



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

February 28, 2022

12:00 p.m.

Virtual

Approved: March 21, 2022

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Robyn Davis called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

Roll Call and Introductions

Members present: Blanca Ruckert (12:21 p.m.), JoAnn Miller, Alex Johnson II (left 1:03 p.m.), Melissa Murphy (left 1:06 p.m.), Josiah Blaisdell, Roosevelt Gray, Robyn Davis, Courtney Stubbs, and Steph Nappa.

Members absent: Kenny Larson.

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments Business Grants

12:05 p.m.

Planner II Beth Frelander and Planner III Anne Catlin introduced the agenda item and spoke about having Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) manage the City's CDBG small business grant program. Sandra Easdale and Anne Whittington from OCWCOG spoke about their organization's small business lending program and potential partnerships with CDBG funds.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Melissa Murphy, Catlin said it is up to the commission and OCWCOG to figure out the commission's level of involvement in selecting applicants. Catlin said those details could be figured out later and this meeting is to gauge interest from both parties in moving forward. Murphy said she has enjoyed interviewing businesses in the past and, though she believes there is a role for OCWCOG in this process, does not want to give away that role.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Josiah Blaisdell, Catlin said there is no requirement under CDBG that the job created by a business, using CDBG dollars, pays a living wage.

Commissioner Steph Nappa noted she is employed by OCWCOG and said she supports OCWCOG managing the CDBG small business grants. Nappa continued, saying she would like to see applicants come before the commission, though she believes it would be a lower barrier for the commission to set criteria and have OCWCOG say if an individual is eligible or not.

Commissioner Roosevelt Gray said he supports OCWCOG managing the grants and coming to the commission for final approval. Catlin and Murphy spoke about CDBG income limits and job creation requirements.

Commissioner Courtney Stubbs said she wants to make sure grants from this program go to businesses that will last. Murphy requested staff bring a list of businesses who have been awarded these funds in the past.

2022 Application Evaluation

12:38 p.m.

Beth Frelander introduced the agenda item, read a response from Albany Helping Hands to the question they had left blank on the original application, and noted she had earlier forwarded answers to commissioner's other questions of applicants. Frelander shared an excel sheet* which had commissioner's scores of applications and a list of applicants with their financial ask.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Robyn Davis, Catlin said that since Davis' wife is applying to a position at DevNW, it would make sense for Davis to be recused from the DevNW scoring. Catlin noted that Nappa, who works for OCWCOG, did not submit scores for that agency's application.

Commissioners discussed their scoring of applications and discussed how to allocate the CDBG social service funding.

After discussion, commissioners agreed applicants should not be asked to answer questions from the application left blank. Commissioners also agreed that only high-scoring applications should be funded and spoke about funding Jackson Street and Family Tree Relief Nursery at a high level and potentially OCWCOG and CARDV at lower levels. Commissioners were open to hearing staff report back how much leftover CARES Act funding could be used to cover the request from YMCA.

Freelander said she would bring back different funding options to the next meeting based on requests by commissioners.

Commissioner JoAnn Miller proposed fully funding the two or three applications with the highest scores. Chair Blanca Ruckert agreed with fully funding the top applications. Blaisdell said he is torn between fully funding the top two applications or spreading the funding around more.

Nappa and Davis supported allocating 80 percent funding each to Jackson Street, Family Tree Relief Nursery, OCWCOG, and CARDV, and split any remaining funds between Jackson Street and Family Tree. Gray said he agrees with the proposal but would fund CARDV at 75 percent since it scored lower.

Ruckert said this item will be taken up again at the next meeting when the commission will hopefully have a number for an official allocation.

Business from the Public

1:23 p.m.

None.

Business from the Commission

1:23 p.m.

None.

Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, March 21, 2022.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Blanca Ruckert adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

signature on file

signature on file

Gabriel Shepherd
Recorder

Beth Freelander
Planner II

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@cityofalbany.net.*