



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

### Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

2825 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Billings, MT 59101 Phone: 406.657.8281 Fax: 406.294.7595 Relay: 711 [www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev](http://www.CityofBillings.net/ComDev)

#### Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board

October 5, 2021

**Board Members Present:** Rebecca Noell, Jessica Schmidt, Joe Stockburger, Katrina Kruger, Jim Corson, Hannah Olson, Shane Noble, Council Member Denise Joy

**Board Members Excused:** Bret Rutherford, Laura Gittings-Carlson

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

**Welcome / Introductions / Announcements:** The Community Development (CD) Board met in the 6<sup>th</sup> 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, Joe Stockburger, moved to approve the September meeting minutes. Board member, Hannah Olson, 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. The Board briefly discussed zoning options and the RFP process.
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** The program is still on hold while staff works through processes for additional funding allocated to the City. One application was received in September and the applicant was informed they have been placed on the waiting list.
- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** There are three pending closings for the next couple of weeks. Funding is available to assist several more households.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** The infrastructure work at the C&C Resident Owned Community (ROC) is almost complete.

Staff received a new application submitted by HomeFront (previously The Housing Authority of Billings) for boiler and unit repairs at the Off the Streets shelter. CD Board and Staff completed recusal forms as necessary. Brenda Beckett recused from the discussion. Dina Harmon and HomeFront staff, Patti Webster and Annie Zimmerman, presented the application details and responded to questions from the Board. The Board discussed project details and other funding options followed by a tour of the property after the meeting. The Board may decide to recommend an allocation of CDBG and / or CDBG-CV funds for this project to City Council. A special meeting is scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup> to allow time for the CD Board to review application materials and vote on the recommendation. If recommended, CD staff will present at the City Council's Regular Meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

- **Billings-Metro VISTA Project (B-MVP):** AmeriCorps VISTA Members attended an In-Service Training in September, and new members are settling into their service assignments. Staff is currently recruiting VISTA members for full-year terms beginning in January / February 2022.

**Status of CDBG Funding:** Brenda Beckett reported on annual and timeliness deadlines for CDBG funding. There has been an increasing number of repayments which contribute to the growing amount of funding that must be expended by April 2022. Beckett reported that staff will be looking at making larger allocations and reallocating staff time to ensure that low-income populations are being assisted in real-time with this funding.

**AmeriCorps VISTA Update – Coronavirus Response Initiative:** AmeriCorps VISTA Member, Tori Doll, presented an overview of a COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy survey she created. Tori discussed methods of development, distribution, and analysis of survey data. She received 76 completed surveys and determined common hesitations among community members. The Board provided Tori with recommendations for looking at strategies to fund outreach that address hesitations. These included partnering with community leaders; ongoing meetings with United Heath Command; applying for CDBG-CV funds; and connecting with Community 7 Television to run a PSA / campaign. Council Member Joy asked for Tori to share the finalized report and survey data with her and Council Member Choriki.

**CDBG / CV CARES Act Funding:** The Subrecipient / Grantee agreement was finalized and sent to The Salvation Army for execution. The Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) is working with staff to review their draft agreement. Agreements must be signed prior to funds being committed. The environmental review process for the BID project is in progress for three potential locations prioritized by the BID for the handwashing station / restroom unit(s). A Historic Review will also be needed for each location as well. Staff will finalize and implement Subrecipient / Grantee report training, which also must occur before agreement execution.

Based on previous CD Board recommendations, staff and CD Board representatives met with Parks, Recreation & Public Lands (PRPL) staff to discuss possible uses of CDBG-CV funding in parks located in low-income areas. Some parks improvements are eligible CDBG-CV activities. Ongoing discussions with PRPL staff continue regarding possible projects.

Staff noted the CDBG-CV application process will likely reopen in December.

**American Rescue Plan – HOME-ARP Funding:** HUD released regulations that are highly complicated and complex. Due to this, the process for reviewing HUD guidance as well as developing and implementing procedures will likely be time consuming and cumbersome. CD Staff will be taking time to work through this process to create the most effective and thorough programming, as expenditure deadlines are not until September of 2030.

**Neighborhood Concerns and Happenings:** None mentioned.

**Next Meeting:** Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:50pm. A special meeting will be held on October 11, 2021. The next regular meeting will be held on November 2, 2021.