

**NH Community Development Finance Authority  
Meeting of the Board of Directors****14 Dixon Avenue, Suite 102  
Concord NH 03301****December 10, 2024, 10:00 AM  
MINUTES**

CDFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, *Chair*; Diane Fitzpatrick, *Secretary/Treasurer*; Cynthia Harrington; Robert Tourigny; Carmen Lorentz; and Cody Morrison.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Ian Hart, *Chief Financial Officer*; Melissa Latham, *Director of Policy & Communications*; Scott Maslansky, *Director of Clean Energy Finance*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Molly Donovan, *Director of Economic Development*; Rebecca Boisvert, *Director of Community Development*; Kim Pacocha, *Director of Accounting*; Nate Olson, *Data and Compliance Specialist*; and Maureen Quinn, *Board Relations and Tax Credit Program Manager*.

PUBLIC: Mr. Jayme Simoes and Ms. Carlota Morgado de Almeida, *Louis Karno & Company*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson opened the meeting at 10:02 AM. He noted two members of the public, Mr. Jayme Simoes and Ms. Carlota Margado de Almeida of Louis Karno & Company in attendance and welcomed them to the meeting. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson invited Mr. Simoes and Ms. Margado de Almeida to introduce themselves to the Board. The Directors and staff in attendance also introduced themselves.

There were no other announcements, and no other members of the public were in attendance; no public comment was offered.

**A. Agenda**

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the meeting agenda. He noted an item should be added to the agenda and stated an Action Item to consider an Eversource Low-Moderate Income Solar and Clean Energy Grant & Loan Program should be added to the agenda. He proposed the Action Item be considered under Section 4, and the Executive Director Update be moved to Section 5. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson noted he would accept a motion to approve the agenda, as amended.

**Motion – 10:07 AM**

Ms. Harrington moved to approve the meeting agenda, as amended. Ms. Fitzpatrick seconded, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board.

**B. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the following items:

- November 12, 2024, Board of Directors Minutes;
- November 7, 2024, Community Development Advisory Committee Minutes;
- November 12, 2024 Finance Committee Minutes;
- November 5, 2024 Credit Committee Minutes;
- Accounting Policy Updates, and
- CDFA Lending Rate.

## **Motion – 10:05 AM**

Mr. Tourigny moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Harrington seconded, and the motion passed with five (5) yeas and one (1) abstention. Ms. Harrington abstained as she was not in attendance at the November 12, 2024, Board of Directors meeting.

## **C. Strategic Plan Visualization and Engagement - 10:06 AM**

Ms. Easterly Martey welcomed Mr. Simoes and Ms. Morgado de Almeida and provided context for their presentation. She noted CDFA's work on its living strategic plan is ongoing and this work is critical to the efforts to not only engage stakeholders but to also ensure stakeholders understand CDFA's strategic plan. Foundational to the strategic plan is operating with transparency and offering to stakeholders and the public what steps and processes can help them gain alignment with CDFA's strategic plan goals. Input and feedback should be visible in the strategies CDFA is advancing.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted one of the starting points of the living strategic plan was development of a hypothetical article for The New York Times which would point to transformative work and impact investment by CDFA. She noted all these years later, the article is still being developed, and while the critical focus point should be the overall vision for the organization, it should be something which can be readily updated to incorporate and reflect change and adaptation; it should be a plan which can evolve and develop with the organization.

Ms. Morgado de Almeida shared preliminary design concept for a website design for CDFA's strategic plan. The concept behind the website is to ensure stakeholders and the public have direct access to CDFA's priorities to enable broader understanding of CDFA and its various funding opportunities. This is intended to align with transparency and accessibility and provide overall guidance and understanding of CDFA. The website is divided into four key areas, including:

- Governance
- Capacity building
- Partnership, and
- Impact

Each of these areas has its own dedicated page to provide in-depth information to users. Ms. Morgado de Almeida noted the site is being developed to be ADA compliant, accessible on phones and other mobile devices, and translates to many languages. This is critical as the website is intended to be a tool for engagement. Consideration of a feedback tool or a 'call to action' option should further enhance feedback to identify what elements may warrant improvement and/or changes.

The Board and staff thanked Mr. Simoes and Ms. Morgado de Almeida for their presentation.

## **Mr. Simoes and Ms. Morgado de Almeida left the meeting at 10:25 AM**

## **D. Sector Presentation: Community Development – 10:25 AM**

Ms. Easterly Martey stated the Directors representing Community Development would provide an overview of trends they are seeing in their particular areas of practice.

Ms. Fitzpatrick provided an overview of challenges seen through the lens of a well-established Boys & Girls Club. She expressed her appreciation for the data provided by CDFA, and noted this has helped establish investment priorities to better enable the organization to serve their community. Ms. Fitzpatrick stressed that for the Club to be effective, it must be willing to evolve and change to meet pressing needs of families and the community. She cited a number of examples, including development of a teen center, a food pantry, transportation, and incorporation of mental health services to assist Club members. Ms. Fitzpatrick added that while programmatic additions are challenging, these changes have contributed to the Club becoming a

collaborator, a connector, and a community center/hub. Ms. Easterly Martey expressed her appreciation for the Club's work and noted the impact on the community – addressing issues of food insecurity, mental health, transportation, etc. – has been profound, particularly in a section of Manchester which has the highest level of financial distress and disadvantaged families.

Mr. Morrison shared his perspective of the changing landscape in the Southwestern region of the State. He stated there is an ever-growing need for capacity to help manage and sustain critical resources for Keene and surrounding communities. He noted some of the shortage has been driven by an aging population (retirees) and a drop in volunteerism. The workforce market has been impacted by overall capacity because there are not enough people to fill jobs; in the last few years, three major employers have left the region, driven in part by a lack of workforce. This has caused a loss in tax revenues, which then adversely impacts tax assessments for other businesses and homeowners.

One proactive approach undertaken is a collaborative effort to increase access to capital, critical to community development. To that end, MEDC and three (3) other regional development organizations collaborated to create an online lending platform to help businesses and individuals avoid predatory lending. Mr. Morrison thanked CDFA for its support and engagement with this program, which also included the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the Business Finance Authority.

Mr. Tourigny provided an overview of trends, particularly as they relate to affordable rental housing and home ownership. He stated that as the housing shortage/crisis continues, the pressure on families and the rental market escalates. With few – if any options – for affordable apartments or home purchases – there are now fewer alternatives and/or opportunities for families to move from affordable housing. Mr. Tourigny noted Neighborworks of Southern New Hampshire has two primary areas of work, which include multi-family housing development and home ownership program. The home ownership program is popular, but fewer than five (5) families have been able to purchase homes in the last several years due to the surge in the price of homes. Additionally, the cost of affordable rental units continues to escalate, threatening to further limit low- and moderate-income families from having secure housing. Mr. Tourigny noted there is municipal support for development of more affordable housing and his organization continues to seek opportunities to develop new and impactful projects.

#### **E. Council on Housing Stability – Annual Report and Strategic Plan– 11:17 AM**

Ms. Easterly Martey provided an update on the Council on Housing Stability (CHS) and noted CHS was established with authority from the New Hampshire Legislature. Many sectors, including those with lived experience, are part of the Council and to date, good work has been realized. She noted CDFA accepted funds to help create and update the CHS Strategic Plan. A key goal is to hire Executive Leadership, someone who can coordinate and lead the Council, but also be a voice to advocate for CHS to the New Hampshire Legislature. She noted there is new leadership (Nick Taylor) for CHS and the Housing Caucus (comprised of NH Senators and Legislators) appear to understand a sense of priorities for this program. Additionally, there is an effort to ensure there is alignment with the Governor Elect's transition team and office to help sustain the program's momentum.

Ms. Easterly Martey expressed her concern that the State budget may not allow for a position to be created as there are financial challenges expected in the next biennium. Options to sustain the Council include continued leadership from CDFA or a scaled back role for CDFA. The Board suggested a deferential acceptance of the Governor's prerogative on this issue makes sense. Ms. Easterly Martey stated she will update the Board in February if warranted.

#### **F. CDFA Tax Credit Program Update – 11:29 AM**

Ms. Easterly Martey shared an information on a proposed increase to the CDFA Tax Credit program. She summarized the proposal and noted that the program could be doubled to \$10M in tax credits annually, with \$3M designated in support of preservation/renovation and rehabilitation of historic housing. She stated that New Hampshire's Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) suggested that CDFA would be ideal to administer the program, signifying significant state support of the Tax Credit program and confidence in CDFA.

Ms. Easterly Martey added there seems to be bi-partisan support for the proposal, but in a difficult budget cycle, there may not be an immediate increase to the tax credits. She added the DRA support could prove to be instrumental for the increase to the program.

#### **G. Opioid Abatement Commission – 11:36 AM**

Ms. Easterly Martey summarized the Opioid Abatement Commission and asked Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson to update the Board on the Commission's purpose and goals. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson stated the Committee is comprised of over twenty (20) members, and the purpose is to disburse trust funds created by settlement proceeds from lawsuits related to the opioid crisis. He noted the Commission must determine how to disburse funds – currently a sum of \$24M – to address issues stemming from the crisis. The Commission has investigated preliminary options by sending RFPs to administer and disburse these funds. One RFP sought to understand the cost to hire an administrator and another RFP sought to understand the cost to partner with existing agencies. It has been determined it would be more cost effective to work with existing agencies to distribute funds.

Two approaches are under consideration, but each would have the same focus of prevention, treatment, and recovery. One proposal would position the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) to administer funds in the amount of \$6M per year for three years. Another proposal would look to CDFA to help administer smaller grants and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NHCF) to manage larger, statewide grants. These funds would likely be disbursed to partners such as United Way (three different United Way organizations in the State). CDFA would present a Memo of Understanding (MOU) to the State of New Hampshire, and assuming it is approved, CDFA would develop a process to disburse funds to United Way and NHCF.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted for the Board that CDFA's strength lies in its capacity to connect public health networks to community-based organizations. The proposed administrative role would likely align well with CDFA's strengths. The Board asked about the level of risk with this program. Successful recovery from substance use disorder is often fraught with many failures before success. Ms. Easterly Martey noted if the risk is deemed to be too high, CDFA would likely choose not to engage in this program. She advised the Board they will be kept apprised of next steps.

#### **H. Eversource Low-Moderate Income (LMI) Solar and Clean Energy Grant and Loan Program**

Ms. Easterly Martey stated there is a unique opportunity for CDFA to administer \$750,000 in renewable energy resources for nonprofits or for organizations involved in affordable housing (for profit or nonprofit). The program would likely fund 5 – 8 projects, and all are targeted to benefit people who qualify as LMI; additionally, funding is for on-site solar array projects and not community based solar projects.

Mr. Maslansky noted a review of current CDBG projects has already taken place since these projects would meet the criteria of the program. The program would allow for grants, loans or combinations that would be deployed over a two-to-three-year period.

#### **Motion – 11:57 AM**

Ms. Lorentz moved to authorize CDFA to administer the Low-Moderate Income Solar and Clean Energy Grant and Loan Program, as presented. Mr. Morrison seconded, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board.

#### **I. Executive Director Update**

Ms. Easterly Martey offered an update to the Board about the CDBG Small Business Task Force Recommendations. She noted the work of the Task Force, under the leadership of Ms. Molly Donovan, was impressive and yielded excellent work and proposals. Ms. Easterly Martey noted that some of the

recommendations from the Task Force – namely scoring changes in the microenterprise program for CDBG funding – will be brought to the Board in February 2025.

**J. Adjourn – 12:00 PM**

There being no further business before the Board of Directors, Ms. Lorentz moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Tourigny seconded, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors.

Respectfully submitted,



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Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager



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Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Chair Board of Directors