

MINUTES
CDBG Advisory Board
January 4, 2012

Board Members Present: Don Dickson, Judy Dickson, Kiona Baez Heath, Jessie Baker, Santina Leporati, Fauna Shaw, Carole LaVigne, Lisa Lillibridge, Sabina Haskell, Jason L'Ecuyer, Jane Helmstetter, Monica Weeber, Diana Carminati

Also Present: Mayor Bob Kiss, Larry Kupferman, Michael McNamara, Gary De Carolis, Margaret Bozik, Denise Girard

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. with a welcome from Mayor Bob Kiss, who also presented a request to award CEDO its requested funding amounts in order to maintain existing services. Michael McNamara, Field Office Director for HUD in Vermont, also welcomed the Board and provided some perspective on both the unique nature of this Board nationally and the current HUD budget priorities. Larry Kupferman also thanked the Board for their service.

Board members introduced themselves and, where they are sharing a seat, explained how they are splitting their responsibilities. For United Way, Diana will be reviewing Public Service applications and Monica will be reviewing Development applications. As Mayoral representatives, Judy Dickson will be reviewing Public Service applications and Don will be reviewing Development applications. For Ward 5, Lisa will be reviewing Public Service applications and Sabina will be reviewing Development applications. For Ward 3, Fauna and Geoffrey will decide how to split their responsibilities.

The Board members reviewed and approved the following ground rules:

1. Be on time - start and end on time
2. Everyone participates – and encourage everyone to speak - but pass if you wish
3. Share the air; be brief and don't speak twice until all have had a chance to speak
4. Move on when opinions are established
5. Tell or ask about assumptions and conclusions
6. Respect opinions - disagree respectfully
7. Facilitator will acknowledge speakers. One speaker at a time - don't interrupt - let each speaker finish
8. Pose, accept and explore difficult questions
9. Operate by consensus; vote when needed
10. For Board members...what is said here stays here (except for the content of minutes) – don't have outside discussions about Board work

Margaret Bozik reviewed the CDBG program – its history and federal process – together with the role of CEDO, the Board, the Mayor and City Council. She also went over the criteria for applications. There are three screening levels that applications must go through:

1. They must comply with the federal eligibility and national objective requirements set by HUD. CEDO screens applications at this level, and the Board does not see applications which don't comply.
2. They must meet an objective of the city's Consolidated Plan, which is the local governing document for the CDBG program. Each application must specify which objective(s) it meets. The city will be rewriting its Consolidated Plan over the next year, and will welcome input from Board members.
3. The Board then applies a set of local criteria spelled out in the Consolidated Plan (the "Resource Allocation Priorities") to rate applications.

The Board then had a discussion about the rating criteria, about their experience with and perspective on poverty in Burlington, about how they may judge the impact a program has on poverty, and about how they may approach the allocation process given the substantially reduced funding available this year.

Margaret then reviewed the contents of the notebooks provided to Board members, went over the Meeting/Work Schedule, and explained why Public Service and Development Applications are separated. Margaret and Gary briefly reviewed the process used for decision-making. The Board will take one meeting to identify conflicts of interest and questions to be asked of applicants. Then, after receiving answers, Board members will rate applications and make individual funding recommendations. That information goes to CEDO, which prepares a composite rating, summary of funding recommendation levels (with colored dots) and median funding recommendation for each application. The Board will then meet to make group funding recommendations using that information, group discussion, consensus where possible and voting where there is no consensus.

The Board meetings are public meetings. Board members are asked not to discuss the applications outside of the meeting setting.

The assignment for the next meeting is to read the Public Service applications, to identify conflicts of interest, to identify questions for applicants and to provide those questions, as much as possible, to Denise by Tuesday, January 24.

Board members reviewed this meeting to see what worked well and what could be changed for the better next year. Things that worked well were good discussion questions and a good discussion, well-organized binders, good food, the name tags, having the meeting in Conference Room 12 (instead of Contois), and having new voices on the Board. A change for next year could be to again have the rating criteria posted on the walls for walk-around review and discussion of relative importance.

There were no public comments. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.