



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101 Phone: 406.657.8281 Fax: 406.294.7595 Relay: 711 www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev

Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board

September 7, 2021

Board Members Present: Rebecca Noell, Jessica Schmidt, Joe Stockburger, Katrina Kruger, Bret Rutherford, Shane Noble, Council Member Denise Joy

Board Members Excused: Laura Gittings-Carlson, Jim Corson, Hannah Olson

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Dina Harmon, Tam Rodier, Wyeth Friday

Welcome / Introductions / Announcements: The Community Development (CD) Board met in the 6th Floor Conference Room of the Miller Building. Board Chair, Rebecca Noell, called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Meeting Minutes: Board member, Katrina Kruger, moved to approve the August meeting minutes. Board member, Shane Noble, seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Staff Reports:

- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** No proposals have been submitted for development of the 930 Steffanich property. Staff will continue to advertise for proposals. Any affordable housing developer can apply as long as they sell to low-income buyer(s). Staff is keeping the expenditure deadline in mind moving forward. Staff may ask for waivers from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) if no timely proposals are submitted.
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** The program is on hold while staff works through processes for additional funding allocated to the City. One application was received in August and the applicant was informed they have been placed on the waiting list.
- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** There are four pending closings for the next couple of weeks. Funding is available to assist several more households. There continue to be several repayments made possibly due to low interest rate refinancing and / or increased home sales.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** There may be a new application for affordable housing development submitted by a local organization soon. Staff has been communicating potential funding uses with this agency. Staff reported that the CD Board must be able to review the funding application and tour the facility to determine appropriate allocation of funds. The CD Board may decide to allocate CDBG and / or CDBG-CV funds. Long-term sustainability and use should be a priority.
- **Billings-Metro VISTA Project (B-MVP):** No updates at this time.

Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 (CDBG-CV) / CARES Act Funding: Subrecipient / Grantee agreements have been drafted and sent to the Downtown Billings Alliance (DBA) / Business Improvement District (BID) and The Salvation Army for review. Environmental reviews are required; however The Salvation Army project is exempt. The Environmental Review is on hold for DBA/BID until a handwashing station / restroom location is determined. A Historic Review will also need to be completed on the DBA / BID project. Staff developed quarterly report and expense reimbursement forms for the subrecipients to use once the agreements have been executed. Staff reminded the Board that the expenditures must be reviewed to ensure the funds spent are eligible expenses prior to reimbursement. Staff is considering digitizing these forms. Staff is also developing subrecipient report training, which also must occur before agreement execution. Training will include how to complete quarterly reports, request reimbursement, ensure beneficiaries are eligible, etc. The next steps will be to execute

subrecipient / grantee agreements; implement the projects; and continue to monitor subrecipient activities going forward. Wyeth Friday reported that he did receive information from City Engineering regarding locations for the DBA / BID facility, so there will be additional details to follow.

There are ongoing discussions about how to reallocate the remainder of the funding. Staff did a preliminary review and tour of the parks prioritized by the CD Board and is actively meeting with Parks and Recreation to determine if the needs are eligible under CDBG-CV guidance. CDBG funds can also be used for these types of projects. Staff will likely open applications again in December in order to consolidate and align the allocation and review process with the established CDBG and HOME timeline.

American Rescue Plan – HOME-ARP Funding: HUD training modules were put on hold. HUD reports there may be some additional guidance released next month, but nothing has been confirmed. There is significant interest in the funds within the community; however, without any set guidance or a Final Rule from HUD, CD staff will be holding off on developing the processes for funding allocations or applications at this time.

Neighborhood Concerns and Happenings: Brenda Beckett reported that there will be a significant change within the CAPER Public Hearing process this year. Beckett suggested that the Public Hearing shall be open to community members to share important community development needs. This should help the CD Board better understand community priorities during their funding recommendation process later this year.

Next Meeting: Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:55pm. The next meeting will be held on October 5, 2021.