

*** All present are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with our City's Core Values ***



OFFICIAL NOTICE AND AGENDA

of a meeting of a City Board, Commission, Department, Committee, Agency, Corporation, Quasi-Municipal Corporation, or sub-unit thereof.

Meeting: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Date/Time: Thursday, November 3, 2016 at 4:30 p.m.
Location: Board Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 407 Grant Street
Members: Bohlken, Freiberg, Thao, Reif, S. Ackerman, D. Ackerman, Olafsson, Campbell, Peckham Jackson, and Lenz

AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION (Note: All agenda items may be acted upon)

- 1 Call to order
- 2 Approval of September 29, 2016 and October 5, 2016 minutes
- 3 Development of a proposed statement of objectives and use of funds in connection with the City of Wausau Consolidated Plan for the 2016 Community Development Department Block Grant Program
- 4 Adjourn

Bruce Bohlken (Chair)

This notice was posted at City Hall and emailed to the media on 10/27/16

Questions regarding this agenda may be directed to the Community Development Office, (715)261-6680.

It is possible that members of, and possibly a quorum of the Council and/or members of other committees of the Common Council of the City of Wausau may be in attendance at the above-mentioned meeting to gather information. **No action will be taken by any such groups.**

Please note that, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids & services. For information or to request this service, contact the City Clerk at (715) 261-6620.

Other Distribution: Media, Alderpersons, Mayor and Department Heads

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Time and Place: The Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee met on Thursday, September 29, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room of City Hall

Members Present: Chairman Bohlken, Freiberg, S. Ackerman, Thao, Campbell, D. Ackerman, Peckham, Lenz, and Jackson

Members Excused: Reif and Olafsson

Others Present: Ed Wilson, Salvation Army; Erica Huffman, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin; Connie Umstead and Dan Mills, Catholic Charities; Allen Wesolowski and Eric Lindman, City of Wausau Engineering Department; Deb Ryan, Westies' Neighborhood Association; Christian Schock, Travis Lepinski and Tammy Stratz, Community Development staff

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the Daily Herald in the proper manner.

(1) **Call to Order and Introductions**

Chairman Bruce Bohlken called the meeting to order at 4:30. Introductions of both the committee members and citizens attending the meeting were made.

(2) **PUBLIC HEARING to receive comments on the program performance and the 2017 Annual Plan for Community Development Block Grant and Public Housing.**

Allen Wesolowski, City Engineering Department, spoke first. Their proposal requests \$125,000 to be used towards to replacement of deteriorated sidewalks and installing ADA compliant crosswalks in income-qualifying census tracts. A map of the proposed are was supplied in the Summary Page for the committee to see – a majority along Sherman Street from S. 3rd Avenue to S. 13th Ave and also along 7th Street from Forest Street to East Wausau Avenue. The funding will assist approximately 130 residential properties – no commercial properties. Only 25% of the cost of the sidewalk replacement will be billed back to the owner – or approximately \$30 per square in front of their house. The life-span of the sidewalk was questioned and Wesolowski responded that the contractor's must guarantee the work for three years.

Connie Umstead, Catholic Charities, operates the Project Step Up Program which is available to all of Marathon County residents. However, the majority of the families that are assisted are Wausau residents – currently only one family resides outside of the city limits. These families' income falls under the 50% of the County Median Income. Project Step Up works one on one with families to learn budgeting, credit repair, how to save, banking education, goal setting and financial organization, to name a few. The program also offers quarterly group events for the entire family - such as back to school shopping and Health Meal preparation. On a given time, 20 families are enrolled, equating to assisting about 30 families in a year. Each family is enrolled for approximately one year, but several come back just to ask follow up questions or to just touch base. Project Step Up works with other agencies such as the Salvation Army, Neighbor's Place, Women's Community and Community Development. The key to a successful program is the case management and relationship building with each family which allows the program to have over an 80% success rate.

Ed Wilson, Salvation Army, operates the Transitional Living Center at the Salvation Army. When he came to work at the Salvation Army, he saw several different areas the center could improve. The first one was increasing the stay time from the 90 days. In many cases, three months is not enough time to get a person to overcome the obstacles they may have to get back on their feet. The other was having the center closed from 7:00 a.m through 4:00 p.m. This didn't allow persons who worked second or third shift to get any sleep or they couldn't accept a job during those shift times. The other was additional case

managers to offer one-on-one assistance. Now the center is open 24/7, a person can stay longer than 90 days as long as they are working towards their goals, and there is more one-on-one case management. The shelter also offers a healthy dinner every day vs. fast food. They also changed their view on addiction. Previously if a client was caught using, they were kicked out of the program for 30 days. Now, they work with them so that the client doesn't want to fall back into the bad habit. With working on more case management, the percentage of clients who found and keep permanent housing jumped from 13% - 47%. The request of \$25,000 would assist in the ability to increase their case managers from two to four. This would enable them to help more clients in a better capacity.

Dan Mills, Catholic Charities, operates a new Pilot program called Beyond Shelter which started in operation this past July. This program provides long term housing for three chronically, homeless males. Catholic Charities rents a house in which each male has their own lockable bedroom and shares the kitchen, living room and bathrooms. The three males that were chose to start this program were referred by The Warming Shelter and were listed by the State of Wisconsin as the most chronically homeless males with the highest failure rate to remain housed. All of them have addiction issues of which the program assists them in breaking the habit with the caveat that if they fall back into the bad habit, staff is there to pick them back up and start moving forward again. The goal is to make the tenant want to overcome the addiction and not want to use again. One of the males is the city's longest homeless man in the City of Wausau. He states he has been homeless for over six years. They also have had their first success story with a gentleman getting a job and being able to afford his own place. All of the men have been very excited to have their own place to live and they have become a family – looking out for each other and being moral support for each other. This program has been so successful already and they are hoping to find other houses to be able to assist more people. The \$10,000 they are requesting for this program will assist with the rent and utility payments of the home.

Travis Lepinski, Community Development Department, discussed the Hand in Hand Housing Program. This pilot program started last year with funding towards the case management for homeless families who were placed in our Short Street apartment building. These tenants are referred from Salvation Army, Women's Community or Catholic Charities. Tenants receive approximately 6 months of free rent as long as they are working with case managers from one of these organizations so they learn how to better their situation and can afford to find long-term housing. The case managers not only work with the families while they are staying at Short Street, but continue to work with them after they move into other housing – helping them to continue to succeed in staying in their home. The request of \$20,000 is to continue to assist with the cost of case management for approximately eight Short Street tenants.

Deb Ryan, City of Wausau resident, stated that there is a high need for rental assistance in the community and the need to continue those programs is a must.

(3) **Close of Public Hearing.**

With no other comments regarding the 2017 Annual Plan for Community Development Block Grant Funding, the public hearing was closed.

(4) **PUBLIC HEARING to receive comments on the re-programming of Community Development Block Grant Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program (program income funds) into Neighborhood Revitalization Program.**

Stratz referred to the memo that was part of the agenda packet that was previously posted. The memo discussed the CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization funds that were set aside for the development of the Longfellow Neighborhood Tot Lot. There is approximately \$54,000 in that fund with the proposed budget for the new tot lot to be around \$75,000 - \$80,000. This past year staff has seen over \$140,000 in loan repayments through the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program with an additional \$300,000 in new funds. The waiting list has dwindled down to around four people on it and the contractors have been extremely busy so it has been difficult to obtain bids. Therefore, Stratz is recommending that we reprogram \$30,000 from the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program into the Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds. She indicated that if there are any funds remaining from that \$30,000 after the tot lot is done, the money can convert back into the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program.

Bohlken asked if the unused funds could stay in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program fund instead of reverting back to Homeowner Rehabilitation. Stratz indicated it could be handled whichever way the committee recommended. Ryan indicated she as the President of the Westies' Neighborhood Association, she would like that is stayed in the Neighborhood Revitalization Fund. Freiberg moved to reprogram \$30,000 from the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan fund into the Neighborhood Revitalization Fund with the stipulation that whatever funds that are not needed towards the Tot Lot, would stay in the Neighborhood Revitalization Fund. Peckham seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

(5) **Close of Public Hearing**

With no other comments to come towards the committee, the public hearing was closed.

(6) **Approval of August 31, 2016 minutes.**

S. Ackerman moved to approve the August 31, 2016 minutes as written. Peckham seconded. Motioned approved unanimously.

(7) **Re-allocation of program funds: Program income Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program into Neighborhood Revitalization Program**

This item was addressed during the public hearing.

With no other business to come before the committee, D. Ackerman moved to adjourn the meeting and Campbell seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce Bohlken
Chairman

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Time and Place: The Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room of City Hall

Members Present: Chairman Bohlken, Freiberg, S. Ackerman, Reif, Thao, D. Ackerman, Olafsson, Peckham, and Jackson

Members Excused: Campbell and Lenz

Others Present: Sarah Westberg and Anne Drow of The Open Door; Linda Koepke and Jerry Lyon of Big Brothers Big Sisters; Becky Zoromski of WATEA Wheels to Work; Maria Coakly and Erica Huffman of Children's Hospital of WI Community Services; Yee Leng Xiong, Fong Moua, Toulee Her and Johnny Xiong of Hmong American Center, Inc.; Christian Schock, Travis Lepinski and Tammy Stratz, Community Development staff

In compliance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and received by the Daily Herald in the proper manner.

(1) **Call to Order and Introductions**

Chairman Bruce Bohlken called the meeting to order at 4:30. Introductions of both the committee members and citizens attending the meeting were made.

(2) **PUBLIC HEARING to receive comments on the program performance and the 2017 Annual Plan for Community Development Block Grant and Public Housing.**

Erica Huffman and Maria Coakly of Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Community Services was first to come before the public hearing. They have been providing In-home care and education for over 27 years and are geared towards low income households with pre-school and school aged children. Through these programs, parents learn good parenting skills, how to support in their children's development, how to improve/maintain their children healthy which will also increase the family self-sufficiency and improve their parent/children relationships. Through their programs they were able to assist new mom's expecting their first child, parents of newborns through age 5 (as long as they were enrolled by the age of 1), and families with children with social and emotional challenges but were told there was a gap for anybody who needed help as long as they had children, income qualified and lived in the City of Wausau. They thanked the committee for the past year's support from CDBG because it did help fill that gap. The goal is to serve up to 20 families annually. This program just started this past July and already there is a waiting list. With the additional funds, they plan to increase their number of families from 6 to 20. The families are enrolled in the program for 12 weeks. So there is a definite start and end date so they can move on to the other families that are on the waiting list. These funding would be able to increase a ½ time position to enable them to increase their enrollment to the 20 families.

Becky Zoromski, from Wisconsin Automotive & Truck Education Association (WATEA) and the Wheels to Work program provides transportation assistance to low income clients. Wheels to Work takes donated vehicles, make necessary repairs and then sells them at a discounted price at a zero percent loan to clients that go through the Wheels to Work program. Clients must participate in three financial education and one vehicle maintenance classes before they received their vehicle. The loan is then amortized out to make the payment affordable. They also provide a vehicle repair program for income qualified households that assists with the repairs at a discounted price. Again, the client has to participate in the Financial and Automotive classes before they can benefit from this assistance. Previously, funding was through WETAP – and in the past CDBG had assisted. This coming year WETAP has changed the income limits for clients from up to 200% of poverty to under 150% of poverty. This income bracket makes it almost impossible to afford a car loan. CDBG funds could assist clients that fall between the 150% and 200% of poverty so this program can helps those that will fall through the

WETAP gaps but qualify under CDBG. Historically, only 1/3 of the WATEA clients fall under that 150% poverty level.

Linda Koepke from Big Brothers Big Sisters spoke next. She introduced Jerry Lyon as their new Executive Director. She thanks the committee for their past support. With the CDBG assistance, their agency was able to serve 315 kids past year with the goal of meeting that again in 2017. The littles that benefit from this program typically have emotional and financial struggles. Last year 14% of the kids had parents that were incarcerated. Having a positive adult role model in their life truly makes a difference. Currently there are 90 littles on the waiting list. They have a strong partnership in the Wausau School District that helps identify children in need. Each match is monitored by a case manager which insures that the match continues to be a good fit and the child feels safe and content. Each match costs approximately \$654 a year and if funding is cut, the number of matches that can be assisted is cut. This year marks their 40th anniversary assisting kids in the Wausau area.

Anne Drow and Sarah Westberg of Open Door was next to speak. This is their first time to request funding from CDBG funds. The program works with recently released people from jail and helps them find housing, jobs, a meal, clothes, sobriety, whatever their needs are to better themselves and break the cycle that gets them into trouble. The first year they opened their door, they were able to assist 400 people. This last year they saw over 2300 people. They have operated their program strictly through donations and volunteers. They open at 5:00 a.m. daily to assist those when they are released from jail to help those that are in need of assistance. Open Door is looking to start a new program called Challenge Program which is a 15-month long program that teaches soft skills for both housing and employment, work on PTSD issues, sobriety issues, etc. This program is a mentoring program that matches a client with a mentor to work through their issues. They do collaborate with all the local agencies – Neighbor's Place, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, etc. This program will be operated by volunteers. The funding they are requesting will go towards rent and utilities.

Yee Leng Xiong from the Hmong American Center spoke next. They are requesting funding for their Youth Programs Coordinator Position who oversees the Y.E.S. (Empowering Youth towards Educational Success) and H.M.O.N.G. (Help Making Our Next Generation) Programs for the Hmong youth. The first Hmong refugee came to Wausau 40 years ago. The goal of the Wausau Area Hmong Mutual Association (WAHMA) was key to assist these families finding housing, translating, finding jobs, acclimating to their new community. Now the needs have changed and WAHMA had to change with it. Their name has changed to the Hmong American Center and their goals are not focusing on the Hmong children to help them complete their education, preserve the Hmong culture, teach leadership skills, and provide mentoring for struggling kids. They discovered that many Hmong males do not go on to higher education because they lack the confidence and drive. Many drop out of high school or just get whatever job they can get after graduation. The H.M.O.N.G. program helps boost their confidence and find their voice and abilities that help gain confidence to show they are capable of doing better things. The youth advisory board teaches leadership qualities and also requires them to mentor the younger kids. This program helps preserve the HMONG culture. They are finding that many of the youth no longer speak the Hmong language and are not able to speak to their own parents – this creates a huge disconnect between the generations. The Y.E.S. Program provides extra guidance with homework and school skills. It provides space and computers for the kids to come after school so they can work on homework. The Y.E.S. program concentrates on kids whose G.P.A. is falling under a 3.0. Xiong stated that the Boys and Girls Club is another great avenue for kids; however, they do not teach the Hmong culture and they have a difficult time recruiting Hmong mentors due to language barriers.

Fong Moua discussed his success with the program. He wasn't the best student but participating in the H.M.O.N.G. program, he found his confidence and joined the ReUnited Dance Group, learned the importance of community service, teamwork and how important their culture is and should be preserved.

Johnny Xiong stated that through these programs he is now enrolled in the Criminal Justice Program at Northcentral Technical College. Before joining ReUnited Dance Group, he was feeling disconnected with his family and becoming depressed. These groups gave him purpose and understanding that his life is important and he confidence to go onto school.

Toukee Her stated that before joining these groups he wasn't very outgoing and would just go from school to home. He had no purpose or drive. But after joining, he found out that participating in events not only gave him a purpose but found out that they were fun. He met community leaders and

now has a goal of becoming a leader himself.

Yee Leng Xiong continued that many of the enrollees come from broken families. Currently they have approximately 60 kids throughout the year. They provide the support many of these kids are seeking. Xiong, himself, is a past participant of these programs. Like the youth that just spoke, he learned confidence and leadership skills. He is now a County Board Member for Marathon County as well as on the School Board. He was appointed the coordinator for the youth programs and has been working with the Hmong American Center Board to get the center running better after hitting some hard times. Of the \$25,000 grant request, \$23,000 would go towards staffing and the remaining would go towards transportation for the kids.

Tammy Stratz, Community Development Manager, spoke regarding funding towards the Blight Elimination Program. This is a program that had not received any new funding for the past couple of year due to the fact that there was some older funding that needed to be utilized before requesting more. All of those funds were utilized late last year. Funding for this program can assist the City in several ways. It can acquire blighted properties, which in turn will be either demolished or rehabilitated and then resold. It can help with testing and/or clean-up of blighted/contaminated properties. In the past we have been able to purchase blighted properties and demolish the buildings, leaving a clean slate in which we were able to rebuild. The request of \$50,000 could potentially assist in the acquisition of one to two properties dependent on the acquisition/clean-up costs. If the property has the ability to be rehabilitated, staff could utilize other federal funds to assist with the rehab costs.

Tammy Stratz, Community Development Manager, spoke regarding funding for Economic Development Program activity. This is a program that has received funding in the past at a much lower request. The City works with McDevco to utilize these funds. McDevco is the economic development arm for the City and County and works with many new businesses or businesses that are looking to expand. There are several loan programs that are funded with CDBG – the Micro-Loan Program which assists up to \$25,000 towards the acquisition of equipment for start-up or expanding buildings; the Women and Minority Loan Program which assists with an unsecured \$2,500 loan; the Incubator Loan Program which assists with new businesses located in the Wausau West Entrepreneurial & Education Center; and a larger loan pool for over \$25,000 that can assist with the acquisition of a building or equipment for a new or expanding business. McDevco understands the CDBG rules that are associated with the underwriting and loan criteria. They report back to us quarterly and Christian Schock is part of their loan committee that reviews loans. In the past we had only allocated approximately \$30,000 - \$50,000 but after a recent monitoring with McDevco, they indicated that they had to turn down a couple of businesses because there was not enough funding in the “pot” that the business fell into. We have since sent over the \$35,000 from our 2016 allocation and that will help for a little bit. They indicated if we were able to allocate additional funds that will allow them to assist with more businesses. Therefore, we are requesting \$100,000 to be utilized in the 2017 budget to go towards Economic Development loans.

Tammy Stratz, Community Development Manager, discussed the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan Program and the \$100,000 request. Even though the committee just reprogrammed \$30,000 of the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan program income into another activity and that there are a few years funding left to utilize, the funding can go very quickly in some cases. Since the reprogramming occurred, we have had two emergency situations arise that if we did not continue to keep funding in this program, we would not be able to assist the emergencies as quickly as we can. In addition, several more applications have been received for the waiting list and we are constantly looking for ways to increase our contractor pool so we don't have to beg for bids. A few years ago, we did not request funding for this program because of the large amount of program income we had received. That year proved to be difficult because we always have a few emergencies each year and we were almost out of money before the new allocation for the following year came in. We would hate to be in that situation again and not be able to assist someone truly in an emergency.

Tammy Stratz, Community Development Manager, discussed the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and the \$35,000 request. This program has received funding in the past and such activities that were assisted were low-level street lighting for streets located in several of the income-qualifying Neighborhood Associations, clean-up activities in designated neighborhoods, installation of a park bench in the Longfellow Neighborhood Association, assistance with a Community Garden in the East Towne

Neighborhood Association, to name a few. Plans are being finalized for the long planned, Longfellow Neighborhood Tot Lot which will be finalized this next spring. In addition, Neighborhood Association identification banners are being designed to be installed on city-owned light poles within qualified associations. We have also assisted with the funding of trees to replace those that have been damaged due to storms or age or disease. The Parks Department does not have the funding to continue to replace some of these trees and these funds were able to address those needs immediately rather than wait several years. We are working with other neighborhood associations to see what their needs are and how we can assist and these funds will be utilized accordingly.

(3) **Close of Public Hearing.**

With no other comments regarding the 2017 Annual Plan for Community Development Block Grant Funding, the public hearing was closed.

With no other business to come before the committee, D. Ackerman moved to adjourn the meeting and S. Ackerman seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce Bohlken
Chairman