



MINUTES

March 21, 2022

12:00 p.m.

Virtual

Approved: April 18, 2022

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Robyn Davis called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Roll Call and Introductions

Members present: JoAnn Miller, Alex Johnson II, Josiah Blaisdell, Roosevelt Gray, Robyn Davis, Courtney Stubbs, and Steph Nappa

Members absent: Melissa Murphy (excused), Blanca Ruckert,, Kenny Larson

Minutes

12:03 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Josiah Blaisdell moved to approve the January 24, 2022, February 7, 2022, and February 28, 2022, minutes as presented. Commissioner Roosevelt Gray seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

2022 CDBG Draft Allocations

12:04 p.m.

Planner II Beth Frelander introduced the agenda item while presenting the CDC funding options excel spreadsheet that was included in the agenda packet. Frelander explained the options were based on anticipated funding from HUD and indicated HUD has not provided a definitive amount.

Vice-Chair Davis suggested choosing the Tiered Option 1 for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Planner III Anne Catlin asked Frelander how much CARES Act funds are available to reallocate. Frelander answered saying the funds that are still available for allocation are included in the spreadsheet and do not represent a large source of funds at this time. Frelander also indicated there may be additional CARES Act funds if those still spending CARES Act funds cannot use all the funds they have been allocated.

Commissioners JoAnn Miller, Alex Johnson II, Josiah Blaisdell, Roosevelt Gray, and Steph Nappa all agreed with choosing the Tiered Option 1.

Motion: Commissioner Alex Johnson II moved to approve allocating funding as presented in Option 1; Commissioner Steph Nappa seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Catlin noted these figures were tentative until the City receives its allocation. She asked if the commission wanted to meet again and discuss the allocations if the actual HUD allocation exceeds a certain amount. Commissioner Blaisdell agreed with meeting again to discuss the allocations if there is a 10 percent increase for the public services amount. Commissioners Johnson II, Gray, and Davis supported that suggestion.

Motion Amended: After discussion and approval by both Johnson II and Nappa, the motion was amended to include a contingency if the HUD allocation is 10 percent or more than what is anticipated the CDC will meet to revisit the subrecipient grant allocations. Nappa agreed to the amendment. The commission passed the motion with the amendment 7-0.

Frelander spoke of the second part of the allocations, which is funding the non-public service applications – with a request from DevNW for the housing rehab program and City Parks and Recreation Department for the sport court. Frelander also spoke about the carryover funds that could be used for small business grants.

Vice-Chair Davis recused herself from voting on the allocation of non-public service funding.

March 21, 2022

Nappa said if the commission receives the anticipated amount listed in the spreadsheet, she supports using the funds for both DevNW and City Parks and Recreation projects in full. Nappa expressed hesitancy to allocate remaining funds to a small business grant program when no one submitted a proposal and was curious about other opportunities for the funds.

Catlin explained the existing carryover funds are already designated to a small business grant program, but there hasn't been activity. Catlin noted any remaining (2022) funds could be added to this small business program. Catlin recommended trying the grant program through Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG).

Commissioner Blaisdell agreed there was an interest for the small business grant program at February's meeting, but there was a question of the amount of control the commission has or if the control would be with OCWCOG to choose the applicants. Davis agreed with Blaisdell's comment.

Commissioner Gray spoke of being in favor of a small business grant program especially if the funds cannot be used elsewhere.

Blaisdell questioned whether the funds could be used as a competitive pot and if the commission would be able to choose the applicants. Freelander explained the commission will need to have a discussion on how they would like to move that program forward, but they have seen businesses have more success with a rolling application instead of a single, competitive application.

Commissioner Johnson II spoke of the long-standing relationship with OCWCOG, and he would not have a problem if they managed the program.

The commission, except for Vice-Chair Davis, unanimously agreed to funding both DevNW and the City Parks and Recreation projects and the small business program with the contingency that the commission will have a discussion about the rollout and approval process.

Senate Bill 5561 Funding

12:29 p.m.

Anne Catlin introduced the agenda item and gave background information about Senate Bill 5561. Catlin ask the CDC if they would help the council determine how to allocate the funding to address affordable housing needs, housing insecurity, and homelessness. The commission supported taking on the role. Catlin shared a suggested process and gave an overview of each step.

Davis stated it was a good process but questioned how it would fit with other housing programs in the City. Blaisdell questioned whether this process would affect the commission's goals for the next five years since they are set to redo those this year. Catlin clarified the money is from the state and not HUD and does not affect the next CDBG five-year plan. Johnson II thinks the proposed process is the fairest way to determine funding.

Commissioner Blaisdell asked if the housing authority helps individuals purchase a home. Catlin replied that the Linn-Benton Housing Authority and DevNW both have programs that help individuals save money to buy homes and could apply for these funds, and Habitat for Humanity might request money to help with their programs. Catlin noted funds would not go to individuals directly but could be with an agency.

Commissioner Miller questioned how the Senate Bill 5561 funding and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds work together to which Catlin replied saying the city council already decided how to spend the ARPA funds. Senate Bill 5561 funding is specifically for housing insecurity, lack of affordable housing, and homelessness. Catlin explained the ARPA funds were geared towards recovering from the impacts of the pandemic and were not housing specific.

Catlin asked the commission what information staff should bring to the next meeting. Miller requested a timeline of how to spend the funding as well as different entities Catlin spoke about and existing shelter services.

March 21, 2022

Blaisdell questioned the percentage of people needing housing currently and how many organizations are serving registered sex offenders.

Johnson II asked if (constructing) accessory dwelling units (ADUs) would qualify for funding. Catlin answered saying it's about the affordability of the dwelling unit and ensuring that the ADU is being rented to lower income occupants.

Vice-Chair Davis added it would be good to see and discuss the broad categories of affordable housing.

Business from the Public**1:02 p.m.**

None.

Business from the Commission**1:02 p.m.**

Staff asked the commission if they would like to switch the meetings to a hybrid format or stay virtual. The commission supported switching to the hybrid option and meeting in the council chambers.

Commissioner Blaisdell questioned whether the commission would meet if the anticipated CDC funds from HUD were less than 10 percent. Davis responded saying that if the funds were less than 10 percent, the commission would proceed with Tiered Option 1, which Catlin confirmed.

Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, April 18, 2022.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Vice-Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 1:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

signature on file

Jessica Valentino
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

signature on file

Beth Frelander
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.*