



Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Thursday, December 5, 2024
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, *Chair*, Elizabeth Fox; Matthew Sullivan; Anne Duncan Cooley; and Kelly Roy.

STAFF: Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Molly Donovan, *Director of Economic Development*; and Melissa Latham, *Director of Communications and Policy*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson opened the meeting at 1:58 PM.

He noted a new member of the Committee was present, Kelly Roy, Managing Director, Multifamily Housing Division at NH Housing, and welcomed her to the meeting. He requested the Committee and staff introduce themselves.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for public comment. None was offered.

A. Agenda

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

Motion – 2:01 PM

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

B. Consent Agenda

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the November 7, 2024 Community Development Advisory Committee minutes. He called for any questions or comments. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

Motion – 2:02 PM

Mr. Sullivan moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded, and the motion carried with a vote of the Committee, four yeas and one abstention by Ms. Roy as she was not present for the November 7 meeting.

C. Small Business Task Force Recommendations

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson introduced Ms. Donovan to discuss the Small Business Task Force recommendations for the Community Development Block Grant Microenterprise Program.

Ms. Donovan provided an overview of the Microenterprise Program goals and application process. She also reviewed the objectives of the Community Navigator Pilot Program, key programmatic elements and learnings from the two years diving deeper into New Hampshire's small business landscape, including the results of the small business ecosystem study.

The presentation underscored challenges and opportunities within New Hampshire's small business landscape and the following key areas of focus:

- Conducting outreach and engagement to new populations;
- Importance of relationship building and representation;
- Need to improve access to capital; and
- Building capacity among community partners and within all stages of small business development.

Ms. Donovan reviewed the guiding principles for the Small Business Task Force and the process they underwent to provide programmatic recommendations for the Committee to consider.

Recommendations for the Microenterprise Program presented to the Committee included:

- **Types of entrepreneurs to be served by the program:** The CDBG Microenterprise Program has primarily served necessity entrepreneurs who are low to moderate income. Continuing to understand the needs of necessity entrepreneurs will help us continue to serve them. It is also important to recognize that opportunity entrepreneurs can be served in the Microenterprise Program and are often served by other programs of the Microenterprise partners.
- **Basic life needs and business barriers:** Provide support to Microenterprise partners who identify and connect clients with the basic life need resources for transportation, housing, counseling and childcare. Connections to resources can range from direct referrals to resource organizations to partnerships with resource organizations.
- **Small business development stages:** Gather data in the Microenterprise Program to better understand how each stage is served in the program to best determine where change can be impactful. Support partnerships and innovation with small business support providers such as Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and others with specific programming to an underserved stage of development in a region.
- **Outreach, engagement and marketing:** Continued support for outreach and engagement efforts with specific efforts tailored to building relationships with priority populations using proven best practices. Key focus areas to include building and/or strengthening: relationships with municipal staff; collaborations among resource providers including a Community of Practice among the funded Microenterprise partners; support for the SBDC Network Hub efforts.
- **Data gathering and understanding:** Increase data collection and impact measurement to assess program performance with short- and long-term impacts. Develop a system for

data collection, outcomes and impacts from technical assistance and training.

- **Community partnerships:** Support community partnerships between resource partners and organizations that are led by, serve and understand the needs of priority populations.
- **Access to capital:** Recognize the importance of organizations to provide or connect small businesses with a range of capital options that best fit their needs. Gathering data on this will be helpful.
- **Mentorship, coaching, cohort training opportunities:** Support these efforts through strong networks and referral among the small business resource providers. Recognize and support the importance of culturally relevant mentorship and coaching for priority populations. Support innovation and the creation of community partnership and partnerships with relevant organizations to access this programming. Support program evaluation and supporting data to determine program outcomes.

The Committee discussed the recommendations, including how the program and its partners might approach supporting entrepreneurs in addressing basic life needs, the stages of small business development and existing supports for those stages, and gathering and understanding data that demonstrates the impact of the program on small businesses.

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

D. Microenterprise Program Scoring Recommendations

Ms. Donovan emphasized that CDFA has supported the funded partners with an emphasis on program design and capacity. This has led to much success in the program and helped to build strong partners in this work. The Microenterprise Program partners report that the funding they received through this program is critical to the services they provide and to their larger mission. The Community Navigator Pilot Program advanced the program to understand and develop programming to better serve priority populations. With this successful experience in hand and a statewide study on the value of strengthening the small business ecosystem, CDFA proposed short, medium and long-term priorities stemming from the Task Force recommendations and possible ways to operationalize.

Ms. Donovan outlined next steps in the process, including the Committee's consideration of CDFA's proposed changes to the Community Development Block Grant program guidelines and scoring criteria in January.

The Committee discussed CDFA's engagement with the Microenterprise partners throughout the process and their interest in and support for the program updates, including a simplified scoring and application process.

The Committee recognized Ms. Donovan and the Small Business Task Force for a comprehensive and thoughtful review of programmatic priorities and recommendations for their consideration.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for any additional questions. None were presented. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

Motion – 2:43 PM

Ms. Fox moved to approve the recommendations of the Small Business Task Force and Microenterprise Program Scoring Recommendations, as presented. Mr. Sullivan seconded, and the motion carried with a vote of the Committee, four yeas and one abstention by Ms. Duncan Cooley as she served as a member of the Task Force and is a funding recipient of the Microenterprise Program.

A. Adjourn – 2:46 PM

Ms. Fox moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,


Melissa Latham, Director of Communications & Policy


Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Committee Chair