



The Health and Human Services Committee

Citizen Participation Public Hearing

Minutes

Date & Time of Meeting: **Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 4:00 pm**

Meeting Location: **Courthouse Assembly Room (B105), 500 Forest Street, Wausau WI**

The public hearing was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chair Tim Buttke to discuss agenda items 1-6 below. The following were present: Lance Leonhard, Jason Hake, Donna Krause and Toshia Ranallo. WebEx participants were: Tim Buttke, Michelle Van Krey, Kelly Gabor, Dennis Gonnering, William Harris, Tom Seubert, John Robinson, Jill Geoffroy, Chris Dickenson, Diane Sennholz, Joanne Leonhard, Vicki Resech, Vicki Tylka, Yvonne Quirk, and three unidentified callers.

1. Identification of total potential funds
2. Eligible CDBG activities
3. Presentation of identified community development needs
4. Identification of any community development needs by public
5. Presentation of activities proposed for CDBG application, including potential residential displacement.
6. Citizen input regarding proposed and other CDBG activities

Discussion:

The presentation was led by Director of Social Services and CDBG-CV Project Manager Vicki Tylka, Diane Sennholz with North Central Community Action Program (NCCAP) and Vicki Resech with MCDEVCO.

The Intent to Apply submitted on November 18, 2020 identified \$1,100,000 for grant assistance with the following breakdown:

- Rental /Mortgage Assistance \$500,000 - NCCAP
- Small Business Grants \$500,000 - MCDEVCO
- Administration Cost \$100,000

The project covers the townships that include all areas in Marathon County outside the Wausau City limits and has two primary goals: (1) preventing homelessness from eviction or foreclosure by providing rental or mortgage assistance and (2) ensuring the sustainability of Marathon County's small businesses, as the restrictions from COVID-19 have forced them to close and reopen with changing operating restrictions from the State and Health Department that decrease customers and revenue.

Preventing Homelessness Due to Eviction or Foreclosure: Diane Sennholz

North Central Community Action Program (NCCAP) would provide assistance to low income households who have a loss of income due to the effects of COVID, due to contracting COVID, or quarantining due to exposure to COVID. This pandemic has impacted an estimate of 500 households consisting of over 2100 individuals in Marathon County. Current funding streams are exhausted and CARES funding only applies to within the City of Wausau. The need for CDBG-CV funds could assist with rental/utilities for rural residents who rent a home or apartment. The NCCAP staff would meet with clients to provide the necessary screening. NCCAP would ensure households meet the criteria for this funding as well as provide to clients additional referrals to community resources. As a sub-recipient NCCAP would be responsible for the fiscal administration of the proposed activity (preparing vouchers, issuing checks to landlords or mortgage holders, complying with audit requirements, as well as the record keeping, demographic data capturing, and quarterly reporting requirements to Marathon County Government. NCCAP's experience in providing rental assistance and working collaboratively with community partners and in providing referrals expands over 40 years.

Sustainability of Small Businesses Directly Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic: Vicki Resech

MCDEVCO has administered the City of Wausau CDBG funds for over 30 years and is contracted to also administer their CARES funding to assist the city's small businesses impacted by the pandemic.

The Marathon County pandemic fund would provide required assistance to businesses throughout the county that continue to struggle from having to close to reopening with ever changing requirements as the pandemic continues to grow. MCDEVCO would administer Five Thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) grants. Basic criteria for Marathon County business eligibility to receive a grant includes:

- Business must have been in operation as of March 25, 2020 and physically located in the Marathon County.
- Business must either have been closed as nonessential or had operations severely limited by the State of Wisconsin Safer-at-Home orders and continue to struggle to be sustainable with new regulations.
- Business must have 10 or fewer fulltime equivalent employees as of March 25, 2020.
- Sole proprietor and independent contractors are also eligible along with LLC's. and corporations that meet the requirements.
- Property management, real estate rental and real estate sales businesses are not eligible.
- Businesses already receiving funds from the SBA's Payroll Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, 20/20 Small Business, insurance disaster claims, and financial institutions cannot duplicate allocation of funding. No refinancing of debt allowed.
- For every grant received, a low-to-middle income position must be retained and/or created.
- 625 businesses throughout the county required financial assistance due to the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There is 10,129 small businesses in Marathon County which is the economic backbone for Marathon County to not only sustain but grow rural communities. Small business owners and employees pay local taxes to fund school, roads, and community programs.

The CDBG-CV application and resolutions will be presented to the County board on February 18, 2021. The application packet is due to the Bureau of Community Development on February 26, 2021. Public input was heard and the public hearing was closed at 4:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Toshia Ranallo