



## Community Development Council (CDC) Meeting Minutes

March 7, 2011

Great Falls Civic Center, Rainbow Room

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Shannon Hoiland called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. and took roll call.

Roll Call	
Community Development Council Members:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tina Cubbage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Darren Fike
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shannon Hoiland
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steve Hurin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carrie Koppy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Aaron Kueffler
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susan McCord
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robert Rudeseal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maria Valandra, chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sandie Wright

### Others Present:

Chris Imhoff, City of Great Falls (City) Planning & Community Development Department, CDBG/HOME grant administrator

Wendy Thomas, City Planning & Community Development Department, deputy director

Melanie Lattin, City Planning & Community Development Department, grants assistant

### A. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Susan McCord made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2011, and February 23, 2011, CDC meetings, Steve Hurin seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved as written.

### B. Public Comment (agenda items)

No members of the public were present.

### C. CDC Discussion

Chris Imhoff reminded the group that while determining their CDBG funding recommendations they should work within the parameters of knowing the City Commission had: (1) acted to allocate \$332,000 to the Upper & Lower River Road Water & Sewer District (ULRRWSD) public facility project; and, (2) adopted percentages for the allocation of funding for the upcoming year that should be adhered

to as closely as possible. Those percentages include 20% for administration and 15% for public services projects.

In response to a question of whether the CDC can choose to not fund a project at any level, the members were informed they have that option and that if they choose to exercise it, they should be able to present their reasoning for such a decision to the City Commission when they give their funding recommendation presentation. The CDC was further informed if there is money remaining after they have decided the funding levels for all proposed projects, that money would go into the un-programmed funds account and be used in the next funding cycle or at the discretion of the Grants Administrator in coordination with the City Manager or City Commission in accord with the City's HUD Consolidated Plan.

The CDC questioned staff regarding their ability to recommend allocating more money for a project than the agency requested on the application. It was discussed that this has not been done in the past and it was a precedent the group did not wish to set.

The CDC was aware of the need to consider the possibility of several different scenarios of CDBG funding reduction, dependent on what Congress passes in the next several weeks. Chris Imhoff noted the possibility of a 10%, 20%, or 63% reduction in funding has been suggested. The CDC decided it would determine funding recommendations for two situations: 1) receiving the same level of funding as the previous year, and 2) receiving a 20% reduction in funding compared to last year.

1. If the same level of funding as last year is received

The group chose to start discussing specific projects in the Economic Development and Affordable Housing categories.

Great Falls Development Authority: The CDC noted the applicant has not spent any of its 2010/2011 allocation. The City Commission policy is to not fund any projects that are not 75% completed by March 31 unless there are extenuating circumstances. The CDC noted the needs of the community are so great and questioned if they could justify funding a project that has not used its funds from the previous year. It was clarified the GFDA revolving loan fund was designed to create jobs for low income people. The possibility that the existing loan fund of \$50,000 may not be large enough to make the loans was discussed. Consensus was reached to not fund the project at any level.

City Water & Sewer Loan Program: Program funds are used to install or repair lines from the city main to the house. Habitat for Humanity refers many people to this program. The aspects of the project which are appealing is that it is a revolving loan fund so will help people into the future and it directly benefits low income people. For the upcoming year the funds would be used to install new lines as part of the ongoing ULRRWSD project. In the future the program funds could be used anywhere in the city limits. Consensus was reached to fund at full amount.

GF City Rehabilitation Specialist: Consensus was reached to fund at the full amount requested.

Neighborhood Housing Services: The application is to fund a revolving loan program with a proven track record of helping people with low to moderate incomes. CDBG funding is the agency's only truly flexible funding source. Consensus was reached to fund with the remaining funds left in the affordable housing category (a minimal reduction compared to the requested amount).

The CDC determined that once the City Rehabilitation Specialist project has been funded at 100% (\$63,600), the remainder of the money in the Affordable Housing category should go to the City Water & Sewer Program at 28.6% (\$60,000) and to Neighborhood Housing Services at 71.4% (\$148,950) of the remaining funds. These two percentages are proportionate to the amount the agencies requested.

The CDC started the discussion of the applications in the Public Service category by querying if all members present were in agreement to fully fund the five highest ranked projects at the amount requested. Consideration was given to whether any of the agencies noted during their presentations that a project could be accomplished with less funding than requested.

Agency on Aging: Consensus was fund at full amount.

Young Parents Education Center: Consensus was to fund at full amount.

CASA-CAN: The request for funding conference expenses for volunteers was questioned. The presenter had noted that paid attendance at out of town conferences was given to reward and show appreciation for the volunteers. CASA-CAN has no requirement that volunteers share the information learned with those who did not attend. The CDC noted that most conferences are taped and provide the option of purchasing videotapes. Although the CDC thinks the volunteers do excellent work and their service is valuable, the cost of the conferences was not seen as directly benefiting low income people. Consensus was to fund training materials, continuing education and a computer but not the conference fees of \$2,900.

Farm in the Dell: Consensus was to fund at full amount.

Quality Life Concepts: Consensus was to fund at full amount.

Rural Dynamics: Lengthy discussion was held questioning the nature of the scholarships and whether CDBG funds would go toward paying salaries rather than directly benefitting low income people. The CDC members want funding to benefit low income people and think it is important all applications for proposed projects clearly delineate specifically how many low income people will be assisted. The CDC supports the City Commission CDBG policy of not funding staff salaries for private non-profit agencies. As requested, Rural Dynamics provided additional information after the

presentation that clarified the intended use of CDBG funds. Initially, there was a charge for a consultation but as the program developed funding was secured so no fee had to be charged. However, the funding is no longer available and they will now have to re-institute a fee. The CDC recognized Rural Dynamics as a gateway agency, just like the Agency on Aging, helping people network to fill needs beyond the services the particular agency provides.

Great Falls Senior Citizens Center: The application reflects the agency would leverage CDBG funds at 100%. Some concern was expressed about the fact that people of all income levels can eat there. It was noted the people pay for their meals and this money goes back to the agency's operational budget to buy more food and to keep the Senior Center open. Consensus was to fund at full amount but with all the money going toward purchasing food and not for equipment or other supplies.

HANDS: The CDC discussed the financial information submitted with the application. It was noted no information was included about their foundation. This information had been provided in previous applications. The agency has many funding sources. Consensus was to fund at some level but to discuss the remaining projects and then return to this project to set the level.

Child Care Solutions: This agency serves a different clientele than HANDS and Young Parents. It was noted that the availability of "Safe Place" child care scholarships provides an incentive to help parents return to work. Most members thought the "Safe Place" scholarships do not have another funding source and would not be able to provide that program without CDBG funds.

Cascade County Law Clinic: At the presentation the agency said they could reduce the requested amount by \$500 as they can do without a desktop computer and the cost of the Canon scanner system could be reduced to \$4,450. Consensus was to fund at \$5,200 (\$4,450 for the scanner and \$750 for the laptop computer).

Paris Gibson Square: Programming does not serve only low income people or seniors. The agency has done income surveying for only three months. If a class is for seniors only there is no fee; if the class is open to the whole community there is a fee. Concern was expressed whether the equipment would serve a certain clientele. Consensus was to fund purchase of 1 pottery wheel (\$2,100) with the caveat it must be restricted to use by handicapped, disabled or low income people for one year, \$1,000 for adaptive equipment and \$2,100 for VSA program supplies. The CDC strongly recommended the agency do income surveying throughout the year before applying next year so they will have income information.

The discussion returned to Child Care Solutions and HANDS. Although one member continued to have reservations about Child Care Solutions, it was determined to fund both agencies at the full amount requested.

Consensus was reached that the remaining funding from the unfunded Great Falls Development Authority application (\$50,000) and from the three Public Service projects, which were reduced by \$8,713, should go into un-programmed funding.

2. If a 20% reduction from the level of last year's funding is received

The CDC then discussed what level of funding to recommend if a 20% reduction in funding actually transpired.

The ULRRW&SD project must be funded at the full amount (\$332,000).

20% of the funding would go to CDBG program administration.

No funding would be recommended in the Economic Development category.

In the Affordable Housing category, the City Rehabilitation Specialist should be funded at 100% (\$63,600), the City Water & Sewer Program should receive \$35,578 and Neighborhood Housing Services should receive \$88,822. The last two amounts are based on proportionate share reduction of the funding —28.6% and 71.4%, respectively—allocated in the 100% funding recommendation option above.

The only change in the Public Services category would be a lesser amount recommended to HANDS (\$8,909) and Child Care Solutions (\$13,125). It was seen that giving more to Child Care Solutions would allow them to serve seven low income families and that HANDS has alternative funding resources.

It was not determined for certain who would be presenting the recommendations at the City Commission meeting on March 15 at 7 p.m. Maria Valandra was not present and Susan McCord has a board meeting that night. Shannon Hoiland will check her schedule and contact Chris Imhoff.

The CDC was thanked for their service.

**D. Public Comment** (any public matter not on agenda but within agency jurisdiction)

No members of the public were present.

**E. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes approved: March 14, 2011