

**Meeting Agenda
State College Borough
CDBG/Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC)
March 3, 2020**

The State College Borough Community Development Block Grant/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CDBG/CAC) meeting was called to order in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street by Selden Smith, Chair on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at Noon.

Members Present

Selden Smith, Chair; David Gaines, Vice-Chair; Ian Boswell; Jason Olcese; and Marcia Patterson

Members Absent

Bruce Quigley, Alexis Burke

Others Present

Maureen H. Safko, Senior Planner; Elizabeth S. Eirmann, Planner-Housing Specialist; Deb Hoag, Public Works Director; Denise L. Rhoads, Administrative Assistant; Annette Ratliff, Housing Transitions, Inc. (HTI); Colleen Ritter, Director, State College Community Land Trust (SCCLT); Phil Jones, Director, House of Care (HOC); Amy Rumbel and Sarah Valsechi, Centre Safe (CS); and Stephanie Fost, Habitat for Humanity (HFH)

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Boswell to approve the February 5, 2020 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Selden Smith, Chair, had nothing to report.

Public Hour

No one from the public wanted to discuss items not on the agenda.

Public Hearing on Program Performance

Ms. Safko stated the purpose of the public hearing was to receive comments from citizens on the performance of the State College CDBG and the HOME Investment Partnership programs during the 2019 program year. She also noted an ad that provided notification of the public hearing was published in the *Centre Daily Times*, and an announcement ran on C-NET and was posted on the Borough's webpage. Notices were sent to municipal and county officials and to human service agencies

- Ms. Rumbel, CS shelter and transitional housing Director, thanked the Borough and staff for the funding previously provided, noting it helped to provide the shelter with 24 hour-overnight staffing.
- Mr. Jones, HOC Director, stated the Borough helped to purchase the home for HOC. He noted this year will be the 20th year the Borough had been supporting the program. There would be a 20th year celebration on June 20, 2020. He also stated the funding supported staff salaries. Mr. Jones stated another reason he attended this meeting was to advocate for the Out of the Cold program that provided overnight emergency shelter. The program had grown to 14 partner congregations with a new daytime shelter. The shelter currently helped 18-24 people per day.

He noted our community really needed a permanent emergency shelter. He asked that staff and members encourage the community to help with this need.

- Ms. Ratliff, HTI., stated the Borough funded their emergency shelter with overnight staff and helped with staff who provide counseling on employment preparedness and housing.
- Ms. Ritter, SCCLT, stated they received HOME funding from the Borough to purchase, renovate and sell to First-Time Homebuyer's (FTHB) and had done this 1996. She noted SCCLT was on target to do two houses in 2020.
- Ms. Fost, HFH, noted they did not receive funding but, she was here to promote awareness throughout Centre County. She stated HFH was interested in partnering across the community.

Ms. Safko's overview included:

- She noted the 2020 CDBG allocations had a 2.9% increase to \$519,000.
- HOME allocations had a 20% decrease to \$228,000.
- Discussed the 2018 year-end financial status and noted what was left from that year was then added to what was allocated in 2019.
- She stated the Borough had just over 1 million to spend in CDBG funds.

She next discussed CDBG goals for 2019.

Ms. Safko reviewed the previously approved goals in the 2020-2024 CP and 2020 AP which would be adjusted through the amendment as follows:

- 2020 Housing Transitions Inc. increases from 70 to 80
- 2020 Burrowes Street Youth Haven decreases from 25 to 15
- 2020-2024 THF Rental Acquisition/Rehab Program increases from 4 to 8
- 2020-2022 Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation increases from 1 to 2

Ms. Safko asked if any of the human service agencies wished to speak on their goal numbers.

- Ms. Rumbel stated the CS shelter was a 30-day shelter but sometimes it took more than 30 days to find proper housing and jobs and they could not always serve the amount of persons they hoped to. She stated the model they were currently using worked better to serve people the best way they could.

CAC comments

- Mr. Boswell asked if they turned people away and Ms. Rumbel stated they did sometimes.
- Mr. Boswell asked why the Borough's low-income program had not met their goal. Ms. Eirmann stated because of the price of the homes in the community the buyer needed to come to the table with a large amount of down payment and not many could do that. Ms. Safko stated the gap between affordability and what the Borough could help with was large.
- Mr. Smith stated it sounded like one program was competing with another of our programs and only one was winning.
- Mr. Boswell suggested taking the sizable balance of Borough's low-income funds and allow the CHDO to use it to make up for the gap in funding.

Next discussed: Goals for 2020

- Owner-Occupied Housing Rehab 1
- FTHB Low-Income 1
- SCCLT FTHB 1
- Temporary Housing Foundation, Inc. (THF) FTHB 1
- THF rental Acquisition/Rehab 2
- Purchased an 8-unit townhouse with SCCLT owning land and THF owning the improvements.
- East Fairmount Park project started Fall 2018 with funds from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, a Tree Vitalize grant along with CDBG funding and should be completed sometime in 2020.

Ms. Ritter stated the SCCLT recently purchased a duplex with tenants already renting. She noted once the tenants move out the renovation would start. She noted the duplex was built in the 1970's and needed a lot of attention. Currently, they were trying out a program called Energy + for improvements. She also noted SCCLT had another project on North Glenn Street and had a sales agreement in place.

Mr. Olcese asked Mr. Jones how much money would be needed for a permanent day shelter and Mr. Jones stated approximately \$500,000. Mr. Olcese noted he would like this to be a priority and be put on an upcoming agenda.

Review of CDBG-Funded CIP's 2020-2024

Ms. Safko stated, traditionally, State College Borough budgeted roughly half of its annual CDBG allocation for public facilities activities such as street reconstruction, installation of streetlights, or similar projects. Staff of the Public Works Department and the Planning Department collaborated to recommend the allocation of CDBG funds for public facilities projects over the next five years.

Ms. Hoag discussed the funding provided by CDBG funds. She noted, if possible, the Public Works department tried to find other funds before using the CDBG funds.

Ms. Hoag's brief overview:

- \$250,000 was allocated for 2019 CDBG CIP Projects: 1) eight lights on Sowers Street and curb ramp replacements as needed, 2) 10 lights on Hetzel Street and curb ramp replacements as needed, and 3) 10 lights on Foster Avenue between Allen and Pugh Streets as an add alternate to the bid.
- \$92,000 was allocated for 2020 CDBG CIP Projects: East Fairmount Park site and equipment upgrades, which was paired with other funding sources for a total project budget of \$228,000:
 - PA DCNR grant \$101,000.00
 - Borough PK001 Parks Maintenance Reserve \$ 11,777.57
 - Borough PK200 Park Acquisition/Improvements \$ 13,222.43
 - **CDBG Funds** **\$ 92,000.00**
 - Borough In-Kind \$ 10,000.00

Ms. Hoag noted an additional source of funding provided over \$3,000 in TreeVitalize grants for trees for the project.

Project or projects to be determined based on Strategic Plan review: \$158,000.00

- \$250,000 was allocated for 2021 CDBG CIP Projects
 - Various Borough-owned parks – evaluate and remove architectural barriers to accessibility at rest facilities and other areas in existing parks and recreational facilities \$ 95,000.00
 - Streetlight and curb ramp replacements \$ 75,000.00
Five lights and two curb ramp replacements on Garner Street
 - Street reconstruction \$ 80,000.00
Burrowes Street paving reconstruction between West College and West Beaver Avenues including bus stop subbase reinforcement and concrete pad construction
 - Bicycle Path Improvements \$ 64,000.00
- \$250,000 was allocated for 2022 CDBG CIP Projects
 - Streetlight and curb ramp replacement – 18 new lights on Pugh Street between Beaver and Nittany Avenues

- \$250,000 was allocated for 2023 CDBG CIP Projects Bicycle Path Improvements
 - Construction of a shared use path to connect parks and schools for off-road travel between facilities. The path may connect sections of existing paths constructed by others adjacent to their property and projects.
- \$250,000 was allocated for 2024 CDBG CIP Projects – Streetscape Improvements
 - A plan for the West End (WE) Neighborhood Streetscape Improvements to be developed in consultation with the neighborhood, which may include lighting, plantings, curb adjustments, etc. designed to improve pedestrian safety and enhance the neighborhood.
- \$250,000 was allocated for 2025 for scattered site pedestrian safety project.

Ms. Hoag stated that the cost of making changes in the WE neighborhood would be far greater than the amount of CDBG funds available.

Ms. Safko noted staff was looking forward to the results of the 2020 Census data.

Ms. Safko asked Ms. Hoag for an update on the schedule for the South Atherton Street project. Ms. Hoag stated PennDOT kept changing the date of completion.

CAC's comments

- Mr. Gaines asked what the WE neighborhood was. Ms. Hoag stated it was the area west of Atherton Street in the vicinity of College Avenue.
- Mr. Smith stated, when speaking of ownership, that a majority of properties in the WE are tenant occupied.
- Mr. Gaines noted the town was changing and asked to what extent were the projects anticipating these changes. Ms. Hoag stated that project selection identification begins during the land development review process.

Substantial Amendments to the State College Borough 2015-2019 and 2020-2024 Consolidated Plans (CP) and the 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 Annual Action Plans (AP)

Ms. Safko stated the Committee was asked to consider recommending to Council for approval the proposed substantial amendments to the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan, which were necessary due to receiving actual allocations from HUD for the FY 2020 CDBG and HOME Programs.

Some highlights included:

- In October of 2019, Council approved a FY 2020 Annual Action Plan for CDBG, and HOME funds based on a budget that was estimated to be equal to FY 2019 funding amounts.
- On February 14, 2020, HUD provided the Borough with actual allocations for the FY 2020 CDBG and HOME Programs.
- The CDBG budget was 2.9% higher than the 2019 funding level.
- The HOME allocation was 20% lower than in 2019.
- Prior to submitting the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), there was an opportunity to adjust budgets and goals and to reprogram balances of CDBG and HOME funds remaining from prior years.

Ms. Safko stated the amendments would include five components:

- adjust the FY 2020 Action Plan budget from estimates to actual allocations;
- reprogram CDBG funds remaining from the completed 2019 CDBG Infrastructure Project: Streetlights/Curb Ramps- Sowers/Hetzel/Foster.

This amendment would accomplish:

After completion of the 2019 Infrastructure Project, the following balance remained \$136,013.28 (\$19,153.49, from 2015, and \$116,859.79 from 2019). The proposed amendment would make all of these funds available to the 2020-2021 Infrastructure Streetlight Project plus an estimated additional \$75,000 from FY 2021 CDBG funds.

- respond to a 20% reduction in FY 2020 HOME funds by reallocating prior year, and FY 2020 CDBG balances from the Borough First Time Homebuyer (FTHB) Program (Low Income) 2020-2021 to the Temporary Housing Foundation (THF) FTHB Program 2020-2021;

This amendment would accomplish:

The estimated HOME funding level was already so low that it was challenging for each CHDO to aggregate sufficient funds to complete one homebuyer project per year. The 20% HOME budget cut only aggravated the problem. To restore needed funding to these affordable housing projects, it was proposed balances from prior year CDBG Borough Low homebuyer budgets be reallocated to a THF CHDO Acquisition/Rehabilitation Project. Each CHDO would receive equal allocations of \$245,066. SCCLT would be funded from HOME funds and THF from CDBG funds. In addition to offering full support to the CHDOs, the proposed amendment would help to maintain timely expenditure rate compliance.

- adjust goals of the 2020-2024 CP and 2020 AP;

This amendment would accomplish:

2020 Housing Transitions Inc. increase from 70 to 80
2020 Burrowes Street Youth Haven decrease from 25 to 15
2020-2024 THF Rental Acquisition/Rehab Program increase from 4 to 8
2020-2022 Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation increase from 1 to 2

- correct minor typographical errors.

Ms. Safko's overview:

- CDBG Actual Allocation for 2020
 - \$103,936.60 for Administration and Planning
 - \$77,952.00 divided between the Human Service Agencies:
 - * Centre Safe \$29,252
 - * House of Care \$17,319
 - * Housing Transitions, Inc. \$16,826
 - * Burrowes Street Youth Haven \$ 9,382
 - * Youth Service Bureau Independent Living \$ 5,173
- Public Facilities and Improvements – Actual Allocation
 - 2020 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Project – Park \$ 92,000.00
 - 2020 CIP Project – Streetlights \$294,013.28
- Housing – Actual Allocation
 - Borough's First-time Homebuyer Program \$ 34,080.88
 - Temporary Housing Foundation, Inc. \$245,066.00
- **Total Expenditures** **\$847,048.76**
- Revenues – Total Allocation
 - Reprogrammed Funds \$322,530.51
 - CDBG Program Income \$ 4,835.25

Ms. Safko asked for comments.

CAC comments

- Mr. Smith stated he reviewed the document and did not note that any major changes as needed.

Ms. Safko stated that the State College Borough Citizen Participation Plan required a substantial amendment process be followed, which included an advertisement, a 30-day comment period, a public hearing, and action by Borough Council.

A motion was made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Boswell to recommend approval of these amendments. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Upcoming Meeting

The next scheduled meeting would be Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at Noon.

Ms. Safko stated there was some confusion as to whether Ms. Burke was still a member. We were waiting on further instructions from the Human Resources Department.

Mr. Boswell stated he would be interested in discussing utilizing former fraternity houses and using them as shelters.

Mr. Olcese stated he would be really interested in helping the homeless.

Mr. Boswell stated the way the CHDO's split the funding seemed to be working.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m. by Mr. Boswell and seconded by Ms. Patterson. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise L. Rhoads
Administrative Assistant