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Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**NH Community Development Finance Authority
14 Dixon Avenue, Suite 102
Concord, NH 03301**

Thursday, April 7, 2022
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson; *Chair*; Ignatius MacLellan; Nancy Merrill; Matt Walsh; Carmen Lorentz; Matt Sullivan; Anne Duncan Cooley; and Theresa Pinto.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; George Hunton, *Director of Tax Credit Programs*; Kevin Peterson, *Director of Economic Development*; Chris Monroe, *Community Development Manager*; Joshua Ahmad, *Community Development Manager*; and Maureen Quinn, *Board Relations Manager*.

PUBLIC: Donna Lane, *CDBG Consultant and Grant Writer*; Christopher Boldt, *Tucker, Donahue & Ciandella, representing The City of Berlin*; Kevin Lacasse and Tim Coulombe, *TKB Properties, LLC*; Cindy Tilton and Karyl Horn, *Bunker Land Condominium Association*; Kaela Tavares, *North Country Council*; Tom Cochran, *Laconia Housing and Redevelopment Authority*; Justin Slattery, *Belknap Economic Development Council*; and Aron DiBacco, *New Hampshire Community Loan Fund*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson opened the meeting at 2:00 PM and noted a quorum was present. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson welcomed members of the public in attendance to the meeting. He called for any public comment. None was offered.

A. Agenda

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the meeting agenda. He called for any changes to the agenda. None were requested. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

Motion – 2:03 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the agenda, as presented. Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Public Comment

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for public comment and stated there were no members of the public in attendance wishing to make public comment. Ms. Easterly Martey noted she was requested to submit written comments shared by Ms. Lori Korzen. Ms. Easterly Martey read Ms. Korzen's letter to the Committee. The letter, alongside a petition submitted by Ms. Korzen, is attached to these minutes as Addendum One.

B. Consent Agenda – 2:04 PM

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the Consent Agenda and called for questions or comments. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

Motion – 2:07 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson stated there are four (4) applications for review in the Housing and Public Facilities Round and two (2) applications submitted under the Economic Development funding category; he requested disclosure of Committee member conflicts and recusals.

- Ms. Duncan Cooley noted she is the Executive Director of the Grafton Regional Development Corporation, which is a subrecipient in both Economic Development applications to be considered. She will recuse from review, consideration, and action on these items.

CDBG HOUSING AND PUBLIC FACILITIES ROUND APPLICATIONS AND PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS

Ms. Kaylor provided an overview of the Housing and Public Facilities round and thanked the Committee for their commitment to review the applications.

C. CDBG Housing Applications

City of Berlin – TKB Properties, LLC – \$500,000

Ms. Kaylor reviewed the application for the Committee. She stated the project is intended to rehabilitate a vacant school building into twenty rental units; fifteen (75%) of the units will be affordable housing to benefit low- and moderate-income households. The other five units will be market rate apartments.

The Committee discussed the long-term benefit for persons and/or households who qualify as low - and moderate-income. Ms. Kaylor noted HUD guidelines only require a five-year benefit period. She noted projects typically provide for a longer-term benefit because it increases a project's score, especially critical in a competitive funding round. The Committee asked whether a market study had been completed to determine whether affordable housing is needed in this community. A market study was not completed.

The Committee discussed the renovation costs. Mr. Kevin Lacasse, of TKB Properties, LLC, noted that the building is in good condition; the City of Berlin installed a new roof to help preserve the integrity of the building. Plans have been developed to try to stay within the existing building envelope, leaving classroom walls intact. This approach will minimize construction costs. Mr. Lacasse noted TKB Properties, LLC does have access to additional funding sources if cost overruns become an issue.

The Committee discussed the role of the governing body of the local municipality in the support of an application, as well as the required public process to engage local citizens.

Ms. Kaylor stated there are sufficient funds in this round to make an award to this project. Funding is recommended with the following staff recommended contingencies:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- There is no impact to the project's score or rank due to the Administrative Review Procedure, which shall be completed within 30 days of Advisory Committee approval;
- The project is able to secure all identified matching funds;
- The State statute regarding the right of first refusal from the Charter School Administrator and recognized charter schools is met;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for additional questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 2:20 PM

Mr. MacLellan moved to approve the application from the City of Berlin for \$500,000, as presented, with all staff recommended contingencies. Ms. Lorentz seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Town of Conway – The Bluebird Project, LLC – \$495,000

Mr. Hunton reviewed the application for the Committee. He stated the project is intended to convert four (4) cottage style buildings, which have been used as vacation rental units, to permanent housing. Three of the four units will be affordable (HUD Fair Market Rent) to low- and moderate-income households for a period of at least ten years.

Mr. Hunton stated there are sufficient funds in this round to make an award to this project. Funding is recommended with the following staff recommended contingencies:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- There is no impact to the project's score or rank due to the Administrative Review Procedure, which shall be completed within 30 days of Advisory Committee approval;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 2:24 PM

Ms. Merrill moved to approve the application from the Town of Conway for \$495,000, as presented, with all staff recommended contingencies. Mr. Sullivan seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

D. CDBG – Public Facilities Applications

City of Laconia – Laconia Housing and Redevelopment Authority – \$488,000

Mr. Hunton reviewed the application for the Committee. He stated the project is intended to renovate 4,500 square feet of unoccupied vacant commercial space owned by the Laconia Housing and Redevelopment Authority (LHRA). The renovated space will be leased and occupied by the Partnership for Public Health (PPH) for a minimum of ten (10) years. The proposed scope of work will create functional and accessible space for LHRA and PPH to better serve their clientele, provide ADA accessibility, and add shared multi-purpose space for enhanced community health education and emergency clinics designed to provide preventative health services.

Mr. Hunton stated there are sufficient funds in this round to make an award to this project. Funding is recommended with the following staff recommended contingencies:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- There is no impact to the project's score or rank due to the Administrative Review Procedure, which shall be completed within 30 days of Advisory Committee approval;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Hunton noted the Board of the PPH has initially approved a seven-year commitment to the property lease. CDFA's grants management system, through which the application was submitted, provides options for five, ten and twenty years. The lease is to be reconsidered by PPH's Board and it is anticipated a ten-year lease commitment will be approved. CDFA will place a minimum of a five-year lien on the property to ensure long term benefit.

Ms. Kaylor noted under 'Recommendation' there is reference to CDBG CV funding. These are not CV funds. Staff apologized for the mistake. The Committee did not have questions about this clarifying statement on funding source.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 2:31 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the application from the City of Laconia for \$488,000, as presented, with all staff recommended contingencies. Mr. Walsh seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Town of Madbury – Bunker Lane Condominium Association/Water Improvement Project - \$500,000

Ms. Kaylor presented the application to the Committee. She stated the project had applied for CDBG funding in a previous round and was not successful. Ms. Kaylor stated CDFA is currently receiving fewer CDBG applications for water and sewer infrastructure projects because the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) has made funding available for these types of projects. Many of the manufactured housing cooperatives which would typically apply to CDFA are now seeking NHDES funds. In this case, the Bunker Lane Condominium Association (BCLA) does not qualify for NH DES funding because the water supply for BCLA comes from the City of Portsmouth's municipal water source. Ms. Kaylor noted BCLA has secured funding from the NH

Community Loan Fund (NHCLF) but is pursuing other funding sources in an effort to find more favorable rates.

Ms. Kaylor reviewed the conditions of the proposed award. She noted the subrecipient is an Association and not a Cooperative. A lien cannot be used as collateral; the NHCLF will work the BCLA to provide collateral which satisfies CDFA's CDBG program requirements.

The application is recommended with the following staff recommended contingencies:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- There is no impact to the project's score or rank due to the Administrative Review Procedure, which shall be completed within 30 days of Advisory Committee approval;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Gaetjens called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 2:41 PM

Mr. Sullivan moved to approve the application from the Town of Madbury, as presented, with all staff recommended contingencies. Ms. Lorentz seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

E. Economic Development

Ms. Duncan Cooley left the meeting at 2:42 PM.

2022 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program Recommendation – Counties of Grafton, Cheshire and Sullivan - \$1,315,400

Mr. Peterson presented the application to the Committee. He noted this is an annual application presented to the Committee. The CDFA CDBG microenterprise is considered a model program for its continued impact and success.

Mr. Peterson stated there are eight subrecipients participating in this project, with a projected 312 clients to be benefited. To assist with COVID-19 relief and business re-orientation, three additional categories of support were added to eligible activities. The new categories are: direct grants of up to \$5,000 per client for machinery/equipment purchase and minor renovations; up to \$10,000 per client for down payment assistance for purchase of a business-related property; and up to \$100,000 in capital for micro lending, to be matched dollar-for-dollar by low-interest loan capital from CDFA.

The following chart outlines the proposed awardees and award amounts:

Subrecipient	Proposed # of Beneficiaries	Program Request	Admin Request		TOTAL REQUEST
<u>Grafton County</u>					
BEDC/WEDCO	47	367,000	24,250		391,250

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GRDC/Coos EDC	35	164,400	17,905		182,305
NCIC	25	82,500	11,020		93,520
WREN	25	105,000	13,720		118,720
<i>Grafton subtotal:</i>	<i>132</i>	<i>\$ 718,900</i>	<i>\$ 66,895</i>		<i>\$ 785,795</i>
<u>Cheshire County</u>					
Hannah Grimes	50	270,000	25,000		295,000
SBDC	35	105,000	15,750		120,750
<i>Cheshire subtotal:</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>\$ 375,000</i>	<i>\$ 40,750</i>		<i>\$ 415,750</i>
<u>Sullivan County</u>					
REDC	75	289,000	29,000		318,000
RVCC	20	74,400	11,160		85,560
<i>Sullivan subtotal:</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>\$ 363,400</i>	<i>\$ 40,160</i>		<i>\$ 403,560</i>
TOTALS:	312	\$ 1,457,300	\$ 147,805		\$ 1,605,105

Mr. Peterson reviewed staff recommendations of this award, noting based on the positive experience with direct grants of COVID-19 relief, significant research and evidence which validates the benefits of investing in microenterprises as a way to build equity and family wealth, as well as expanded marketing to underserved microenterprises that will result from the Community Navigators program, approval is recommended as outlined above for the program year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The application is recommended for funding with the following conditions:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated to the State by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD);
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD regulations and CDFA guidance.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments.

Motion – 2:55 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the application for the 2022 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program in the amount of \$1,315,400, as presented and with all staff recommended conditions. Ms. Merrill seconded.

The Committee complimented Mr. Peterson and staff for concisely presenting a complex and important funding application. The Committee asked if results for this funding are tracked. It was noted a three-year tracking period is carried out by each of the Counties. The Committee asked whether there is long-term data related to businesses funded. It was noted the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene (a funding recipient for this grant) tracks data on microenterprises. Further, CFDA requests this data in final reports to measure outcomes and evaluate the program effectiveness and impact.

The motion passed with seven (7) yeas votes and one recusal.

County of Grafton – NH Alliance of Regional Development Corporations/Business Technical Assistance Program - \$267,000

Mr. Peterson presented the application from the County of Grafton for the NH Alliance of Regional Development Corporations in the amount of \$267,000. Mr. Peterson stated the project will create fourteen (14) jobs for people who are of low- and moderate – income and there is additional funding allocated for consultants to support businesses participating in this program, designed to create greater opportunities for success.

Mr. Peterson stated the project is recommended for funding in the amount of \$267,000 with the following staff recommended contingencies:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- The project is able to secure all identified matching funds;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 2:59 PM

Mr. MacLellan moved to approve the application from the County of Grafton in the amount of \$267,000, with all staff recommended contingencies. Ms. Lorentz seconded and the motion passed with seven (7) yeas and one recusal.

Ms. Duncan Cooley returned to the meeting at 3:00 PM

F. CDBG Award Amendment

Mr. MacLellan noted to the Committee new challenges in construction are emerging as costs continue to escalate in an unprecedented fashion. In some projects, contractors are refusing to bid due to uncertainty in costs. This is adding barriers to project development.

Town of Conway - Avesta Tech Village Affordable Housing Project - \$400,000

Mr. Monroe reviewed the request for Change in Contract Funding for the Town of Conway's Avesta Tech Village affordable housing project. Mr. Monroe noted the request also includes a request for extending the project end date. The project, to meet skyrocketing construction costs, also secured an additional \$685,000 in funding through NHHFA's SCRAHP program.

Mr. Monroe stated staff recommends additional funding in the amount of \$400,000 for this project, with no added contingencies. Staff also recommends extending the project completion date to December 31, 2023.

The Committee briefly discussed the State's plans for \$100 million in ARPA funding, with \$60 million earmarked for housing projects. These funds may ultimately be helpful to some CDFA funded projects but further decisions on how the funds will be expended must first be made by the State.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions comments. None were offered.

Motion – 3:08 PM

Mr. Walsh moved to approve the amendment for the Town of Conway – Avesta Tech Village Affordable Housing in the amount of \$400,000 with an extended completion date of December 31, 2023. Ms. Lorentz seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

G. Action Plan

Mr. Sullivan left the meeting at 3:10 PM

Ms. Easterly Martey thanked the Committee for their work on components of the Action Plan, which impacts CDFA's deployment of CDBG funds, and noted she would be seeking a vote on the proposed plan. Ms. Easterly Martey highlighted the following:

- Readiness criteria has been modified;
- Energy audits are again considered a threshold requirement;
- A slightly modified tiered point system also remains in place to provide more points for those projects which have incorporated energy components;

Criteria regarding points awarded to projects which demonstrate correlation and connection to regional or municipal plans and also benefit and or support community and neighborhood centers will be revised at a later date.

The Committee asked about factors such as readiness and creation of facilities which qualify as energy passive. Ms. Easterly Martey stated both factors are emphasized and will be positively reviewed as applications are considered.

Ms. Easterly noted CDFA is committed to review of all scoring metrics. This review will help determine what revisions should be considered to maximize the impact of the CDBG program. Additional scoring criteria will be updated at a later date.

Motion – 3:24 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the Action Plan, as reviewed and discussed. Ms. Merrill seconded and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

H. CDBG-CV Funding Round

The July 2022 CDBG-CV funding round and available resources was also discussed with the Committee. Particular areas of focus in the round will include:

- Projects which emphasize childcare, mental health or clean energy initiatives;
- Funding must support facilities which are owned by a government entity or a non-profit and are open to the public;
- At least 51% of project beneficiaries must qualify as low- and moderate – income;
- Maximum award is \$750,000;
- No combination of CDBG funding may exceed \$1M for a single project.

The Committee asked for clarification on types of organizations which will be eligible for this funding. Ms. Easterly Martey noted facilities are eligible as long as the building is not used for the general conduct of government . Ms. Easterly Martey shared examples, including but not limited to:

- Childcare centers;
- Boys & Girls Clubs;
- Recovery centers;
- Family Resource Centers.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDBG-CV funding does not count against a city or town's maximum CDBG application award amount.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments. None were offered.

Motion – 3:34 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approved the CDBG-CV Funding Opportunity Round, as presented. Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote of the Committee.

Adjourn – 3:35 PM

Ms. Easterly Martey thanked the Committee for their thorough review of applications, initiatives and discussion items presented. She noted staff will continue to update the Committee about proposed changes to scoring and other elements of the funding opportunities.

There being no further business before the Committee, Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Lorentz moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Walsh seconded and the motion carried with a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager



Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Committee Chair

Mollie Kaylor

From: Lori Korzen <lekorzen@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Mollie Kaylor
Subject: RE: Berlin, NH CDBG Grant GRIEVENCE
Attachments: 2022-01-16-14-45-01-worth-more-than-1.pdf

How do I submit my written comments? Here is the letter that I would like to submit, if this is not the correct way to submit written comments, please let me know how to do so; other please submit this letter. Also attached is a petition by residents who are also opposed to the CDBG grant, it includes 7 pages worth of name of Berlin residents opposed. Please submit the petition also!

Lori Korzen

To Whom it May Concern,

As a concerned resident of Berlin, NH I am writing to ask that you NOT APPROVE the CDBG application applied for by Berlin, NH. This project has many complicating factors and is NOT in the best interest of our city. Public outcry AGAINST this project has been strong yet has so far fallen on deaf ears. I humbly ask that you deny the Berlin, NH CDBG on the following grounds:

- 1) Perceived Conflict of Interest
- 2) Violations of 91-A Right to Know Laws
- 3) Bullying and intimidating Citizens from speaking in opposition to this project (including possible 1st Amendment Right issues and Criminal Intimidation and threatening of a taxpayer.)

There are a few concerns we have with this project, including a perceived conflict-of-interest, several 91-A Right to Know violations, and a Mayor and City Council that has done their best to silence their opposition, including threatening one man's business and telling me to sit down and be quiet and striking my words from the public record.

We are speaking to the Grafton County Attorney this week in regards to these illegal practices that have been used against us to silence the opposition and push this project through before the deadline. This project is in fact being pushed through to circumvent a new law that went into effect on the first of this year.

Please allow me to explain:

Back in November, the citizens of Berlin found out that our Mayor and City Council were in negotiations with a company, New England Family Housing, owned by Mr. Kevin Lacasse to sell the Brown School building (worth over 1.1 million dollars) for just \$1.00! When I set out to find the minutes of the meetings that led to this despicable deal, I found absolutely nothing. There were zero Brown School Committee Meeting minutes posted online, there were zero Planning Board minutes online and only one brief mention in the City Council minutes saying that this was the project they had chosen.

One of the public's biggest issues is that the school was sent out as a Request for Proposal twice, it has never been on the market or even sent out for bids. The same 2 companies have sent back their proposals.

The first company, owned by Kevin Lacasse, proposed a 20 unit apartment complex and was asking for the building for \$1.00. Mr. Lacasse asked that Berlin sponsor a CDBG block grant in the amount of \$500,000 to begin the project. The apartment complex would be for low to moderate housing units and because of the federal grant would have to be at least 51% subsidized housing.

The second company, Wildcat LLC is owned by Mr. Fred Dambrie. His proposal was also for a 20 unit apartment complex but included keeping the gymnasium for the students of Berlin Schools as well as the student of White Mountain Community College to use for basketball games. This proposal also included using the gym for area events, functions, and seminars for the citizens of Berlin. A couple of the apartments would be set aside for short-term rental units for the traveling nurses and doctors at Androscoggin Valley Hospital. Financing for this project was not determined yet as Mr. Dambrie had a few options including private financing.

Mr. Dambrie sent one of our City Councilors, Ms. Lucie Remillard, a couple of questions about the building. The answers to his questions would decide which financing option Mr. Dambrie would utilize for his project. Ms. Remillard **failed** to answer Mr. Dambrie's questions and ignored the contact he tried to make with her. The next thing Mr. Dambrie heard from her was that they had decided to go with Mr. Lacasse's company. To this day Mr. Dambrie's questions were ignored by Ms. Remillard, who is not only on the City Council but also volunteered to be on the Brown School Committee and was an ex-officio on the planning committee.

A concerned resident told me a couple of weeks ago that Ms. Lucie Remillard is actually her brother's nephew... I asked Ms. Remillard on Facebook if Kevin Lacasse was her brother's nephew, her reply was that my information was not true and that there was no relation, and that I needed to check my facts. I let it go for a bit but had it in the back of my mind, at that point I had no reason to believe that Ms. Remillard would flat out lie to me so I took her at her word. As I started reading through the minutes of the city council meetings, I found that Ms. Remillard was anything but an unbiased Councilor and has, from the fall of 2021, been pushing and swaying the Council toward Mr. Lacasse's offer, which just to reiterate did not offer the community anything except low to moderate housing.

I have come to find out that although Ms. Remillard denied ANY relationship with Mr. Lacasse, I was indeed right. Mr. Lacasse is, in fact, her brother's nephew. Mr. Lacasse has been buying property in Berlin for years, oftentimes for just \$1.00. Mr. Lacasse and his company TKB Properties was able to "buy" the old Bartlett School about 7 years ago... again for just \$1.00 and used the CDBG Block Grant in the amount of \$500,000. If Ms. Remillard was truly unbiased and working FOR the public and not for her brother's nephew, why did she blatantly lie about the relationship? I have a screenshot of her absolute denial of any relationship, where she tells me to check my facts.

When I ask other business people in the area, they all agree that this is a potential and perceived Conflict-Of-Interest that should have been disclosed from the beginning or at the very least admitted to when asked about it. Lucie Remillard was asked about it on a public forum. The owner of the other company who wanted the building, Mr. Fred Dambrie ALSO believes this is a conflict of interest and now understands why his questions went ignored and unanswered. Many people in our community see this as a conflict of interest the City Manager, Mayor, and Council are trying to sweep under the rug.

The Mayor and Council have been less than welcoming to anyone who is against the CDBG grant. The Mayor may have violated one of us speaking out against this proposal by threatening his business and investigating a contract he has had with the city. We have a lawyer who is looking into a possible criminal charge (TITLE LXII CRIMINAL CODE CHAPTER 640 CORRUPT PRACTICES Section 640:3.) against the Mayor who was trying to intimidate the opposition to this grant.

During the "Public Comment" portion of the City Council meeting on Monday, 01/03/2022, I waited my turn to be called on by the Mayor. I calmly and rationally asked for the City Council to put a hold on this sale of the Brown School for just \$1.00. I asked that the property be put up for sale through a commercial realtor or just sent out for Bid to the highest bidder. I said that any money from the sale could be put into the Berlin Public School system or even toward fixing our streets and roads (which are horrible.) I then said, "Any money we could get for the school would be better than getting just \$1.00 from her (Lucie) brother's nephew." I never even got the word "nephew" out and the Mayor was on his feet banging his gavel, ordering me to sit down and be quiet. The Mayor began belittling and berating me publicly, I sat down as ordered but did have my hand

raised to be able to finish my comments. I was not allowed to finish my comments and the Mayor turned to the City Clerk and ordered her to strike my comments from the record.

I do feel that my First Amendment Right was violated by Mayor Grenier when he silenced me during the Public Comment section when I publicly brought up the perceived conflict of interest between Councilor Remillard and TKB properties. Furthermore, the one City Councilor who has been voting against giving this building away for just \$1.00 was also silenced at Monday night's City Council meeting. During the "Council Comment" portion of the night, Councilor Eastman had his hand raised to speak and the Mayor refused to call on him. Several people brought up the fact that Councilor Eastman had his hand raised to speak but the Mayor adamantly refused to allow him to speak. The Mayor and other councilors adjourned for the night and quickly left the building. Councilor Eastman was also silenced that night.

Many of our Berlin residents believe that Lucie did not act in the best interest of the City or its residents but had an agenda all along to favor her brothers' nephew. Ms. Remillard should have, at the very least disclosed the relationship between her and Lacasse, maybe even abstained from votes. Instead, Ms. Remillard lied about the relationship, saying that it was untrue and that I needed to check my facts. Even Mr. Fred Dambrie, the owner of Wildcat LLC feels that this is a conflict of interest and that Lucie failed to answer his questions to knowingly stall his proposal and show favor to her brothers' nephew. I will attach a few of the comments made by Councilor Remillard at various City Council meetings, to show that she was never working for the public.

There is a lot more going on than meets the eye and for the public's best interest and in the best interest of the Mayor and City Council I ask that a full investigation happen here in Berlin and that the request for the CDBG be put on hold pending the results of investigations into these violations.

In regard to the possible 91-A, the Brown School Committee Meeting minutes, as well as the Planning Board meeting minutes were never uploaded until January 3rd when we insisted on seeing them. Some of those opposed to this project and opposed to the CDBG have asked for other meeting minutes that have been ignored.

Please, the citizens of Berlin implore you not to approve this grant. We do not think this is a good fit for the neighborhood or the city. Our own Council members have gone on record, in the past (2020) as saying that they themselves do not want this project for the neighborhood or the city. They are rushing this through to again circumvent the new Charter School Law even though they know it is not in Berlins' best interest.

In addition to this letter, please find two petitions against the sale of the Brown School and against the CDBG grant money. As well as some of the public comments surrounding this proposal.

As I previously said, we are speaking to the Grafton County Attorney this week to sort out the multiple violations in this situation. (BTW...We are in Coos County but because Mayor Grenier is also a County Commissioner, they recused themselves for a conflict of interest).

Thank you for any time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Lori Korzen
788 Kent Street
Berlin, NH 03570

Sent from Mail for Windows



**This petition has collected
86 signatures
using the online tools at www.ipetitions.com**

Printed on 2022-01-16

WORTH MORE than \$1

About this petition

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I am writing on behalf of a group of concerned citizens, who were disappointed by the proposed deal that has been struck with New England Family Housing for the purchase of the beautiful Brown School for just \$1. We, the taxpayers, have put hundreds of thousands of dollars into that building and would love to see some return on the investment. For any deal to be made to sell that building for just \$1 is a slap in the face to all Berlin taxpayers. We still have loans out for the new windows we put into that building. SO we will be giving it away and still have to pay the loans we took out? At least attempt to sell this building for the outstanding loans and/or a portion of the loans!

You can not in good conscience sell this beautiful building for just \$1.00 then turn around and once again increase our tax rate. Either we are desperate for money enough to increase the tax burden on your residents, who are already paying the 4th highest tax rate in the state, or you have enough money to be able to give away a building. Which is it? You can't claim that we have no money to fix our streets then take a building like that and give it away. That is not fiscally responsible.

Wildcat deserves this building. The Wildcat proposal allows the children and residents of Berlin future use of the gymnasium for events and basketball games.

In addition, giving Wildcat LLC this building side steps and potential conflict of interest and/or unethical behavior on the part of one of the Council members who has been pushing this contract through even though it is her brothers' nephew who would be benefitting from a million-dollar building being sold for just \$1.00!

In Berlin's Best Interest,

Signatures

1. Name: Lori Korzen on 2021-12-16 16:13:07
Comments:

2. Name: Richard Mattos on 2021-12-16 16:26:29
Comments: Berlin,NH Reident

3. Name: Ashley Mattos on 2021-12-16 16:27:27
Comments: Berlin,NH resident

4. Name: Tiffany Hale on 2021-12-16 17:00:02
Comments:

5. Name: Christian Judson on 2021-12-16 17:29:29
Comments: As a life time member of Berling and going to Brown school as a kid. It's heart breaking to see it sell for just one dollar. I remember painting america on the pavement in 2008. This build has so much more than to sell for just \$1.

6. Name: Rob on 2021-12-16 17:30:14
Comments:

7. Name: Dave Leeman on 2021-12-16 17:30:59
Comments:

8. Name: Tanya Santy on 2021-12-16 17:32:38
Comments:

9. Name: Kevin Murphy on 2021-12-16 17:35:09
Comments:

10. Name: Brittany Wooding on 2021-12-16 17:36:05
Comments:

11. Name: Smith Lisa on 2021-12-16 17:55:21
Comments: Charge more and charge the buyers property tax.

12. Name: Reilly Wood on 2021-12-16 17:57:02
Comments:

13. Name: Shelley Rich on 2021-12-16 18:14:01
Comments:

14. Name: Roger Boissonneau on 2021-12-16 18:14:04
Comments:
-
15. Name: Michael McLain on 2021-12-16 18:16:42
Comments: More good stuff from the "trusted experience" team. What a joke
-
16. Name: Jean Gagne on 2021-12-16 18:36:56
Comments:
-
17. Name: Carl Crowley Sr on 2021-12-16 18:55:10
Comments: The city really doesn't care about it's taxpaying residents.
-
18. Name: Dylan Bridge on 2021-12-16 19:16:33
Comments: Our city doesn't deserve this and is consistently losing funds as well as businesses. This is a disgrace to the local economy.
-
19. Name: Steven Korzen on 2021-12-16 19:27:16
Comments: Sale? More like a giveaway.
-
20. Name: beth smith on 2021-12-16 19:57:10
Comments:
-
21. Name: Deborah Laflamme on 2021-12-16 20:05:09
Comments: Sell it for more money. If you have so much money to give buildings away, then decrease our taxes I smell corruption
-
22. Name: Kelley A Timblin on 2021-12-16 20:25:51
Comments:
-
23. Name: Palkovich Robert on 2021-12-16 20:27:13
Comments: Our town needs utilities updated and we are paying taxes on this property
-
24. Name: Kristina Wilkow on 2021-12-16 21:08:20
Comments: As a tax payer living in Berlin, this isn't my responsibility & this is reckless as well as completely inappropriate.
-
25. Name: Tanya Santy on 2021-12-16 21:08:42
Comments: The way the town of berlin is managed is very poor. Its a shame we werent able to elect new people into office
-
26. Name: Angela Law-as on 2021-12-16 21:32:31
Comments:
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27. Name: Kimberly Allen on 2021-12-16 22:06:29
Comments:
-
28. Name: Kelly Starkey on 2021-12-16 22:07:59
Comments:
-
29. Name: Donald Lanteigne on 2021-12-16 22:14:43
Comments: Something needs to be done with this building, however I agree. ..worth more than a dollar ..even with future tax revenue
And who and where can I find info on new england housing ..who's proffiting here ???
-
30. Name: William Pike on 2021-12-16 22:20:36
Comments:
-
31. Name: David connelly on 2021-12-16 22:25:18
Comments: What a disgrace, stand up people, .. a old timer once told me ,, the squeaky wheel gets the greece,,,
-
32. Name: Kayte Alford on 2021-12-16 22:35:26
Comments:
-
33. Name: Douglas Fairbanks on 2021-12-16 23:00:14
Comments:
-
34. Name: Mary Jane Winslow on 2021-12-16 23:22:34
Comments: I am a renter my brother pays taxes and my rent will go up. I work full time a single mom raising two! This is not right mr. Mayor!
-
35. Name: Ann Morin on 2021-12-17 00:47:59
Comments: We need housing but cannot afford to give buildings away when some of us are worried about our excessively high tax bills.
-
36. Name: Zack hilliard on 2021-12-17 01:42:03
Comments:
-
37. Name: Kelly raymond on 2021-12-17 02:17:58
Comments:
-
38. Name: Cynthia Rondeau on 2021-12-17 02:33:34
Comments:
-
39. Name: Stewart Stephen on 2021-12-17 02:57:56
Comments:

-
40. Name: Kathy Trumbull on 2021-12-17 04:11:31
Comments: We know exactly why you're ramming this through, and we are calling you out! You flat out stated at the public meeting, "That's not going to happen!" in response to a charter school possibly taking it over. Why are you so against charter schools??? Or any other school??? Then you tried to discredit the Berlin Prosperity group in the BDS for standing up when many others were opposed as well. Shame on you, Paul Grenier!
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41. Name: Jason Delafontaine on 2021-12-17 04:42:53
Comments:
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42. Name: Mabel Borroto on 2021-12-17 10:42:53
Comments:
-
43. Name: Alice Ewalt on 2021-12-17 13:44:46
Comments:
-
44. Name: Robert Cone on 2021-12-17 14:29:51
Comments: Agreed with this article. Our administration for Berlin is completely aloof and driving this once proud city into the ground.
-
45. Name: Shannon Patti on 2021-12-17 16:09:30
Comments:
-
46. Name: Bryan Hogan on 2021-12-17 16:37:40
Comments:
-
47. Name: Jarrod Austin Woodard on 2021-12-17 16:40:54
Comments: Stop waiting for a political cycle and either reform or fire the people in your life that enable this.
-
48. Name: Dan Millet on 2021-12-17 22:14:26
Comments:
-
49. Name: John Beck on 2021-12-18 03:42:45
Comments:
-
50. Name: Dean Crane on 2021-12-18 12:21:46
Comments:
-
51. Name: Jeremiah Hammill on 2021-12-18 13:00:05
Comments:
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52. Name: Natasha Lamoureux on 2021-12-18 14:25:46
Comments:
-
53. Name: Mandi Fenwick on 2021-12-18 14:45:56
Comments: Berlin deserves better than footing the real bill in their tax raises... Do better
-
54. Name: KimberlyKay Brand on 2021-12-18 16:18:42
Comments:
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55. Name: Diane Vigue on 2021-12-18 20:39:27
Comments: We the tax payers have paid for this building and it should should be used for public use. Why can't We the tax payers have it for \$1.00
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56. Name: Laurie Blake on 2021-12-18 23:26:13
Comments:
-
57. Name: Tracy Lang on 2021-12-19 00:12:31
Comments:
-
58. Name: Eli D Clemmer on 2021-12-19 01:28:23
Comments:
-
59. Name: Pamela Van Vlaanderen on 2021-12-19 05:08:06
Comments:
-
60. Name: Heather on 2021-12-19 06:06:38
Comments:
-
61. Name: Joanna Russell on 2021-12-19 09:15:22
Comments:
-
62. Name: Kayla Roy on 2021-12-19 13:08:50
Comments:
-
63. Name: Dan mccosh on 2021-12-19 16:36:58
Comments: I think something better could be done with this building.
-
64. Name: Charles Wise on 2021-12-19 18:35:36
Comments:
-
65. Name: Bob Van Vlaanderen on 2021-12-19 18:38:50
Comments: Another Berlin government scam

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66. Name: Ashley Hood on 2021-12-19 19:37:32
Comments: This is insane
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67. Name: Bethany Hartzell on 2021-12-19 22:07:51
Comments:
-
68. Name: Katie Demers on 2021-12-20 01:12:17
Comments: This just keeps getting worse.
-
69. Name: Michelle Giroux on 2021-12-20 01:34:13
Comments:
-
70. Name: Diane Gilbert on 2021-12-20 01:41:04
Comments:
-
71. Name: Steven J Gardner on 2021-12-20 10:41:58
Comments:
-
72. Name: Lynn Crane on 2021-12-20 13:48:03
Comments: If this is a legit deal we implore upon you to wait till after the first of the year. This seems a slap in the face to every taxpayer in Berlin. And screams of nepotism.
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73. Name: Kasey Bently on 2021-12-20 14:06:06
Comments:
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74. Name: Trisha Lore on 2021-12-20 14:34:05
Comments:
-
75. Name: Spencer Fortier on 2021-12-20 19:51:45
Comments:
-
76. Name: Connie Robinson on 2021-12-20 20:18:03
Comments:
-
77. Name: Alan Lockwood on 2021-12-20 21:34:00
Comments: This building is worth so much more. Don't slap the hard working Berlin taxpayers with such a ridiculous deal.
-
78. Name: Stephen gregory on 2021-12-21 11:52:08
Comments: To make no money off it to make it a place to suck more money dumb anf that was my scool my hole famyls scool to make it in to a state rund hosue and make no

money on the saile is a slap in the face wat about are town that mony from selling it would went to are towm

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79. Name: Richard R King Sr on 2021-12-23 23:25:18
Comments: These people are so under handed we need to call A/G s office and the Governor. Lets stick together and hold them accountable . just wondering is there a way to remove these people for their position we need to break up the Good Boys & Girls club.
-
80. Name: Nancy Daisey on 2021-12-27 16:44:42
Comments: I said we should put it as a homeless shelter and upstairs they can use it for offices we can also use some of the building for a police station downstairs it's used for many things but I still say they should help the homeless I'm on the phone just needs that act that little edge and to get them off the street we have some very cool Winters up here why not help them update Police department
-
81. Name: Kc Fortier on 2021-12-28 16:37:05
Comments: Wow
-
82. Name: Samantha Villnave on 2021-12-28 16:47:04
Comments:
-
83. Name: Ashley Landers on 2021-12-28 16:51:14
Comments:
-
84. Name: Morency Maranda on 2021-12-29 10:13:54
Comments:
-
85. Name: Diana Dumont on 2021-12-31 19:21:32
Comments: There is a condemned house next door that went for auction it is in ill repair the city would not take less than 2 thousand for it they got 7 thousand... it doesn't have much land... that says a lot about the wisdom of this
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86. Name: Jesse Peters on 2022-01-01 04:44:52
Comments: I pay my taxes I want more of a return also. It's bs one buck for that building.
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