



CUMBERLAND COUNTY – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES: October 18, 2018

MEETING LOCATION: Windham Public Library

Attendees: Tom Gruber- Acting Chair (Cumberland), Theo Holtwijk, (Falmouth), Meredith (inter for Falmouth), Scott Hasting (New Gloucester), Daniel Stevenson (Westbrook) Scott LaFlamme (Yarmouth), Michele Bukoveckas (Sebago), David Galbraith (Gorham), Tom Bartell (Windham), Matt Sturgis (Cape Elizabeth), Kathy Tombarelli (Gray), Stephanie Carver (GPCOG), Bill Girgioux (Standish), Brian Sites (North Yarmouth).

Staff: Kristin Styles, Cumberland County Community Development Director,
Sandra Warren Cumberland County Community Development Coordinator.

1. Welcome & Introductions: 14 voting members attended and a quorum was reached. The meeting began at approximately 2:05PM.
2. Kristin presented a PowerPoint giving an overview of the CDBG program, the County program, and progress updates on current project. Additionally, gave an updated on the projected funding for 2019 and program year schedule. Kristin also notified the group of the slight increase in HOME funding for 2018 which resulted in funding two projects: (1) West End apartments in South Portland (developer Avesta Housing); (2) Larrabee Woods in Westbrook (developer Westbrook housing & Anew).
3. Nomination / Election of 2019 Committee Chair. Kristin mentioned to the committee, member Tom Gruber has expressed interest in this position and is the acting chair. Kristin ask the committee if anyone else had an interested in this position, seeing none, Theo motioned for approval, Scott seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Tom Gruber is the 2019 MOC Chair.
4. Changing the Grant cycle of the Social Services and Planning Grants. In the past, social services and planning grants were able to have 18months to draw down funds, this was due to a loop hole in HUD accounting tracking system. In recent years this loop hole has changed and now we need to look at moving back to the original 12- month cycle. In the past we have been able to get away with keeping the 18-month cycle because traditionally we have not run up against our cap for these services. Kristin asked the committee to go back to the 12-month cycle so we do not run up against this issue of

hitting the cap and potentially effecting the next years funding amounts. The county can make exceptions to this rule on a case by case basis if needed. Theo asked if we should vote on this, to change the cycle of the social services and planning grants to be limited to 12-months. Kristin asked the committee to vote on this. Daniel Stevenson of Westbrook asked about expenditure when does the clock start for the 12month cycle. Kristin indicated the timeline would be the grant year, which begin July 1 and end June 30 of the following year. Daniel stated the key would be if you apply for it you need to understand that the funds must be drawn within that year. Theo mentioned the Freeport Bus Pass not expending the \$4000 from 2015. By giving towns, 12-months there is an expectation to spend down those funds. Also to encourage towns applying for realistic funding amounts. Scott Leflamme added that this would also create a sense of urgency to spend the funds and knowing there is always exceptions to the rule it seems like a good move. Scott Leflamme made a motion to change the planning and social service grant cycles from 18-months to 12-months, motion seconded by Theo. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Review Team follow up: Suggested changes to the application:

- a.) Switching the distress score from 10-5 points. Last spring, the review team discussed changes they would like to see happen to the application. One of those suggestions was to change the distress scores. Kristin provide the committee with what those scores would look like if we changed them. Kristin also notified the committee that HUD announced they will be updating the census tracts in 2019 and our numbers will be changing as early as January of 2019. Hearing this Tom Bartell suggested this item be tabled until after we know what the new census track numbers will be. The committee agreed.
- b.) Adjustments to application. the review team suggested that the application be looked at by County staff to see if anything could be removed from the application to shorten and streamline the application process. Staff concluded that due to the federal regulations, the application is as minimal as it can get. That being said, Kristin created a new cover page for the application, to make this more user friendly and to allow applicants to complete the cover page as there pre application. This will somewhat streamline the process without removing the necessary HUD requirements. Tom Gruber stated he felt this would be a good idea, it can be very overwhelming to fill out the application and having a cover page that can tell you in one page if your project is a go or not is very helpful. Tom Bartell asked for clarification on the section titled HUD Program Objectives. Kristin stated this section is the categories designated by HUD, and projects must fit into one of these three categories. Daniel Stevenson asked about the Job Creation Categories. Daniel provide the following scenario: Let's say you were able to get some money and purchase equipment, what's the cap per job created? Kristin indicated that the total amount is \$35,000 per job, but most places use a lower threshold, for example, the City of Portland's business assistance program limits the amount to \$10,000 per job. It does fall under the general services category so you would have over 12-months to complete the grant. Tom Gruber asked the committee for a motion to except and implement the new cover page for the 2019 application year. The motion passed unanimously.

6.) Kristin asked members to consider serving on the Application Review Team. 6-8 members are needed for the review panel. The following MOC members volunteered to serve: Tom Gruber (Chair), Daniel Stevenson, Scott Leflamme, David Galbraith, Matt Sturgis, Brian Sites, Sandy Warren and Stephanie Carver.

7.) Other Business: Kristin provided an updated on the Opportunity Alliance (TOA) Housing Repair Program. The county and TOA for many years ran a very success Housing Repair program. However, in the last two to three years changes in program staff lead to the county terminating its contract with TOA. Kristin collaborated with The City of Portland to use up the remaining 2016 & 2017 funds left over from TOA. However, using the City of Portland's rehab program long term is not a viable option. The County has spoken with Habitat for humanity to see if they could run a rehab program. In the past the TOA did not submit applications annually, and the question of whether the MOC would like to simply let Habitat take over the program, put out an RFP, or compete on an even level all CDBG applications. Tom Bartell questions the idea that TOA did not submit applications annually and would like staff to look into this as he thought they did. Sandy Warren spoke and stated that this program was set up similarly to the set- aside in that they were automatically given funds each year and did not need to compete for those funds, primary because there was no one else regionally at that time that could provide a housing rehab program like TOA. Daniel Stevenson spoke about the value a program like this has with helping folks regionally, further stating that in place like Yarmouth and Cumberland that do not qualify area wide, low-income individuals can receive services. Scott Leflamme also spoke to this, and support funds being set aside for a housing program. Scott Leflamme stated that we should regardless of setting aside funds make this a competitive process. The committee as a group would like proposals for housing rehab be presented to the committee. Brian Sites from North Yarmouth stated that there are other agencies such as Volunteers of America that could provide these services and suggested that an RFP for these services go out. Tom Bartell questioned how we could run a program like this without using a CAP agency. Daniel Stevens brought up the point that there are two components to this program, which are the rehab and the administration piece. The administration of a program like this is very in-depth. Daniel Stevens asked if the county has the staffing capacity to complete the administration of the program. Kristin stated what was great about the TOA program is that they did it all, and the most ideal situation would be to find an agency to run both aspects. The question Kristin posed to the committee is whether they like the County to set aside funds and create an RFP or just encourage any non-profit rehab program to apply during the regular CDBG application process. Scott Leflamme would like to see proposals from local agencies. Daniel and Tom suggested calling local PHAs to see what their thoughts were and if they would be interested in the program. Kristin asked for a vote on whether we want to pull funds and set them aside for 2019 and then continue the discussion. Tom Gruber asked for a motion on \$150,000 to set aside for Housing Rehab, motion second. Motion passed with no objection.

8.) Regional Programs, including or excluding Bridgton and South Portland. Kristin asked the MOC how we should handle this. Currently there is no policy in place for this and the question is whether we allow Bridgton and South Portland to participate in regional programs or make the set asides account for this locally. Currently we are running up against this with AlphaOne. They have ramp projects in Both Bridgton and South Portland. Discussion was had between Daniel Stevenson and Sandy Warren about why

AlphaOne does not apply to South Portland directly. Sandy explained that due to the low volume of services that are being provide to those areas South Portland did not require AlphaOne to submit an application as they usually on do One ramp a year, however that being said should service numbers increase, the City of South Portland would begin requiring AlphaOne to apply directly to them. The group agreed that we would continue the process as is and monitor for any increases and make changes as needed.

8.) Next MOC, Kristin asked the group to think about where we should meet and to think about where a common middle ground would be.

9.) The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00PM.