

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, November 22, 2016
TIME: 5:30 p.m.
PLACE: Housing and Community Development Department
350 W. 6th Street, Suite 312, Dubuque IA 52001

Chairperson Michelle Hinke called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law.

Commissioners Present: Rick Baumhover Theresa Caldwell Tom Wainwright
Dean Boles Michelle Hinke
Sara Burley Rev. Lindsay James

Commissioners Absent: Rob Blok II, Julie Woodyard

Staff Present: Erica Haugen Sarah Bennett
Jerelyn O'Connor

Public Present: None

Certification of Minutes

Commissioner Baumhover moved to approve the September 28, 2016 Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Boles seconded. Roll call. All present in favor. Motion passed.

Correspondence / Public Input

Erica Haugen, Community Development Specialist, announced that one application had been received for Community Development Block Grant Funds. Haugen will discuss details at the next meeting.

Old Business

Commissioner Boles provided several handouts regarding the 3rd Grade Reading Initiative he discussed at the last meeting. Boles stated the data shows that at Audubon, only one out of three kids are reading at third grade proficiency. He stated the kids in economically challenged areas are experiencing horrible conditions and more needs to be done to increase what is being done. Boles said that CDBG dollars could be used to help the kids read better. Haugen confirmed educational support activities could be a public service activity under CDBG. Boles also distributed an email he sent to City Council detailing poverty increase of 40% in the City and third grade reading proficiency going down.

Oath of Office

Sara Burley read Oath of Office.

New Business

FY 2017 Annual Action Plan Amendment 1 – Review, Comment, and Set Public

Hearing

Haugen requested the Commission review and set a public hearing for Amendment 1 of the FY 2017 Annual Action Plan. Haugen introduced the proposed amendment regarding FY 2016 carry-over funds. The amendment re-allocates \$20,000 from Purchase of Services to St. Mark Youth Enrichment, as awarded in the FY2017 Purchase of Services Grant Competition.

Commissioner Caldwell asked about additional funds being allocated to rental rehabilitation were already obligated. Haugen stated those funds have not been allocated to specific properties at this time and there will be a program developed for rental rehabilitation.

Commissioner Boles requested an explanation of the microenterprise assistance program. Haugen explained this program was awarded funding in 2016 and the program did not really get off the ground in that year. The program is for loans to small businesses with five or fewer employees, one of which is the low/moderate income owner of the business.

Commissioner Boles said he did program management for the Pentagon and the Air Force as a contractor. One of the things they looked at was obligation rates and expenditures. Boles distributed handouts showing how funds are distributed by the federal government and moves to local governments to commit to categories. After they are committed, they must be obligated. Boles stated HUD gave us money last year and we did not spend it. Boles stated we are not spending the funds we have been allocated and that the City has an obligation problem and funds are being committed and not obligated. Boles asked how the City monitors obligation and expenditure rates. Haugen explained every year, HUD tests the City for timely expenditure of CDBG funds. The program rule for timeliness is that a grantee cannot have more than 1.5 times their annual entitlement amount sixty days prior to the end of the grantee's current program year. The City has passed the timeliness test. Haugen explained that various projects stall for various reasons. The CDBG expenditures are laid out in a five year plan. The City met the expenditure regulations for the first year of the five year plan and is on track to meet the expenditure obligations for the second year. Boles said he would advocate for spending all of the money every year and be more helpful to residents and we could set a different goal than what HUD requires.

Commissioner James asked if CDBG provided funding for staff support in Economic Development to run the microenterprise assistance program. Haugen stated CDBG did not provide any administrative dollars to Economic Development. James asked if the Economic Development Department was ready to proceed with the funds for this year. Haugen said that there were two applicants interested and the program requirements needed to be finalized. James asked if we needed to reallocate funds towards third grade reading initiative or some poverty reduction programs. Boles said funds should be allocated to those programs or other activities that expend funds quickly such as "shovel-ready" programs where everything is planned but they just need funding. Haugen reminded the commission there are limits on spending for certain CDBG programs, such as public service activities, which are limited to 15% of previous year's income and current entitlement.

After thorough discussion, Commissioner Baumhover moved to set the Public Hearing for January 17, 2017. Commissioner James seconded. Roll call. All present in favor. Motion passed.

FY 2018 Annual Action Plan – Review, Comment, and Set Public Hearing

Haugen provided the proposed FY2018 Annual Action Plan for use of the Community Development Block Grant Funds, along with a summary of the program and activities for FY2018. Haugen then discussed the guidelines and process the City uses to create each Annual Action Plan, along with any proposed amendments. Commissioner Boles requested obligation plans to check if programs are behind or ahead of their obligation rates and recommended the commission evaluate spending and move the funds to programs that can spend the funds. Commissioner Boles asked if more funds could go to Purchase of Services. Haugen referred the commission to the sheet in their packet that showed the caps for Administration and Public Services. Haugen explained the Public Service cap is based on the previous year program income plus the current year entitlement, so we always know exactly how much can be expended in that category and at this time we have reached the cap. Commissioner Boles stated he felt there was a large amount of funds that will be unspent because of obligation rates that are low.

Commissioner Wainwright stated he did not think we should start funding for the schools when there are housing needs. Boles requested to revisit the obligation rates in the spring.

Commissioner Boles moved to set a Public Hearing for January 17, 2017. Commissioner Caldwell seconded. Roll call. All present in favor. Motion passed.

CAPER- Reschedule Public Hearing: Tuesday December 20, 2016

Commissioner Baumhover moved to reschedule the Public Hearing to Tuesday December 20, 2016. Commissioner James seconded. Roll call. All present in favor. Motion passed.

Reports

Housing Commission Report

Commissioner Baumhover shared a letter he received as chairman of the Housing Commission recognizing the City of Dubuque Housing and Community Development Department as a High Performing Housing Authority. The City of Dubuque received a 96% score on the Section 8 Management Association Assessment leading to the recognition from our Regional Housing and Urban Development Department in Kansas City, MO.

Housing & Community Development Reports

Kris Neyen, Rehabilitation Programs Supervisor was not available to discuss the monthly report she provides in the packet. Haugen went over an additional handout updating the Commission on upcoming initiatives and projects the Housing Department has been involved in. These initiatives and projects include: Source of Income Working Groups, Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Projects, Inclusive Dubuque Housing Sector Group Goals, National Disaster Resiliency Grant, Imagine Dubuque, and the International Property Maintenance Code.

Neighborhood Development Reports

Jerelyn O'Connor, Neighborhood Development Specialist provided an article she found in the Cedar Rapids Gazette titled "Busting Myths about affordable housing and the people how live there." O'Connor discussed how this article aligned well with the struggles Dubuque faces regarding affordable housing and provided a different perspective on the issue.

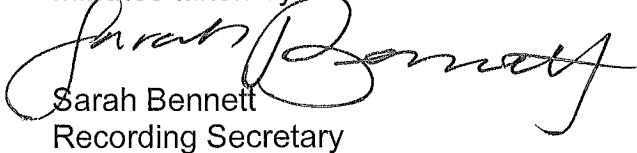
Information Sharing

Haugen invited the Commission to attend The Boards and Commissions Orientation on January 18, 2017 5:30 PM located in the City Council Chambers.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Caldwell moved to adjourn. Commissioner boles seconded. Motion passed by voice vote. Meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Minutes taken by:


Sarah Bennett
Recording Secretary

Respectfully submitted by:


Erica Haugen
City of Dubuque Community Development Specialist