



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

### Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

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#### Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board

February 7, 2023

**Board Members Present:** Rebecca Noell, Jim Corson, Kathleen Candelaria, Shane Noble, Erica Doornek, Jenna Martin

**Board Members Excused:** James Allen

**Absent:** Joe Stockburger

**City Council Representative:** Denise Joy

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

**Announcements:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Meeting Minutes:** Board member Jim Corson moved to approve the January minutes as written and distributed. Board member Shane Noble seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and the motion to approve the January minutes was unanimously approved.

#### Staff Reports:

- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** Dina Harmon reported three closings are scheduled in February. Applications are still coming in. Following approval, many applicants are asking, "How do I find a home?" January and February are usually slow, but she is hopeful things will pick up.
- **Affordable Housing Development Program:** Dina Harmon said she met with HomeFront regarding their potential partnership with Homeword (existing CHDO) for a project in the Billings Heights.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Tam Rodier reported the Steffanich Project is moving forward.
- **CDBG-CV:** Tam Rodier said all the quarterly performance reports due in January have been approved and reimbursements processed. Projects that have been completed and closed out to date include: Alternatives (Fast-Track), Boys & Girls Club, Chinook Horses, Family Promise and the Salvation Army.
- **Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP):** Carly Collins passed out copies of the profiles for the VISTA who started service with Chinook Horses in January (Lara Koebke) and the VISTA who will start service with the Billings Police Department Domestic Violence Investigations in February (Ellie Stanton).

She received Host Site Proposals for summer VISTA projects (Eagle Mount, Wise Wonders, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Continuum of Care). Advertising will start the first week in March and she is hoping to bring on three or four summer VISTAs (8-10 week program).

She will be present at the MSU-B Virtual Career Fair in late February.

**HOME-ARP Program:** Carly Collins distributed copies of some key Service Provider Survey data and charts:

- Is your organization interested in accessing HOME-ARP funding? (Yes 55%; No 15%; Unsure 30%)
- Does your organization solicit feedback from populations served? (Yes 84%; No 16%)
- Populations organizations served over the past 12 months.
- # Individuals & Families Experiencing Homelessness served in the past 12 months. (Top 10 service agencies were Community Crisis Center, Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley, RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County Continuum of Care, Tumbleweed Runaway Program, Montana Rescue Mission, Bureau of Indian Affairs, St. Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, Angela's Piazza)
- # Individuals & Families Escaping Violence & Trafficking served over the past 12 months. (Top 5 were served by Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley, YWCA Billings, Community Crisis Center, Montana Rescue Mission. St. Vincent Healthcare)
- Handout showing the text of responses to "Unmet Service Needs."
- Ranking the need for additional funding to serve Billings' qualifying populations.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Priority – Mental Health / Substance Abuse Treatment / Accessing Housing – Case Management
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority – Transportation / Outreach Services / Homeless Services Counseling / Food
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority – Outpatient Health Services / Rental Assistance / Rental Deposit Assistance / Utility Payments

Carly said she is currently drafting the Allocation Plan. The drafted plan will be emailed to CD Board members on February 21. She asked Board members to quickly review, adopt recommended priorities, and be prepared to take action on the Plan at the March 7 CD Board meeting.

**Annual Action Plan / Proposed Activities:** Brenda Beckett said she is moving toward developing the FY 2023/2024 Annual Action Plan. She shared a copy of the draft FY 2023/2024 Community Development Proposed Activities list. Action is not yet required.

Brenda Beckett noted HomeFront submitted a CDBG/HOME application by the January 20, 2023, deadline. However, the application was clearly for an Affordable Housing Development (AHD) Project and they should have used the AHD application, not the CDBG/HOME application. Dina Harmon is providing technical assistance to HomeFront to help them understand and comply with the AHD application process. She noted that AHD applications are accepted year around; there is no deadline to apply.

**Amending Comanche Park Coronavirus Impact Project:** Tam Rodier said a new playground pod, fall protection, playground equipment, ADA parking spots, and an ADA accessible walkway to the playground will be installed in Comanche Park under a Grant Agreement previously executed with the Parks Department.

CDBG funds are available to pave any or all of the three existing gravel streets adjacent to the park (S. Plainview Street, Kalmar Drive, and S. 12<sup>th</sup> Street W). At the January meeting, the Board asked for the following before taking action at this meeting:

- Perform an eligibility assessment to ensure the service area is ≥51% residential (required by HUD). **DONE-OK.**
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment completed. **DONE-reviewing today.**
- Increase project contingency, if approved, from 10% to 20%. **Will be included in the Grant Agreement if the CD Board approves paving project today.**

The Board reviewed and discussed the paving project, cost estimates, and aerial photographs and asked a few clarifying questions of Ken Ard, Staff Engineer in the City Engineer's Office. Tam said the Board could choose to recommend the City Council allocate CDBG funding for paving all, or a portion of, the gravel streets adjacent to Comanche Park.

Board member Jim Corson moved to recommend the City Council approve the staff recommendation to pave all three streets adjacent to Comanche Park, increase contingency from 10% to 20%, and allocate CDBG funds for the project. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

**Comanche Park CPTED Recommendations:** Tam Rodier presented the assessment report and recommendations prepared by the Billings Police Department as well as costs estimates to install the recommended improvements. The CD Board could choose to recommend the City Council approve any or all of the CPTED recommendations within Comanche Park, or ask for more time to consider the CPTED assessment report and defer action until the March 7 meeting. CD Board members reviewed and discussed the recommendations.

Board member Jim Corson moved to recommend the City Council approve all the Comanche Park CPTED recommendations and allocate CDBG funds for implementing. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

#### **Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings:**

Wyeth Friday shared the following:

- The Planning and Community Services Department [2022 Annual Report](#) has been released. CD Board members may be interested in not only CD projects, but other projects as well.
- The first City / HomeFront Development Committee meeting is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 15, at HomeFront, 2415 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North. Any interested CD Board members are welcome to attend along with the CD staff and the CD Board Chair and Vice Chair.
- *The Big 5 Motel* is being rehabbed now as a sober living facility. It is located on the north side of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North just west of N. 26<sup>th</sup> St.
- He shared the CD Board's simple and concise remote participation guidance with other City department directors.

**Next Meeting:** Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:20 p.m. The next regular in-person meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on March 7, 2023.