stephen Sparks then asked where this money was coming from. The City responded once more that it is from program income, and that no more than 15% of the program income in total can be used on these types of projects.

During the discussion, Kris Woolley gave kudos to Oakwood for the services they provide, and shared his opinion that he thought the Board should go on with this proposal. Diana Yazzie Devine asked if this program income money needed to be spent. The City responded that it did. The City explained that there is a 1.5 ratio that needs to be met every year. If that ratio is not met, then not only is money taken away from the City to award, but could result in less CDBG funds being given to the City to award in the future. The City emphasized that granting this portion of the program income would really help the City meet the 1.5 ratio.

This was a discussion item; no action was required by the HCDAB.

- B. Public Hearing – Proposed Second Substantial Amendment to the FY 2015/16 Annual Action Plan.** This public hearing is regarding the proposed funding of public services provided by Oakwood Creative Care. The Amendment contains specific activities recommended for funding under the FY 2015/2016 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) under the category of public services. The activities described are those that the City of Mesa plans to undertake to address priority needs, in terms of local objectives, that were identified in the City's 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan.
- 1. Motion to convene Public Hearing** – Stephen Sparks made a motion to convene the Public Hearing. Kent Westover seconded the motion, and was carried by a vote of 7-0.
 - 2. Discussion regarding the proposed funding of Oakwood Creative Care**
Discussion regarding Oakwood occurred previous to the convening of the Public Hearing. Kent Westover asked for clarification between “Oakwood Senior Services Program” as mentioned in the discussion in item IV A, and “Oakwood Creative Care” as noted in the proposal for the Public Hearing (item IV B). The City explained that one is the name of the actual non-profit, and the other is the name of the program.
 - 3. Public comments:** No public comments.
 - 4. Approval and Submission of Amendment:** Approval of the proposed Second Substantial Amendment to the Plan is tentatively scheduled on November

12, 2015, at the regularly scheduled Council Study Session at 7:30 a.m. in the Lower-Level Council Chambers (57 E. First Street, Mesa AZ 85201).

5. Motion to close Public Hearing

Erica Varela made a motion to close the Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by Kent Westover, and was carried by a vote of 7-0.

C. First Amendment to FY 2015/2019 Consolidated Plan

Dennis Newburn provided an overview of the First Amendment to the FY 2015/2019 Consolidated Plan. The City is partnering with the Arizona Fair Housing Center (AFHC) in an effort to diversify the City of Mesa fair housing portfolio. People that cannot afford legal help will have access sit down with legal mediators. \$5,000.00 of CDBG funds are allocated to this Pilot Program.

Kris Woolley asked what the \$5,000.00 was for. The City responded that the money provides training opportunities for the legal mediators, as well as City of Mesa staff.

Kent Westover asked if the City of Mesa staff will be receiving the same training as the legal mediators with these funds. The City responded that they would.

This was a discussion item; no action was required by the HCDAB.

D. FY2016/17 Application Process

1. ZoomGrants Presentation

Dennis Newburn introduced the new software system that will be used for the FY 2016/2017 CDBG/ESG/HS application process through a PowerPoint presentation. Prospective applicants will have to request access from the City of Mesa. The new software system is user-friendly, and all applicants will be fully trained prior to the application process being opened.

This was a discussion item; no action was required by the HCDAB.

2. CDBG/ESG/HS Application Process

Dennis Newburn provided an overview of the FY 2016/2017 application process. The application process will be open from January, 3-21, 2016. Trainings on the new software system will occur previous to the application opening. The software is more user-friendly than what has been used in the past. The City of Mesa can make sure applications are accessible to organizations that do not have a lot of experience in applying for grant money.

Kent Westover asked if learning this new system will be a bigger burden on grantees. Dennis responded that the system would not be particularly difficult to navigate, and that grantees should easily be able to complete the information requested.

This was a discussion item; no action was required by the HCDAB.

3. HOME Application Process

Ra'Chel'Ni Mar'Na provided an overview of the FY 2016/2017 HOME application process. The City recommended in the last HCDAB meeting that the HOME application process go to an "open" process, which was approved by the HCDAB. The process of putting together a development plan will be more fluid. The Funding Schedule is still in draft, but the application process should start in November.

For the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) process, it has a tight schedule, but is doable. It will be a challenge to do risk assessments within the timeline of due diligence. Kris Woolley asked who will do the risk assessments. Ra'Chel'Ni responded that City staff will.

Diana Yazzie Devine asked how many applications are estimated to be received. Ra'Chel'Ni said he had been meeting with a lot of developers that had interesting projects. Ray Thimesch commented that the challenge for the HCDAB will be in scoring these applications, as funding is low.

This was a discussion item; no action was required by the HCDAB.

V. Staff Announcements/Reminders

- A.** Program updates and trainings – None given.
- B.** Next HCDAB Meeting – December 3, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
 - 1. At the next HCDAB meeting, Community Services staff will present on the Mesa Royale situation.
 - 2. Additional items for future HCDAB meetings: Diana Yazzie Devine commented that she would like the Board to discuss way to better help other mobile home parks. Also, more information regarding the Point-In-Time homeless count will be given.

VI. Adjourn the Meeting

Stephen Sparks asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ericka Varela made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Kent Westover, and was carried with a vote of 7-0.