



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

June 6, 2023

Board Members Present: Rebecca Noell, Jim Corson, Joe Stockburger, James Allen, Erica Doornek, Jenna Martin

Board Members Excused: Kathleen Candelaria

Absent: None

City Council Representative: None

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

Guests: Katy Easton, CEO of the Downtown Billings Business Improvement District, Inc. (BID)

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 3:00 p.m.

Announcements: None

Public Comment: None

Meeting Minutes: Board member Jim Corson made a motion to approve the May 2, 2023, minutes as written and distributed. Board member Joe Stockburger seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Downtown Public Handwashing Station / Restroom Project – Additional Funding Request: Katy Easton provided a historical and financial review of the project to date, then answered questions from the Board about the need for additional funding. She said the construction contract has been signed and the contractor will start the concrete demo work tomorrow. Following the demo, the contractor will do plumbing and electrical work, and then the unit will be craned onto the site and bolted down. The plan is to have it installed before the Strawberry Festival the first week in July. They plan to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony. The BID has already created a trailer to regularly clean the unit.

Wyeth said he reached out to Terri Porta, who painted the mural on the wall near where the unit will be placed. Katy added that the unit may be “wrapped” with artwork.

After reviewing the Downtown Public Handwashing Station / Restroom Project status and funding, Board member Jim Corson made a motion to direct staff to process an Agreement of Modification to the BID Grant Agreement to increase grant funding by \$75,000 and extend the time of performance to July 31, 2023. Board member Joe Stockburger seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Staff Reports:

- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** Dina Harmon reported two closings are scheduled for June 28th. There were four FTHB loan pay-offs last week.

- **Affordable Housing Development Program:** Dina Harmon said she is working on project monitoring. She just finished Southern Lights and Westchester Square; Old Town Square and Pheasant Home are in progress. Brenda said Dina monitors all projects annually. New construction projects are monitored for 20 years. Monitoring includes verification of rent limits, income limits, and a project risk assessment, etc.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Tam Rodier shared a slide show showing the Steffanich progress to date. She said the project is currently on schedule to be completed by June 30.
- **CDBG / CDBG-CV Parks Projects:** Tam gave the following project updates.
 - Comanche Park:
 - Shared a slide show showing the progress to date.
 - Playground should be completed by the end of June.
 - The street paving construction contract is routing for signatures now; it includes an October 30, 2023 completion date.
 - The CPTED improvements construction agreement is routing for signatures now; it includes a December 29, 2023 completion date.
 - North Park:
 - Parks did not receive any quotes to the direct solicitation of the Request for Quote (RFQ) for the existing restroom demo and site prep work. Public advertising June 9th and 16th.
 - New restroom anticipated to arrive late June to early July.
 - Contract has been awarded for the site improvements for adult exercise pod and existing shelter demo.
 - Exercise equipment scheduled for delivery June 29.
 - Contract has been awarded for the installation of the adult exercise equipment and new shelter.
 - Parks Accessibility Projects – Quotes due by 6/6/2023 5:00 p.m.; none received yet
 - North Park Center HVAC and accessibility improvements.
 - Restroom water intrusion mitigation and accessibility improvements.
 - Zimmerman Center accessibility improvements.
- **Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP):** Carly Collins said recruitment is slow. The deadline for a July start is June 12; the deadline for August start is July 14. She will continue recruiting for both start dates. No summer associates were successfully recruited. A couple of recommendations have been made, but no applicants have accepted yet. Other projects in the state are also having trouble recruiting.

She arranged in-service training for current VISTAs in Livingston next week. This should energize VISTAs for another successful quarter.
- **HOME-ARP Allocation Plan:** Carly Collins reported she is currently working on policies and procedures (P&P) to successfully meet the complicated regulations / requirements. Her plan is to ensure projects cannot stray off track. She had initially thought she would work on P&P and the application simultaneously. She has decided it would be best to concentrate on the P&P and have it in place before developing the application.

Carly said she invited all local service providers to a focus group session June 13th. During the session, she hopes to learn about their clients' needs, funding gaps, etc. to help guide the application process.

Carly speculated the HOME-ARP application would not be ready to release until this Fall. Once applications are received, CD Board members will review and conduct site visits before making recommendations to the City Council. Carly said about \$900,000 will be available for service providers via the application process.

CDBG Timeliness: Brenda Beckett said the City did not meet the CDBG expenditure timeliness deadline on May 2, 2023. As a result, the City is required to submit a "workout plan." HUD stipulates what must be included in the plan. She said she structured her response to address each HUD requirement. She then went through a PowerPoint presentation illustrating the plan contents and commitments to HUD. She also answered Board members' questions.

Brenda said the workout plan mentions pursuing a Crime Prevention Through Environment Design (CPTED) Program and creating affordable housing by placing modular homes on vacant infill properties, which are not within the City's 5-year Consolidated Plan. She asked the Board if they wanted her to start preparing a Substantial Amendment to add those programs. Board members agreed this was appropriate.

July Meeting: Rebecca said the July meeting has been cancelled in the past, and this year the first Tuesday of July falls on July 4. She asked if Board members wished to cancel or reschedule the meeting.

Board member Jim Corson made a motion to cancel the July 4, 2023, meeting. Board member Jenna Martin seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings: None

Next Meeting: Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:35 p.m. The next regular in-person meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on August 1, 2023.