



Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Thursday September 7, 2023
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson; Elizabeth Fox; Matthew Walsh; Matthew Sullivan; Carmen Lorentz; Anne Duncan Cooley; Ignatius MacLellan; and Joe Doiron.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Melissa Latham, *Director of Communications and Policy*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Rebecca Boisvert, *Director of Community Development*; Priscilla Baez, *Contract Manager – Community Center Investment Program*; Melanie Steenbeke, *Contract Manager*; and Maureen Quinn, *Board Relations Manager*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM. Ms. Easterly Martey informed the Committee Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson was reappointed to serve on CDFA's Board of Directors for another five (5) year term. She thanked him for his commitment to CDFA and the leadership he brings to the Community Development Advisory Committee. The Committee congratulated and thanked Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the meeting agenda and called for any questions or changes. None were offered. He called for a motion.

Motion – 2:03 PM

Ms. Fox moved to approve the agenda, as presented. Ms. Lorentz seconded, and the motion passed with seven (7) yeas of the Committee. Mr. Doiron abstained from the vote.

A. Consent Agenda

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the consent agenda, which included the minutes from the May 30th, 2023, Community Development Advisory Committee meeting. He called for questions or comments; none were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

Motion – 2:04 PM

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Fox seconded, and the motion passed with seven (7) yeas of the Committee. Mr. Doiron abstained from the vote.

B. CDBG Planning Grant – Town of Derry/The Upper Room: A Family Resource Center – \$25,000

Ms. Kaylor presented the application for the Committee's review and consideration. The Town of Derry is requesting \$25,000 in CDBG Planning Grant funds to be subgranted to The Upper Room, A Family Resource Center (The Upper Room). The Upper Room is a nonprofit organization which provides education, services, and resources to families in Southern New Hampshire. The funds will be used to fund a feasibility study to determine viability of expansion. The Upper Room served approximately 7,200 individuals in the early 2000's,

including 2,600 calls. Demand has increased dramatically and in 2022, they served 17,083 individuals, including 10,183 calls.

The organization has been the primary local provider of family support services in the area for over 37 years. The Upper Room programs address family conflict, substance misuse disorder, academic challenges, youth engagement and skill building, family wellness, food insecurity and more.

Ms. Kaylor noted planning grants are accepted on a rolling basis; this application scored within the range required for funding. The Committee asked whether The Upper Room has plans to purchase the property. Ms. Kaylor noted the organization has a long-term lease with the Town of Derry, securing the organization's location. The Committee also sought clarification on the number of individuals served. Ms. Kaylor noted the 17,083 people are unique individuals and does not count people more than once for multiple services received. Ms. Kaylor stated staff recommends this project for funding with the following conditions:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms apply; and
- The use of fund conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for further questions or comments. None were offered. He called for a motion.

Motion – 2:11 PM

Mr. Doiron moved to approve the CDBG Planning Grant application from The Town of Derry//The Upper Room, A Family Resource Center, in the amount of \$25,000 with all staff recommended conditions. Mr. Sullivan seconded, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

C. 2023 Community Center Investment Program Update

Ms. Easterly Martey noted she would provide an update on the Community Center Investment Program (CCIP). She introduced Ms. Rebecca Boisvert, director of the program to the Committee. She asked the Committee to introduce themselves to Ms. Boisvert.

Ms. Easterly Martey summarized the first round of CCIP, noting sixteen (16) projects were approved for funding. There were five (5) grants, and eleven (11) loans and nine (9) of the projects are rehabilitation/construction projects. CDFA provided outreach and technical assistance to organizations whose applications were not funded in this round. Twenty-one (21) of twenty-eight (28) organizations participated in these meetings and the feedback was positive. Ms. Easterly Martey stated the multi-activity requirement seemed to cause the most confusion amongst applicants; this provided CDFA with an opportunity to improve clarity within this element of the application.

Ms. Boisvert summarized the timing of the second round of applications. Important dates are as follows:

- Round Opens: October 20, 2023
- Round Closes: November 30, 2023
- Awards: March 2024

The Committee asked how much CCIP funding remains for the second round. Staff noted there is \$6 million dollars remaining in the program. Ms. Easterly Martey noted staff anticipates a very competitive second round of funding, as many applicants who were not funded in the first round intend to apply in the second round and there is also significant interest from many other organizations. Ms. Boisvert noted there will be funds available, on a competitive basis, for organizations who need assistance with either project development or grant writing. This initiative is intended to reduce barriers for organizations who have less internal organizational capacity. Ms. Easterly Martey noted some changes to the application – intended to align questions with the scoring – are likely to be incorporated. Ms. Boisvert noted the first round of awards are on track; contracts were sent on August 31, 2023; all awardees are projected to accomplish what was proposed and outlined in applications.

The Committee discussed a number of topics relative to the application and program guidance, including:

- Minimum and maximum award amounts;
- Geographic distribution of resources;
- Differences in nonprofit and municipal timelines for accepting a forgivable loan award; and
- Threshold and scoring criteria, including match fund, readiness and need requirements.

The Committee agreed that program consistency is essential to help ensure the success of the final round applicants.

D. Administrative Review Process

Ms. Easterly Martey stated CDFA provides an Administrative Review process within the CDBG program. It was also offered within the CCIP. She noted that the Administrative Review is a mechanism for an applicant to request a review of the scoring of their application. The review is an opportunity to evaluate an application's scoring and determine if there are discrepancies.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDFA received two Administrative Review requests after the first round of CCIP. The organization had not seen this type of request in many years. The Administrative Review process yielded positive meetings with both applicants. Scoring criteria and project elements were thoroughly discussed and both applicants were satisfied with the assessment of their application. Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDFA considers these reviews as an opportunity to work with applicants and provide guidance for future applications with CDFA. In this instance, one of the applicants will reapply for CCIP and the other applicant has indicated intentions to apply for CDBG funding. CDFA will also direct some applicants to consider the Tax Credit program, particularly in instances where it is the best funding opportunity for the type of project being developed.

Ms. Easterly Martey summarized that the demand for the program has underscored the significant need for this type of infrastructure statewide.

E. CDBG – Second Round of Housing and Public Facilities Applications – 2:59 PM

Ms. Kaylor provided an overview of the second round of housing and public facilities applications. She stated fifteen (15) applications were received, including eight (8) housing applications requesting a total of close to \$4 million and seven (7) public facilities applications requesting close to \$3.5 million. This is a large round with limited resources, with approximately \$1.3 million available in each category.

Ms. Kaylor noted the process of initial review of applications is underway. Site visits and scoring will take place in the coming weeks resulting in recommendations being presented to the Committee in November. The Committee asked whether CDFA will have the flexibility to move unutilized funds from CDBG Economic Development into the round to make more awards. Ms. Kaylor noted Economic Development funds cannot be reallocated until early to mid-2024. Projects which are not funded in this round may be recommended for consideration in the next round of CDBG Housing and Public Facilities and/or CDFA's Tax Credit program.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted the State of New Hampshire will be applying for the PRO Housing Solutions grant opportunity from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. New Hampshire's application will focus on alignment with our unique needs as a rural state and the work of the Council on Housing Stability. Ms. Easterly Martey noted she anticipates upcoming public hearing and work sessions to help inform the application. It is hoped these engagements will enable the State to submit a highly competitive application.

F. Adjourn – 3:09 PM

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maureen Quinn".

Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson".

Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Committee Chair