

**CDBG Advisory Board Meeting
2/17/16**

The meeting began at 5:55 PM.

Members Present: Anne Brena, Ben Hatch, Karen Freudenberger, Rita Neopaney, Peter Ireland, Basu Dhakal, Russ Elek, Cassie Lindsay, Jane Helmstetter, Tina Hubbard, Hemant Tamang-Ghising arrived at 7:25pm.

Staff Present: Marcy Esbjerg, Val Russell, Marcella Gange

Marcy welcomed the Board and announced changes in the agenda. She informed the group that the actual allocation for Public Service projects is \$108,732. She explained how HUD uses the American Community Survey to calculate the entitlement amount annually. Introductions followed for members who were not at the first meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting is made and seconded.

Public Comments - None

Marcy initiated review of group allocation process and basic rules. Board members discussed the process that each of them used to read and score applications.

Marcy asked if the Board members would like more guidance for the scoring and funding process. Board members discussed the merits of various levels of guidance and made suggestions such as putting a cap on requested amount.

Marcy explained that in the past someone from the United Way attends this meeting. Lisa Falcone could not come but Marcy had extensive notes on her feedback.

A Board member brought up that this process favors well established organizations who have the ability to meet the reporting requirements, and not small startup organizations.

The Board had a display of the average ratings of all Public Service applications and the average funding amount proposed from individual Board member's allocations, and colored dots representing each Board member's allocation for each application as follows:

Blue Dot: 76-100% of the amount requested

Green Dot: 51-75% of the amount requested

Orange Dot: 26-50% of the amount requested

Red Dot: 0-25% of the amount requested

Budget Balancing Rules: The board will consider applications which received a number of red dots to be removed from the process.

Applications were rated by advisory board members in order of the highest average point value to lowest average point value.

They ranked as follows:

PS1 - Pathways Vermont - Expanding Housing First Services in Burlington

PS2 – Women Helping Battered Women - Safe Tonight

PS6 – CVOEO - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

PS4 - CVAA – Complex Case Management for At-Risk Seniors

PS5 - HomeShare VT – Home-sharing: People Helping Each Other

PS3 - VT Works for Women – FRESH Food

PS8 - Howard Center – Safe Recovery Opioid Recovery Case Manager

PS7 - VT Parent Representation Center – Rapid Intervention Pre-Natal/Parenting Project

Marcy asked if the group would like to fund 2 year projects or 1 year first. A Board Member suggested eliminating any applications with multiple red dots before deciding how to proceed.

The Board discussed eliminating PS7 and PS8 the two lowest scoring applications with the highest number of red dots.

PS7 - VT Parent Representation Center Review

- Concerns over whether the program is sustainable.
- One Board member specifically wanted to fund the transportation byline in the budget.
- It is important to fund the opioid issue.
- Would like to see more factual data that ties it back to HUDs goals, CDBG goals, and the city goals.

Vote to not consider this application for funding - Passed by majority

PS8 - Safe Recovery Opioid Recovery Case Manager

After discussion, the board voted to continue to consider this application within the process.

The board voted to consider all applications in order of highest to lowest score regardless of whether they are a 1 year or 2 year program.

PS1 Pathways Vermont - Expanding Housing First

Marcy gave an overview of the organization and the project, brought up some clarifying information regarding a capacity increase of beneficiaries in Burlington

- The program catches people who are falling through the cracks.
- The organization asks for 1/2 of the total Public Service funding available, and there are a lot of other projects to fund.

The group voted for consensus on average funding \$29,193: fail 1-5

Suggests \$25,000, vote 9 -1, approved

PS2 WHBW - Safe Tonight

Test for consensus at average funding \$21,253: fail

- Strong data to backup need and claims.
- Data doesn't demonstrate outcomes that some Board Members would like to see.

Vote for average funding \$21,253: 6 – 4, approved

PS6 - CVOEO - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Test for general consensus - fail

- Project meets a great community need for those who are very low income.
- Program cost of \$17 is low, Board Members ask why they don't charge the \$17. Response, most of the people they serve are very low income and would not have \$17.
- This program receives federal funding and is very established. It could attract other sources of funding easier than some of the other projects.
- The program has great outcomes not just for beneficiaries but also for the volunteers.
- It supports low income individuals who are working.
- The program is an important tie-in to financial management classes and other CVOEO services.
- CVEOE just received a \$400,000 grant for the Growing Money Program. They ask for \$3,500 for Growing Money in this grant.

Vote for consensus on average funding \$7,400: 3 – 7, fail

Vote on suggested \$8,000: 8 – 2, approved

PS4 - CVAA – Complex Case Management for At-Risk Seniors

Vote for average funding at \$9,300: 7-3, fail

- Application did not instill confidence in the sustainability of the program, would like to see more solutions/positivity.
- This program serves an important population, very vulnerable seniors.
- There is a concern about the low salary and high caseloads.
- A specialist is important for appropriately serving special populations.
- They are the only agency that takes these targeted cases regardless of ability to pay.
- Updates/clarifications the program is asking for less than 10% of total budget.
- Marcy noted that 2 year applications must receive a minimum of \$10,000.

Vote on \$10,000: 8 – 2, approved

PS5 HomeShare Vermont - Home-sharing People Helping Each Other

Vote on average funding \$12,800 - fail

- Appreciates the duality of the program, it addresses an urgent City need for housing and supports seniors staying in their homes.
- Cost per person is not correctly calculated, need clarification on this.
- The matches last about 18 months, is the duration of the results worth the per person cost?
- Note on the process - need to clarify what information we need to calculate cost per person, is it total for the program or for the CDBG funding and beneficiaries.
- The duration of the results is appropriate for transitional housing. That could give people time to figure out a permanent housing solution and give seniors time to figure out next steps.
- Would like more information on how the program and outcomes relate to CDBG goals.

Vote on average funding \$12,800 4 -6, fail

- Fills existing housing stock, using what we have and avoiding the need to build more housing.
- Benefit to the Community stops when the program ends. How does this benefit the community in the long term?

Vote on suggested \$15,000: 4 - 6, fail

Vote on suggested \$13,000: vote 9 - 1, approved

PS3 VT Works for Women

Vote on average funding \$12,614: fail

- CDBG funded them in the last year based upon their projected goals, and then they made a strategic decision to change their area of service and deliver on one route. Will they use the money the way they said they were going to this year, or make more changes?
- The same strategic cost cutting, was a big plus for Board Members as it demonstrated a streamlined cost effective process.
- Appreciates the duality of the program offering health food to children and job training to women.

Vote for average funding \$12,614: 5 – 5, fail

Vote on suggested \$16,000: 7 – 3, approved

PS8 - Howard Center – Safe Recovery Opioid Recovery Case Manager

- Appreciated that it was clearly laid out what they would do with the funding if they are partially funded – creating a half time or quarter time position.
- The Board wonders why the Howard Center did not fund the program when the federal grant ran out.

Marcy passed around an updated budget that she received upon request.

- Would like to see more outcomes reported as opposed to number of interventions.
- How many of these goals can be met by funding this program at a quarter of the requested funding?
- This funding would help rebuild a successful program that has had to cut back due to funding.
- Concerned at the reduction of staff in the past year.
- The program serves a lot of people, and addresses a huge problem in the City.
- The application successfully ties back to CDBG goals.
- The preventative vaccine portion of the program ensures outcomes.
- Some services that they are proposing to provide could be provided by other agencies and may be duplicative.
- They have low barriers to service and are one of the only places in Chittenden County that does this.
- The program is part of a strong organization that has a wealth of strength and knowledge.

Vote on average funding \$12,252: 3 – 6, fail

- The reduction of funds and staff is concerning for some Board Members.
- Current program staff is 2 FTE, so funding a half or quarter time position is a significant increase in capacity.
- Will CDBG funds effectively leverage other funds?
- 286 overdose reversals is a clear and measurable outcome.

Vote on suggested \$0: 6 – 4, approved

A proposal was made for use of the unallocated funds: To award the remaining funds to the top 3 scoring programs. Awarding \$4,000 to CVOEO VITA program to reach full funding, awarding \$5,740 for Pathways Vermont Housing First, and awarding \$5,739 to Women Helping Battered Women Safe Tonight.

Vote on allocation of remaining funds: 8 – 2, approved

Vote on final allocations for public services - 9 -1, approved

Approved Funding Value: \$108,732

2016 CDBG Applicants - Public Service				
Proj #	Project/Program	Organization	Amount Requested	Recommended Award
Homeless & Housing Services				
PS1	Expanding Housing First Services in Burlington, VT*	Pathways Vermont, Inc.	\$50,000	\$30,740
PS2	Safe Tonight*	Women Helping Battered Women	\$38,546	\$26,992
Hunger/Food Security				
PS3	FRESH Food*	Vermont Works for Women	\$30,000	\$16,000
Seniors & Persons w/Disabilities				
PS4	Complex Case Management for At- Risk Seniors*	Champlain Valley Area Agency on Aging	\$20,000	\$10,000
PS5	Homesharing: People Helping Each Other*	HomeShare Vermont	\$25,000	\$13,000
Equal Access				
PS6	Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program	Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity	\$12,000	\$12,000
Health				
PS7	Rapid Intervention Pre-Natal/Parenting Project	Vermont Parent Representation Center, Inc	\$127,000	\$0
PS8	Safe Recovery Opioid Recovery Case Manager	Howard Center	\$47,250	\$0
	* Two-Year	TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$349,796	\$108,732
		TOTAL AMOUNT AVAILABLE	\$108,732	
		DIFFERENCE	(\$241,064)	

Marcy handed out the new applications for development, the new development scoring sheet, and the new corrected advisory board contact list. The group reviewed the homework process and made sure the due date works for everybody. The next Advisory Board meeting is March 16th, homework is due March 9th.

Feedback on the Meeting

- It was suggested to create a clear outline of the group allocation process, a summer committee to improve the process might be a good solution.
- One member was worried at first that the process would be too overwhelming but found that it wasn't and thought the teamwork was great.

- We did not make a decision about whether it is best to fund applications partially or fully. That would be helpful to some members.
- Every comment was thoughtful and it was a great benefit, great team work.
- It was interesting to see the difference between what each individual allocated and what the group allocated.
- One member noted that they were proud to approve the budget and that his opinions were adjusted by other people's comments during discussion of applications.
- One member found others input to be interesting and helpful because they have a different background and thought about the applications differently.
- One member notes that her scoring process will be a little different for the next round based upon how the group process work. She also noticed a curve on her scoring from the first to the last application and suggested that other members don't score in order or go back through.
- Great facilitation - made sure everybody had a chance to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Russell

Community Development Specialist – Grant Administration