

Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board
August 4, 2015

Board Members Present: Patt Leikam, Michele Zahn, Fred Button, Katrina Kruger, Becky Bey, Bret Rutherford

Unexcused Board Members: Nate Fawcett, Kathleen Candelaria

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Lynda Woods, Dina Harmon

Welcome / Introductions / Announcements: The Community Development Board met at its regular monthly meeting located in the 6th Floor Conference Room, Miller Building, 2825 3rd Avenue North, Billings, Montana. Chair Patt Leikam called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Patt Leikam introduced and welcomed two new Board members; Becky Bey and Bret Rutherford. Introductions were made around the room. Neil Kiner has resigned from the Community Development Board.

Public Comment: No public comment was offered.

Announcement: Beckett announced the Senate has proposed a 93% cut to the HOME program; the nation's largest program for the development of affordable housing for low income Americans. Over the past 20 years, the HOME program has funded over 1.2 million affordable housing units for households under 80% of the Area Median Income. For the State of Montana, this would mean a \$3.5 million reduction. For the City of Billings, this would take our current HOME allocation of \$263,688 to under \$18,500.

Meeting Minutes: *Katrina Kruger voted that the May meeting minutes be approved as written. Fred Button seconded. No discussion ensued and the motion carried.*

Staff Reports: The monthly reports were sent out from May and June. Staff reviewed the May report during the meeting.

- **Billings Metro VISTA Project:** The Billings Youth Connect event went well. Katrina Kruger also noted she had a friend who thought the event not only reached youth in the target range, it also reached and benefitted other people who attended. Lynda Woods acknowledged the event is expected to happen again. Patt Liekam asked how many VISTA members were currently in service and Beckett responded she thought 29 were currently on board (staff note: there are currently 27 VISTA members serving in Billings through the Billings Metro VISTA Project). Beckett noted the Summer Associates are wrapping up their service term this and next week and we will welcome three new full-year members during the City's On-Site Orientation Training on August 17, 2015.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Rehabilitation:** Lynda Woods noted the City has successfully purchased another property to renovate. She notes difficulty with the neighbors at one of the homes currently under renovation. Repeated complaints have been issued and a new Code Enforcement weeds complaint was received this week. Staff will keep the Board apprised of any major developments with this issue. The additional \$30,000 repaid to the City for the Stewart Rental Rehabilitation project has been allocated and expended on the new Custer property acquisition and rehabilitation contract. Staff does not expect additional repayments from the Rental Rehabilitation program in the future.
- **First Time Home Buyer:** The First Time Home Buyer program is currently able to assist a few more households with current funding available, even though the FY15-16 HOME allocation is completely expended. Staff has facilitated budget changes to garner an additional \$130,000 in CDBG funds to expend. Dina Harmon has closed nearly 50 homes during FY14-15. The program will still have program income to expend as it comes in for both HOME and CDBG.
- **Pheasant Home:** A certificate of occupancy is expected to be issued to close out this project!

- **Manufactured Home Repair:** Three projects are near completion and no additional applications have been received to date. Staff has approximately \$30,000 allocated to assist new applicants for this program at present.
- **Housing Rehabilitation:** There are five projects getting ready to close. Staff is having difficulty garnering new contractors as they are now required to register with the SAM.gov website to receive federal funds through the home repair programs, as staff is required to check on the debarment status of all contractors who enter into agreements utilizing federal funds. The process is lengthy, confusing and contractors have noted the information required is intrusive. Staff has appealed to HUD for guidance on applicability for these third-party contracts and received confirmation that the contractors must register with SAM.gov. Currently, only four contractors are actively bidding on home repair projects.
- **Uniform Physical Condition Standards** - A staff member has completed a training program to learn about this new HOME requirement through a public housing authority online learning system. Staff went this route because HUD has informed City staff that they are required to utilize this new housing conditions standard and that guidance would be forthcoming. This standard took effect in January 2014 and HUD has not issued guidance or training on this standard to date. Dina Harmon notes the standards are more detailed than our previous Housing Quality Standard.

Neighborhood Concerns and Happenings: Fred Button reported on the happenings at Habitat for Humanity; they just completed a wall raising event. There is also a building event scheduled to begin this fall at the parking lot near the Habitat ReStore. The project will later be placed on Jordan Circle. A Habitat project was recently assisted through the First Time Home Buyer program. Costs are rising and it's becoming more difficult to raise funds for these housing projects. Michelle Zahn mentioned that Phillips 66 will be sponsoring their meet and greet event on September 10, 2015 from 5:00pm to 7:00pm. There will be many community organizations in attendance.

Community Development Board Member Orientation: Staff reviewed a PowerPoint presentation (see attached).

September Meeting: Discussion ensued regarding Board responsibilities and duties required for this meeting. *Fred Button moved that the September meeting be cancelled. Katrina Kruger seconded the motion. Motion carried.*

Patt Leikam adjourned the meeting and the next meeting is set for October 6, 2015.