

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(CDAAC)  
Minutes  
July 12, 2007**

Development Center, Conference Room #1  
445 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 101  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: David Kinsey, Chair; Shirley Coleman, Vice Chair; Charley Coss;  
Doris Jackson; Pegg Osowski; Mildred Smith

Members Excused: Mark Fricke; Kathy Steppenwolf; Sue Oakes

Members Absent: Jennifer Mills

Guests: Don Cooney, City Commissioner

City Staff: David Thomas, Neighborhood Development Specialist

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Kinsey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF ABSENCES**

City staff was advised that Mr. Fricke, Ms. Steppenwolf and Ms. Oakes would not be at the July CDAAC meeting.

**Ms. Jackson, supported by Ms. Coleman, moved approval of the absences of Mr. Fricke, Ms. Steppenwolf and Ms. Oakes from the July 12, 2007 CDAAC meeting. With a voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.**

**AGENDA (July 12, 2007)**

Mr. Thomas advised that the agenda provided at the meeting was an amended version of the Agenda that was mailed to the CDAAC members. The new agenda reflects recent events which have transpired. In particular, the discussion regarding shelter grants is now the first item under old business and the Citizen Participation Plan is second. Under new business, another item was added regarding general funds for summer programming – review process.

**Mr. Coss, supported by Ms. Osowski, moved approval of the July 12, 2007 CDAAC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**MINUTES (May 10, 2007 and June 14, 2007 ESG sub-committee meeting)**

**Mr. Coss, supported by Ms. Osowski, moved approval of the May 10, 2007 CDAAC minutes and the June 14<sup>th</sup> Emergency Shelter Grant subcommittee minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

### **COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBERS' REPORTS**

Ms. Coleman advised that SARA (Stuart Area Restoration Association) has a new format for its newsletter/website. The new director of SARA is Matt Baldwin-Wilson, a resident of the Stuart Neighborhood for 23 years. Also, the Reach and Teach School is relocating to the former Bible Baptist Church.

Mr. Coss inquired as to the members of the nominating committee. Mr. Thomas advised that Ms. Mills, Ms. Jackson and Ms. Smith had been appointed to serve as the nominating committee.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **PY2007 Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Process**

As a follow-up to the June 14 discussions concerning ESG funds, Mr. Thomas advised that Mayor McKinney has been speaking with service providers around town and she became concerned that there are very limited funds available to people who are in danger of having their utilities shut off. The state had stopped/reduced those funds recently. The Mayor approached city staff to inquire if the ESG funds could be used to assist with a utility shut off prevention program. According to the HUD regulations under homelessness prevention, up to 30% of the ESG funds can be used for that purpose. Mr. Thomas stated that if someone is in danger of having their utilities shut off, they would need to go first to the Department of Human Services (DHS), a state office. If a person doesn't qualify to receive funds through DHS, they can apply to the Salvation Army. Since last October, the Salvation Army has provided financial assistance for 1,730 households regarding utilities. Mr. Thomas stated that he also checked with the United Way and Housing Resources, Inc. and they agreed that there is need for such funding. The state has reduced funding available to assist with utility bills from what might have been an average of \$500 previously, to approximately \$300 now.

Mr. Coss inquired as to how much funding the Salvation Army would have for this program per year. Mr. Thomas advised that the amount of the available funds fluctuates. They try to budget so they can maintain funding levels throughout the year, but it is sometimes necessary to request more funds from local churches as needed.

Mr. Thomas advised that the Mayor and the City Commission would like to see some of the ESG funds set aside, tentatively as a possible award to the Salvation Army.

Accordingly, the report being presented tonight contains a fifth column. Under the category of homelessness prevention/utility shut-offs, the number which was "to be determined" has now been suggested to be \$20,000. HUD regulations advise that the amount to be spent in this category can be no more than 30% of the total ESG allocation to the City - approximately \$24,000. The funding recommendations on the report are as follows: The Ark, \$10,000; YWCA, \$20,000; the County of Kalamazoo, \$10,000; HRI, \$20,734 and \$20,000 for this new initiative suggested by the City Commission.

In response to Ms. Osowski's question, Mr. Thomas confirmed that although the Salvation Army is a faith-based organization, they don't require that recipients of these funds also be involved with the church. Ms. Osowski mentioned that Consumers Energy also has a program to help people who can't pay their utility bills.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Salvation Army requires a referral from DHS for individuals requesting assistance with their utility bills. Applicants also need to provide information about their income and the number of people in their household and provide copies of their utility bills. The Salvation Army will review the situation and provide information about how to budget for utility bills. They will also call Consumers Energy to find out if any of the bills can be reduced or waived.

Ms. Osowski inquired as to who would administer the funds for utility assistance. Mr. Thomas stated that, as a tentative proposal, the Salvation Army would administer the funds and city staff would monitor the program.

Mr. Coss inquired if the ESG funds should be set up in the form of a grant and, therefore, be made available to other organizations who might provide this service. Mr. Thomas advised that it should not be set up that way because this program is criteria based and is a sole source (only one vendor can provide that service) so the contract can be provided through that source. Mr. Coss inquired if there was a way to leverage this money to get matching funds from Consumers Power. Mr. Thomas stated that it might be possible to negotiate that program with Consumers since the ESG program requires that funds be matched dollar for dollar. Mr. Coss inquired if \$20,000 was enough or too much to give them the maximum ability to leverage funds for this program.

Commissioner Cooney advised that one of the problems is that the federal government has drastically cut (or possibly eliminated) the amount of money they allot for the rehab/energy assistance program. That money goes through the Community Action Agency. The Agency does a "walk for warmth" and when that event took place this year there was talk of the dramatic cuts to the program.

Mr. Thomas referred to Mr. Coss' question regarding need. He pointed out that the availability of ESG funds is an anomaly this year. All of the groups on the funding report received ESG funds from the state. The \$80,734 of ESG to the City from HUD is something extra for the budget this year since it is a function of the CDBG formula and

something which City staff were not expecting to receive. Therefore, any ESG award from the City is more than what the organizations might have expected, and it may serve to leverage additional funds.

Ms. Jackson mentioned that the other four recipients actually applied for the grant money. She inquired if there would be a problem with just awarding the money to the Salvation Army. Mr. Thomas deferred that question to Commissioner Cooney.

Ms. Osowski commented that just because someone's utilities are shut off doesn't mean they will be homeless. She mentioned that her neighbors were evicted and they wound up staying with relatives. Mr. Thomas advised that there is a 10-year plan through the County of Kalamazoo to address homelessness. Keeping families in their homes is one of the top priorities. Mr. Thomas stated that the Salvation Army can help with utility bills once every 18 months; that is their policy. Also, under the ESG program, evidence would need to be provided by the applicant to demonstrate need.

Mr. Kinsey inquired if there had been discussion at the City Commission level regarding the utility assistance funding. Commissioner Cooney stated that it had not been discussed but that he was certain there would be support for it. He mentioned that his wife is a social worker who works with troubled families. She takes families to the Salvation Army when they have exhausted other possibilities for assistance. The Salvation Army program is well run and they are providing assistance to people who really need it.

Ms. Jackson inquired if it would be a problem for the Salvation Army to receive the funds if they didn't apply for it along with the other four applicants. Commissioner Cooney inquired if any of the applicants were turned down for funding and Mr. Thomas advised that they were not. Commissioner Cooney commented that there should not be a problem with the Salvation Army receiving funds for their program under these circumstances.

Ms. Coleman commented that the applicants have applied but they have not been informed as to the amount of funding they will be receiving. Commissioner Cooney stated that there is awareness on the part of the other applicants as to the necessity for funding the Salvation Army program. Mr. Thomas mentioned that he had spoken with someone at HRI to inquire about utility shut-offs as a component of homelessness. He was advised that it is an increasing problem. There is a trend toward not including utilities in rent payments; this is another cost that is being passed on to renters.

**Ms. Jackson, supported by Ms. Osowski, moved to recommend to the City Commission that the ESG funds be distributed per the recommendations of city staff as outlined in the report. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Osowski inquired as to who would be responsible for the money at this point and who will administer it. Mr. Thomas advised that, once approved by the City Commission, the subrecipient agencies would administer each of their programs. There are details yet to work out concerning the utilities shut-off initiative.

**Citizen Participation Plan Update/Rewrite**

Mr. Kinsey mentioned that copies of the Flint Plan had been distributed at the last meeting for review by the CDAAC members. Mr. Thomas advised that the previous Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) for the City of Kalamazoo was approved on April 1, 1998. Since there is need to update the Plan, city staff and CDAAC have reviewed plans from other communities. Flint has a well-organized Citizen Participation Plan. Mr. Thomas provided a revised draft copy of the Kalamazoo Plan that includes obvious updates such as the number of CDAAC members, location of the meetings, elimination of the Rehab Appeals Board, etc.

Mr. Thomas referred to the HUD Citizen Participation Plan checklist included in the CDAAC packets. Anything that HUD wants to see in the Plan is stated as one of the 285 questions on the checklist.

Ms. Jackson referred to the Flint plan and stated that it mentioned several places where the Consolidated Plan would be made available. She inquired if Kalamazoo's Consolidated Plan was still available at the Development Center and at City Hall. Mr. Thomas advised that the Consolidated Plan is also on the city's website. He mentioned that there are some inconsistencies in the Citizen Participation Plan where it refers to the "Consolidated Plan," the "Annual Plan," the "Comprehensive Plan," and the "Performance Report." Mr. Thomas updated the draft CPP with the HUD names for these terms. The five year Consolidated Plan, the yearly Action Plan, and the CAPER, last year's end-of-year report, are on the city's website. The CPP will be added to the website when it is updated. These documents are also available at the main branch of the library. This information can be added to the CPP when it is updated.

Mr. Kinsey inquired as to the timeline for updating the CPP. Mr. Thomas stated that CDAAC can formulate its own timeline. He suggested that it be completed before the next funding decisions need to be made by CDAAC at the beginning of the year. Mr. Kinsey suggested continuing this discussion at the next CDAAC meeting.

Mr. Coss mentioned the section in the CPP regarding "purpose" and commented that it is probably intended to convey the scope of CDAAC's work. He stated that there has been some discussion in the past about CDAAC being a public body for items which require public hearings. He inquired if that would be reflected in the CPP. Mr. Thomas stated that public hearings are mentioned in the CPP but that language could be expanded to include additional public hearings that may be required.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PY2006 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report Timeline (CAPER)**

Mr. Thomas stated that at the end of every program year (June 30<sup>th</sup>) city staff must compile a report (CAPER) for HUD advising how the City of Kalamazoo has utilized

their HUD funds during the program year. The CAPER is due at the HUD offices by August 30<sup>th</sup>. HUD requires that a public hearing be held to review the CAPER. The public hearing will be held at the August 9<sup>th</sup> CDAAC meeting. During the public hearing, Mr. Thomas will provide a summary of the funds that were expended and the priority areas that received funds. HUD also wants to know what funds were leveraged using federal money. The CAPER will be made available for public comment prior to its submission to HUD.

Ms. Jackson inquired if volunteered services will be considered leveraged funds by HUD. Mr. Thomas advised that only in the case of Habitat for Humanity does HUD allow “sweat equity” (volunteer time) to be assigned a cash value that is recognized by HUD. Habitat for Humanity keeps detailed records on the hours worked by volunteers. Other volunteer work is acknowledged but it is not assigned a cash value.

### **Summer Programming Review Process**

Mr. Thomas provided a copy of the City Commission General Funds Application for Summer Youth Programming. Last October Mr. Thomas was contacted by the City Manager’s office inquiring how CDAAC makes determinations regarding CDBG funds. Mr. Thomas provided a brief review of the process. At that point, discussion began with regard to having CDAAC’s input in determining how the summer programming funds are distributed, especially since some of the same organizations who receive those funds are also receiving CDBG funds. It is hoped that this process will prove to be cost effective. Commissioner Cooney advised that the summer programming fund is approximately \$28,000. Mr. Thomas inquired to what extent CDAAC would like to be involved with the distribution of these funds. He mentioned that staff support would also be provided through the City Manager’s office in order to maintain some involvement in the process. CDAAC’s involvement would be for the 2008 funding round.

Commissioner Cooney stated that the idea was to give the money to groups who already have summer programs so that they can enhance their programs. For instance, additional funds were provided to the Douglass Community Center and they worked out a program with New Genesis and the Lincoln School to provide a summer basketball program which involves 400 kids. The midnight basketball program at Douglass, summer programs of the Boys and Girls Club, and the Eastside Neighborhood youth programming are all examples of successful programs. Commissioner Cooney advised that people from the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, the City’s Recreation Department, and the Douglass Community Center met to discuss what summer programs could be provided for kids in the city. The objective is to keep these kids off the streets. It was beneficial to have people from these different groups work together to discuss the options. It proved to be a real team effort which dramatically enhanced the alternatives for kids for the summer.

Ms. Osowski commented that the Vine Neighborhood had a summer program for kids a couple of years ago and everyone was amazed at how many people showed up. She inquired as to how many groups applied for the funds and if a narrative could be

included, 1 to 3 pages only. Ms. Osowski commented that the CDBG applications include a narrative to demonstrate a group's ability to focus on the program they are proposing. Mr. Thomas advised that he would work with Alfrelynn Roberts from the City Manager's office to streamline the application. Ms. Jackson agreed that it would be a good idea to include the narrative. Commissioner Cooney stated that there are about six groups receiving the money this year. Ms. Jackson commented that if more groups find out that the funds are available, more people will apply. If there is an increase in the number of applicants it would be helpful to have a more streamlined application.

Commissioner Cooney suggested asking at the end of the year how each of the groups expended the funds. He mentioned that the Boys and Girls Club did a terrific job accounting for the funds that were spent. It might be helpful to use that as an example. Mr. Thomas referred to the bottom of the second page of the application and commented that they were due last year on October 15<sup>th</sup>. Accordingly, there is some time to make changes to the application.

Mr. Kinsey inquired as to the process for making changes to the application. Commissioner Cooney stated that the City Manager's office can make a recommendation to the City Commission for approval. The city's Parks and Recreation Department works closely with these groups. Ms. Jackson suggested that someone from the Parks and Recreation Department be consulted regarding these matters. Commissioner Cooney advised that he's been working with Denise Siegel from Parks and Recreation. Ms. Coss suggested having a liaison from Parks and Recreation sit in on the meetings pertaining to distribution of this funding.

Mr. Thomas stated that he would inform Ms. Roberts of CDAAC's desire to be involved with the funding process. City staff can then meet to further discuss the options. Mr. Thomas advised that he would provide an update on this subject at the next CDAAC meeting.

Ms. Osowski expressed concern that review of the summer programming funds might conflict with CDAAC's schedule for reviewing CDBG grants. Mr. Thomas stated that he would consider that factor. He advised that this should be a much shorter process than reviewing the CDBG grants and, hopefully, it will be completed prior to review of the CDBG grants.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Commissioner Cooney thanked the CDAAC members for their work. He advised that it has been difficult for him to attend the CDAAC meetings because of his teaching schedule. Also, he helps run a program at Washington School on Thursday nights. The program provides meals for children followed by basketball and dance class, etc.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Community Development Act Advisory Committee (CDAAC) Minutes

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**Mr. Coss, supported by Ms. Smith, moved to adjourn the July 12, 2007 CDAAC meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Recording Secretary)

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Staff Liaison)

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_  
(CDAAC Chair)