



**NH Community Development Finance Authority
Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**14 Dixon Avenue, Suite 102
Concord, NH 03301**

**November 9, 2021
10:00 AM**

CDFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESENT: Michael Clafin, *Chair*; Cynthia Harrington, *Vice Chair*; John Manning, *Secretary/Treasurer*; Ben Gaetjens-Oleson; Rick Wyman; Peter Rayno; and Jared Reynolds.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Melissa Latham, *Director of Policy and Communications*; Kevin Peterson, *Director of Economic Development* and Maureen Quinn, *Office Manager and Board Relations Manager*.

Mr. Clafin called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM. Mr. Clafin noted no members of the public were in attendance. No public comment was offered.

Mr. Clafin called for any announcements. There were none.

Mr. Clafin reviewed the meeting agenda and called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 10:02 AM

Mr. Wyman moved to approve the agenda, as presented. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board.

Mr. Reynolds arrived at 10:03 AM

A. Consent Agenda

Mr. Clafin reviewed the consent agenda, which included Board of Directors minutes from October 12, 2021 and Community Development Advisory Committee minutes from October 7, 2021. Mr. Clafin called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 10:03 AM

Mr. Manning moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Mr. Wyman seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board.

B. Living Strategic Plan – Strategy Screen – 10:04 AM

Ms. Easterly Martey stated the Living Strategic Plan requires regular review and analysis so that appropriate changes may be made to programmatic priorities. She asserted CDFA must balance its own mission with the ability to maintain the flexibility to meet the demands of community partners, stakeholders, and the nonprofits in the State who play a vital role in community and economic development.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDFA has experienced increased demand to deploy funding through new statewide initiatives. She noted regular review of RSA 162-L, CDFA's enabling legislation, in concert with a strategy screen has allowed staff to evaluate the programmatic opportunities and determine best strategies in a variety of scenarios. The Board encouraged continued use of the strategy screen; it was suggested CDFA's RSA be

listed at the top of the form to ensure context of mission and guiding priorities are always at the forefront of analysis.

Ms. Easterly Martey cited the emphasis 162-L:5 places on technical assistance and noted capacity building and technical assistance have always been areas of focus for CDFA. She highlighted the set-aside from the Tax Credit program – the Community Economic Development Capacity Building Program – targeted towards organizational capacity building and stated funding has nearly doubled in that program (from roughly \$300K to \$625K) in the last year to enable investment in these key areas of focus. Ms. Easterly Martey stated capacity development – in organizations and communities/municipalities – takes years. She noted targeted investment has been made by CDFA for nearly ten years in Franklin, NH. The transformative impact is now being realized with the emergence of a more vibrant downtown area, improved opportunities for businesses and residents alike, and increased tourism.

The Board asked how communities and/or organizations can be successful in competitive funding rounds and whether CDFA has a network of grant writers ready and available to work with communities that have not traditionally pursued CDFA funding. Ms. Easterly Martey noted a new CDFA initiative provide funding for grant writing assistance for Tax Credit applicants, there already are funds for grant writing in the CDBG program. She noted pre-application meetings are an ideal time to assess whether a potential applicant has this capacity and if they would benefit from a grant writer. Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDFA has nine (9) grant writers to whom they can refer potential CDBG applicants; a number of these grant writers are from the Regional Planning Commissions, the grant writers list for Tax Credit applicants has some overlaps and an additional nearly 10 grant writers.

The Board asked whether there have been new trends in the type of applications that have been submitted. Ms. Easterly Martey stated there is still a focus on broadband, childcare, housing, mental health and rural transportation. She expects CDFA will receive more of these types of applications, especially coupled with CDFA community engagement and outreach. She also noted there have been a number of recent and successful applications where a community service provider is central and vital within its community. The Gale School and Hundred Nights are two examples of this type of applicant which yields significant community impact.

The Board discussed available grant writing resources for nonprofits. Ms. Easterly Martey noted the State of New Hampshire hired an organization called Guide House to assist municipalities with ARP funds.

The Board considered how grant writers become trained, or experienced. The challenge is that every grant application is different and there are not a particular set of guidelines which guarantee successful applications. The Board noted webinars offer an approach that can reach a larger audience. The Board discussed a critical need for effective writing skills – akin to creative writing – to prepare a grant writer to adapt to the nuances of different grants. Ultimately, the discipline to stay on point is critical to effective grant writing. The Board asked whether CDFA can develop a grant writing tutorial to provide guidance and an emphasis on critical priorities. CDFA provides more than 15 workshops annually to potential applicants, grant writers, Municipalities and other stakeholders which provide a strong foundation.

C. Data & Community Progress Indicators – 11:05 AM

Ms. Easterly Martey shared a presentation on Data & Community Progress Indicators. She noted that data is helpful in the following ways:

- defining how to engage with the Board, partners, and investors;
- data reveals trends over time and helps inform community decision making
- data informs CDFA's strategic direction, annual goals, and investment decisions, and;
- data can be used to improve community well-being.

Ms. Easterly Martey stated the Community Progress Indicators are a valuable tool in identifying where funding gaps may exist and where CDFA outreach and engagement may leverage critical impact investment. Mr.

Peterson shared data overlays with software purchased by CDFA. The data available provides a broad range of socio-economic factors within each New Hampshire community.

The Board asked whether CDFA is too heavily invested in particular geographic areas. Ms. Easterly Martey stated that while stacked and targeted investment has been used by CDFA, there has been a breadth of investments minimizing duplicative and/or overlapping investments. Targeted investments happened in large part because of critical community need.

The Board expressed their enthusiasm for the robust data sets. They thanked Ms. Easterly Martey and Mr. Peterson for the presentation.

D. CDBG – Housing and Public Facilities Applications and Planning Grant Applications – 11:33 AM

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson informed the Board that the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) met on November 7th, 2021 to review and consider applications submitted for the housing and public facilities round. Additionally, there were three planning grants reviewed and considered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson provided a brief summary of the applications recommended for funding and approved by CDAC.

Housing - CDBG

- Town of Salem – Depot & Main, LLC - \$500,000 – construction of 74 units of new, affordable housing for individuals who all qualify as low- and moderate- income

Housing – CV

- City of Rochester – Community Action Partnership of Strafford County – Gafney Home – \$500,000 - renovation of Gafney Home to create 21 units of affordable housing for elderly households at or below 60% or the area median income

Public Facilities – CDBG

- Town of Belmont – Lakes Region Community Developers – Gale School renovation - \$500,000 – renovations for adaptive reuse of the historic Gale School, including a childcare center and a social service center which provides a variety of services. 51% of the projected 135 beneficiaries qualify as low-and moderate- income
- Town of Colebrook – Colebrook Homeowners Cooperative - \$500,000 – improvements to the cooperative’s failing water infrastructure. 60% of the beneficiaries qualify as low- and moderate- income

Public Facilities – CDBG – CV

- County of Cheshire – Hundred Nights, Inc. - \$500,000 – for construction of a 48-bed emergency shelter and resource center. 100% of beneficiaries qualify as low- and moderate- income
- City of Keene – Monadnock Community Service Center, Inc. – for acquisition and rehabilitation of a property which will serve as their new facility and centralize mental and behavioral health services. 73% of beneficiaries qualify as low- and moderate- income

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson noted there were insufficient funds in this round to make awards to all applicants. Projects not awarded were encouraged to reapply in a future round. Projects not recommended for funding, due to insufficient funds included:

Public Facilities – CDBG

- City of Claremont – Sugar River Cooperative, Inc. - \$474,077 to replace an aging water distribution system

- Town of Holderness – Town Line Village Cooperative, Inc. - \$500,000 to replace an aging water distribution system
- Town of Madbury – Bunker Lane Condominium Association - \$500,000 to replace an aging water distribution system

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed Planning Grant applications recommended for funding.

Planning Grants

- City of Concord – Making Matters NH dba Concord Makerspace - \$25,000 – to coordinate and oversee an assessment of the current entrepreneurial and small-business support ecosystem in Concord and the Capital region. A survey will be conducted to guide the Makerspace’s work to revise and expand services, reach more LMI clients, and plan for additional capacity to serve microenterprises in the region.
- Grafton County – \$25,000 - Broadband last-mile planning for nineteen municipalities. Funding will assist with consultant costs for project development and planning. 51% of beneficiaries qualify as low-to moderate- income
- Town of Northumberland – Brookview Mobile Homeowners Cooperative, Inc. - \$25,000 to hire an engineer to assess the condition of the water and sewer systems and to develop preliminary plans and cost estimates to replace/upgrade the systems to correct problems.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson noted that not all housing funds were deployed; these funds will be held for the next funding round as it is anticipated there may be an increase in applications due to the housing shortage and crisis in the State.

Mr. Clafin called for questions or comments. Mr. Rayno and Mr. Reynolds stated they would recuse from the vote and noted conflicts.

- Mr. Rayno is on the Board of Directors for Depot & Main, LLC.
- Mr. Reynolds is the Executive Director of Making Matters NH dba Concord Makerspace

The Board noted that some of these applicants are familiar. Ms. Easterly Martey noted that several of the applicants have either previously been awarded CDFA funding or have previously applied for funding. The Board requested staff make note on applicant summaries when the project has received other funding from CDFA. This will provide the Board with a greater understanding of stacked or layered financing and will provide a better overview of the applicant’s project.

Motion – 11:43 AM

Mr. Wyman moved to approve the applications in the Housing and Public Facilities Round and the Planning Grants as proposed and recommended by CDAC and the Board requested that moving forward, summary write-ups include CDFA funds/awards received by the applicant. Mr. Manning seconded. The motion carried with five (5) yeas and two (2) recusals.

Mr. Reynolds left the meeting at 11:44 AM

E. SBA Community Navigators Pilot Program – 11:45 AM

Ms. Easterly Martey provided a brief overview of the SBA Community Navigators Program. She noted the program will have a focus on engagement with partners and creating public awareness around the needs of underserved businesses.

Ms. Easterly Martey sought the Board’s feedback on hiring the Capacity Building Manager who will work on SBA Community Navigators 60% of Full time. The Board agreed with the staffing approach to staffing and encouraged Ms. Easterly Martey to proceed as proposed.

F. Adjourn – 11:57 AM

There being no further business before the Board of Directors, Mr. Rayno moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Manning seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager



Michael Clafin, Chairman of the Board of Directors