

CDBG Advisory Board
March 2, 2011
MINUTES

Board Members Present: Barbara Bielawski, Emily Neilsen, Carole LaVigne, Stephanie Seguino, Jason L'Ecuyer, Martha Maksym, Jane Helmstetter, Geoff Wyman, Judy Dickson

Others Present: Gary De Carolis (facilitator), Margaret Bozik and Denise Girard (CEDO staff)

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. with a welcome and review of the agenda. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved without change. There were no public comments.

The Board had in front of it the composite ratings and the respective rankings of all Public Service applications, the median funding amount from individual Board member's allocations, the amount a project received last year, and colored dots representing each Board member's allocation for each application as follows:

- Blue Dot: 75-100% of the amount requested
- Green Dot: 50-75% of the amount requested
- Yellow Dot: 25-50% of the amount requested
- Red Dot: 0-25% of the amount requested

The Board reviewed the basic process for making allocation decisions, which is to use the median funding amount as a starting point, to test for consensus and discuss, and then to vote with Board members rotating to propose a new amount if a majority does not support the previous amount. The Board also unanimously decided on a set of "budget-balancing rules" as follows:

1. Look first at applications with multiple red dots (indicating that multiple Board members had recommended no funding) and vote yes/no whether to eliminate those applications
2. Don't revisit the applications eliminated in step
3. Review the remaining applications in order from highest ranked to lowest ranked
4. If the budget isn't balanced after steps 1-3, revisit close votes
5. If the budget isn't balanced after step 4, review again starting with the lowest ranked applications, including eliminating any with funding of less than \$1,000
6. If the budget still isn't balanced after step 5, review any projects funded at an amount greater than last year

The Board then discussed how to handle the fact that the city still doesn't know how much CDBG funding it will be receiving. It is likely that the city will receive less funding than next year – probably at least 7.5% to 10% less. The Board decided unanimously to assume a cut of 10% and to make funding recommendations based on that amount (for Public Service projects, that amount would be \$130,256).

Reviewing applications with multiple red dots, the Board unanimously decided to eliminate PS20, PS23 and PS27 from further consideration. The Board also decided on a vote of 7-1 to eliminate PS22. The eliminated applications were the lowest ranked of all Public Service applications. On votes of 2-7 and 3-6, the Board decided not to eliminate PS1, PS8 or PS 30 at this time.

The Board then began reviewing applications beginning with the highest rated applications. The highest rated applications, all tied for the number one ranking, were PS4, PS5, PS6 and PS10. On votes of 9-0, 7-2 and 7-2 respectively, the Board tentatively decided to award \$7,250 to PS4, \$14,000 to PS5 and \$7,500 to PS10. The Board voted 0-9 against a proposed amount of \$4,500 for PS6 and 9-0 for a tentative award of \$6,000.

The Board then considered PS2, PS7, PS31 and PS3, ranked second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively. On votes of 8-1 and 7-2, the Board tentatively approved awards of \$7,500 for PS2 and \$8,000 for PS7. The Board unanimously tentatively approved awards of \$3,000 for PS31 and \$8,500 for PS3.

PS11, PS13, PS15 and PS17 were tied for the sixth place ranking. The Board tentatively approved awards of \$12,000 to PS11 and \$6,000 to PS17 on votes of 7-2 and unanimously approved tentative awards of \$5,000 to PS13 and \$6,000 to PS15.

For PS25, ranked seventh, the Board unanimously rejected zero funding and tentatively approved funding of \$4,500 by a vote of 6-3. For PS9 and PS16, tied for the eighth place ranking, the Board tentatively approved awards of \$3,000 and \$6,000 by votes of 9-0 and 7-2 respectively. For PS14, ranked ninth, the Board rejected a proposed amount of \$5,000 by a vote of 3-6 and unanimously approved a tentative award of \$6,000.

PS18, PS21, PS30 and PS12 were ranked tenth, 11th, 12th and 13th, respectively. For PS18, the Board rejected a proposed amount of \$10,000 by a vote of 4-5 and approved a tentative award of \$8,000 by a vote of 6-3. The Board unanimously approved tentative awards of \$3,000 to PS 21 and \$2,500 to PS12. For PS30, the Board rejected a proposed amount of \$2,500 by a vote of 4-5 and approved a tentative award of \$1,000 by a vote of 5-4.

PS26, PS29, PS28 and PS24 were ranked 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th, respectively. The Board tentatively approved an award of \$3,000 to PS26 by a vote of 5-4. The Board unanimously approved a tentative award of \$3,252 to PS 29. For PS28, the Board rejected proposed zero funding by a vote of 2-7 and unanimously approved a tentative award of \$4,000. For PS24, the Board unanimously rejected proposed zero funding and unanimously approved a tentative award of \$2,500.

PS1, PS19 and PS8 were ranked 18th, 19th and 20th, respectively. On votes of 7-2 and 8-0, the Board decided to eliminate PS1 and PS8 from further consideration. On a vote of 7-2, the Board tentatively approved an award of \$2,250 for PS19.

After finishing this first round of consideration, the total amount tentatively awarded for Public Service applications stood at \$139,750. The Board then revisited the two close votes of 5-4 on PS26 and 30 and unanimously voted to eliminate PS30 from further consideration but to keep PS26 at \$3,000, leaving the balance at \$138,750. The Board then considered two approaches to balancing the budget. A motion to cut \$9,494 and then to prorate funding back in if more is received was unanimously approved. A motion to eliminate PS18 was rejected by a vote of 2-9. A motion to prorate cuts by 6.12% across applications not already eliminated was approved by a vote of 8-1, with funding to be prorated back in if more funding is ultimately available. The prorate cut of 6.12% leaves the following allocations:

PS2	\$7,041
PS3	\$7,980
PS4	\$6,806
PS5	\$13,143
PS6	\$5,633
PS7	\$7,510
PS9	\$2,816
PS10	\$7,041
PS11	\$11,265
PS12	\$2,347
PS13	\$4,694
PS14	\$5,633
PS15	\$5,633
PS16	\$5,633
PS17	\$5,633
PS18	\$7,510
PS19	\$2,112
PS21	\$2,816
PS24	\$2,347
PS25	\$4,225
PS26	\$2,816
PS28	\$3,755
PS29	\$3,051
PS31	\$2,816
Total	\$130,256

The Board reviewed its assignment for the next meeting on March 23, which is to read the Development applications, identify conflicts of interest and identify questions for applicants. Things which the Board thought worked well about this meeting were the food, the humor and the preparation. Things which Board members would change were:

- o There's not enough money available for the CDBG program
- o We should change application questions to reflect questions that are always re-asked, to get more information up front
- o There should be more discussion about the general principles of how to balance the budget and more review of the process before the actual allocation discussions start

- o The order of questions in the grant applications should follow the rating sheet or vice versa
- o Put rankings on a sheet that has a short description of the project
- o There could be better ways to help Board members keep track of applications. One suggestion is for members to use sticky notes on the applications themselves as they're reading, to keep track of notes and questions. Another suggestion is to have a "notes sheet" for members to use as they're reading.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.