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## **Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

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

Thursday, March 6, 2025  
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, *Chair*; Elizabeth Fox; Matthew Sullivan; and Joseph Doiron.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Molly Donovan, *Director of Economic Development*; Scott Maslansky, *Director of Clean Energy Finance*; Melissa Latham, *Director of Communications and Policy*; and Felicity Winters, *Executive and Marketing Assistant*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson opened the meeting at 2:04 PM. He noted there were no announcements.

### **A. Agenda**

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

#### **Motion – 2:05 PM**

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

### **B. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Community Development Advisory Committee minutes. He called for any questions or comments. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

#### **Motion – 2:06 PM**

Mr. Sullivan moved to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Fox seconded, and the motion carried with a unanimous vote of the Committee.

### **C. Update on CDBG**

Ms. Easterly Martey stated CDFA continues to monitor activity at the federal level that may impact the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. CDFA recognizes that this activity has caused

considerable uncertainty among our partners across New Hampshire. The organization will continue to administer the CDBG program as normal unless we receive guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding any changes.

Ms. Easterly Martey stated that CDFA is a member of Council of State Community Development Agencies (COSCDA), which is an advocacy organization and training organization for State administrators of the Community Development Block Grant. CDFA continues to receive regular updates on activities at the federal level from COSCDA, including the current budget negotiations. The current budget approved by Congress funds the government till March 14. Congress will need to pass a continued resolution to support government operations beyond that date.

The Committee discussed how federal funds flow to New Hampshire through CDFA and the status of current federal funding allocations. In addition, the Committee discussed communications with grant administrators and projects to ensure resources continue to support projects underway.

CDFA will continue to monitor activity and communicate any updates or guidance as received with the Committee and partners. The Committee will review applications from the January 2025 Housing and Public Facilities round in April.

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

#### **D. CDFA Energy Policy**

Ms. Easterly Martey provided that as the Committee will be considering the Action Plan in the coming months, as well as the Con Plan next year, there was an opportunity to review foundational areas of the Community Development Block Grant program. One key area is CDFA's Energy Policy.

Mr. Maslansky provided an overview of CDFA's Energy Policy, which aims to help ensure resources are being invested in facilities that prioritize energy improvements, lower operational costs, and create more sustainable buildings in the long-term. He reviewed the key elements of the policy, including requirements and recommended steps for projects to consider. The presentation included examples of how implementation of the policy has positively impacted projects CDFA has invested in.

The Committee discussed further how projects are able to access resources that ensure compliance with the energy policy, as well as the use of energy audits or energy charettes to guide improvements to existing facilities or designs.

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

#### **E. Planning Grant Shifts**

Ms. Kaylor presented an update on Community Development Block Grant Planning Grants, including how funds have been used to-date and new opportunities for investment of these resources.

CDFA can award up to \$25,000 to support planning and feasibility related activities to determine whether a proposed project is viable. Municipalities can apply for funding to conduct activities like income surveys, preliminary architectural and engineering design, cost estimates and market analysis. These grants can be beneficial for municipalities that are new to the program to better understand how they could leverage federal funds to accomplish local goals.

The Committee discusses the maximum award amount and its potential impacts on applications to the program, as well as new potential uses for the planning grant funds, specifically around land use regulations and breaking down barriers for housing that builds on the work of the Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) Grant Program or recent legislation related to manufactured housing parks.

There was also discussion related to the transformational planning grants to the Regional Planning Commissions which are currently underway and how CDFA can use that feedback to inform future program

guidelines for the Committee to consider. The Committee stated that CDFA should continue monitoring and giving technical assistance since this is a pilot program outlined in the CDBG Consolidated Plan. CDFA staff will also review applicant data to gather additional information on the true cost for planning activities related to a CDBG project.

Ms. Donovan provided an update related to CDFA's community outreach efforts. She stated a consultant will be hired to reach municipalities of different sizes across the state to understand local community economic development challenges. The consultant will gather information that will help CDFA better understand the needs of municipal partners and will share findings to help inform future work of the organization. The project also offers the opportunity to strengthen existing and build new relationships with municipalities.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted the idea stemmed from the panel discussion CDFA hosted at the New Hampshire Municipal Associations annual conference. The discussion featured Mr. Sullivan as a municipal official from Nashua alongside an official from a more rural community. Throughout the dialogue, it became clear that despite differences in community size and capacity, there were many similarities in the challenges or barriers faced when looking to advance a shovel-ready local community economic development project.

The Committee expressed support of the approach and interest in the forthcoming findings.

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

#### **F. CDBG Housing and Public Facilities Round Preview**

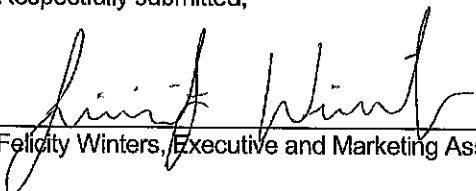
Ms. Kaylor stated CDFA is reviewing applications submitted in January for the Housing and Public Facilities round. CDFA received five Housing applications and three Public Facilities applications. There are a number of applications requesting \$750,000 in resources as a result of a supportive housing component to the project. Site visits are underway and the Committee will review staff recommendations at the April meeting.

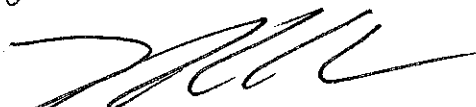
Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for any further questions or comments. None were offered.

#### **G. Adjourn – 3:22 PM**

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

Respectfully submitted,

  
Felicity Winters, Executive and Marketing Assistant

  
Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Committee Chair