

**MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
(CDBG) PROGRAM - PUBLIC HEARING
CITY BUILDING - CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MEETING OF APRIL 2, 1998**

ROLL CALL

Present: Harry Milliken
Tom Peters
Denis Theriault
Lew Zidle (arrived late)
Mark Paradis
Daniel Knowlton

Staff: James E. Andrews, Community Development Director;
Gil Arsenault, Interim Director of Development
Ken St. Amand, CD Planner
Yvette Bedard, Recording Secretary

Others: Heidi Randall, Betsy Norcross Plourde, Bonnie Bickford, Estelle Rubenstein,
David McDaniel, Philip Rioux, Susan Levine, Diane Hines, Paul Rubin,
Scott Jordan, Roxanne Jackson, Steve & Linda Hairston, Jesse Hammond,
Jeanne Bard, Tahlia Hope, Lisa Henry, Jeff Newick, Marty McIntyre,
Garv Golding, William Baxter, Eva Rodd, Michael Ladd, Carol Troy,
Nancy Ruff, Bro. Richard

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. Harry Milliken announced to the public that anyone wishing to address the Board should sign in. Harry then turned the floor over to Jim Andrews for a brief overview of the Review Committee recommendations presented to the planning board and the process the review committee used to make the recommendations. The review sub-committee included several Planning Board members as well as Development Review Committee.

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Jim explained the purpose of the meeting was to hear public input on the proposed CDBG funding recommendations. The format of the public hearing was different than in past years where everyone requesting funds were required to address the Board. This year only those who wished to speak would be heard. The reason for this being that many agencies come back every year with the same request and it was not necessary to repeat information that the Board is familiar with. Jim also explained that funding for public service agencies and administrative budgets were subject to a cap. The formula for the caps are as follows:

Public Service Agencies: 15% x (Grant Allocation + FY98 Program Income)

CD Administration: 20% x (Grant Allocation + Projected FY99 Program
Income)

At this time Harry opened the meeting to the public.

Abused Women's Advocacy Project (AWAP)
Request of \$25,000 for the Androscoggin Justice Project
Review Committee Recommendation of \$4,000
Speakers: Heidi Randall and Carol Perkins

The Board and Review Committee were given handouts explaining the project. This is the first year AWAP has requested funding for this new program. Ms. Randall explained that they needed at least \$15,000 to come up with matching funds or the project would cease to exist. The project is a collaborative effort between the Lewiston Police Department ,the District Attorney's office, the Community and AWAP. This pilot program is being tested in Lewiston only so many people are watching to see the results. Without the \$15,000 the project will cease in July because no new funds are coming until October, 1998. If AWAP receives \$4,000 it will use the funds to help in the other 2 projects. Tom Peters suggested that the IOLTA Program could be a source of funding for them and that Judge Beliveau would have more information.

Advocates for Children
Request of \$5,000 for the Parent Resource Center
Review Committee Recommendation of \$2,000
Speaker: Betsy Norcross Plourde

Betsy introduced herself to the Board and thanked them for the support shown by the recommendation. The program serves both children and parents and the \$2,000 will be used to offer services to these clients.

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American Red Cross

Request of \$10,000 for Disaster Relief Services

Review Committee Recommendation of \$2,000

Speaker: Bonnie Bickford

Ms. Bickford was stunned at the recommendation. She asked why her allocation was being cut back so drastically from previous years. Jim Andrews apologized for not having called her prior to the meeting to explain the recommendation. Because of the scarcity of funds the Review Committee cut back on this particular program but was not abandoning it. Because the Program funds are needed in time of emergency the City would have an open door policy for the Red Cross to request funds when needed. There are Contingencies funds available for use in emergency situations. Tom Peters and Denis Theriault assured Ms. Bickford that the City would not turn its back on the Red Cross in times of need.

Androscoggin Head Start

Request of \$72, 000 for Childhood Enrichment

Review Committee Recommendation of \$66,878

Speaker: Estelle Rubenstein

Crying need for infant care. Currently, there are over 40 children on the waiting list. Regina Merrick has three children, one is a first grader who has gone through the Head Start Program, another is 3 years old and is currently in the program, but her 1 year old son Uriah is on the waiting list. She is not able to afford child care which means she is unable to go out work to help her husband support their family. She is a volunteer with the ASPIRE program but is unable to be there because of lack of child care for Uriah.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Request for \$3,500 for Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program

Review Committee Recommendation of \$1,500

Speaker: Diane Hines

Ms. Hines thanked the Board for all its support. At a recent presidential national summit a goal to double the current caseload by the year 2000 was set. Since the summit there are more people

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volunteering their services to help the children. In the Lewiston Elementary Schools mentors

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have increased from 7 to 20 volunteers in this current year. Currently serving 50 Lewiston children.

Androscoggin Home Health
Request for \$33,636 for Lewiston Home Care Program
Review Committee recommendation of \$18,000
Speakers: David McDaniel and Philip Rioux

Thankful the support received from the City. Mr. McDaniel asked that the Board reconsider its recommendation and fund the agency with at least the same amount as last year (\$22,000). The agency receives cost reimbursement for its administrative costs but does not receive reimbursement for charitable and subsidized care. Other grants that have been applied for are contingent on the amount received from the City.

Child Health Center
Request for \$7,500 for Kids Korner Preschool
Review Committee recommendation for \$2,625
Speakers: Diane Hines

Ms. Hines wanted to reiterate the thanks to the City for its support. Currently Kids Korner is serving 27 children from Lewiston which accounts for over 1/2 of the clients served.

Faithworks
Request for \$50,000 for Jobs program
Recommendation from Review Committee is for \$0
Speaker: Paul Rubin

Mr. Rubin explained that Faithworks is able to provide good paying jobs to people who are for the most part not able to find employment any where else. They offer flexible hours and good pay. The operation has proven to be successful but money is needed to help pay-off some of the creditors. This is a one time request and once they get caught up they will be able to take care of bills on their own. Tom Peters asked how much cash is actually needed because the request of

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\$50,000 is impossible to grant. The amount of \$25,000 would be sufficient. Tom then suggested that they make an appointment with Jim Andrews, Community Development Director, and discuss the possibility of a low interest loan. Jim explained that seed money is not usually the types of loans Community Development does but that the Lewiston Auburn Growth Council could do this type of loan. He invited Mr. Rubin to make an appointment so they could discuss the issue further. Daniel Knowlton suggested the possibility of a merger or collaborative effort with one of Faithworks' clients to help with funding.

In the Crib Productions

Request of \$20,000 for the Hip Hop Festival

Review Committee recommendation for \$0.

Speakers: Scott Jordan, Roxanne Jacobson, Steve & Linda Hairston, Jesse Hammond

The Hip Hop Festival is a non-profit event in the community and Mr. Jordan hopes to make it an annual event, but in order for this to happen he needs financial assistance. The festival attracted 250 people last summer and was a positive influence on the youth of the area. Mr. Jordan feels with more publicity and funds that this festival could grow every year. Parents who attended last years festival spoke in support of making this a yearly event. It gives youths the opportunity to show their talents, dance to music and just spend the day with friends and family. Former Mayor of Lewiston, John Jenkins attended last years festival. Tom Peters asked Jim Andrews if CDBG had funded festivals in the past. It has not. Mr. Peters asked Mr. Jordan how much funding he really needed. Mr. Jordan would be happy with any amount the City would grant. He went on to say that last year the City took care of insurance costs but that this year, for unknown reasons, had decided not to extend the offer.

Literacy Volunteers

Request for \$9,606 for One-On-One Tutoring Program

Review Committee recommendation for \$0.

Speakers: Tahlia Hope, Jeanne Bard

A survey conducted by the National Institute for Literacy shows that Lewiston has the highest percentage of illiterate adults in Maine at 22%. This is a level one which means these people cannot fill out applications for employment, cannot read to their children, cannot read road signs. All of this translates to a life which is very isolated. The children of illiterate parents are more

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likely to need special services in school costing the City \$76,000 per student for the length of their education. Two years ago the program serviced 10 adults, today they are serving 50 and want that number to grow. If the City could fund \$3,198 it would enable Ms. Hope to add an additional 5 hours per week to her schedule which she desperately needs to do in order to accomplish her goals. Tom Peters inquired as to who performed the survey since he was concerned of the reliability of this type of survey. If the survey is correct, the numbers are alarming, if it is not correct than the numbers are insulting.

Norwich House
Request of \$15,000 for the Residential Group Home
Review Committee recommendation for \$10,000
Speaker: Lisa Henry

Ms. Henry is new to the Norwich House and introduced herself to the Board and thanked them for past support and for the current recommendation. Norwich House has invested \$36,000 to renovate its facility and bring it up to code standards. Currently there are 7 women and 8 children live at Norwich House.

Pathways
Request \$20,389 for Day Care
 \$18,416 for Workplace Program
 \$20,115 for Extended Employment
Review Committee recommendation for \$14,000; \$14,000 and \$10,000.
Speaker: Joel Packer

Mr. Packer stayed in the audience and thanked the Board for all the support received in the past.

SEARCH
Request of \$5,100 for Support Group Services
Review Committee Recommendation for \$5,100
Speaker: Jeff Newick

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Mr. Newick is the new director of SEARCH and wished to introduce himself to the Board. He distributed a handout which explained the program numbers. The program has been in existence since 1975 in Lewiston. He expressed his appreciation for the support given by the City.

Sexual Assault Crisis Center
Request of \$2,500 for Client Services
Review Committee recommendation of \$1,250
Speaker: Marty McIntyre

Ms. McIntyre thanked the Board for its support of the program.

Tri-County Mental Health
Request of \$8,500 for Family Services
Review Committee recommendation of \$3,000
Speaker: Garv Golding

This is Tri-County's 23rd year offering children's services to the community. He receives 60 - 80 referrals weekly. The program has 25-30 mobile crisis volunteers who go to the area schools to help those children who are in crisis. 60% of the clients are from Lewiston. The funding received from Lewiston pays for one person per diem.

Trinity Episcopal Church
Request of \$10,000 for Meals Program
\$14,000 for Wellness Program
Review Committee recommendation of \$10,000 and \$0.
Speaker: Rev. Bill Baxter

Rev. Baxter explained that the meals program has been reduced from 6 days a week to 3 days a week when the program funding was cut last year. He explained that although the name implies that clients are offered a meal it actually does much more. By bringing the neighborhood together the church sees what other needs there are and helps the people with many other problems such as getting medication, clothing, etc. It has also been responsible for other programs coming into existence, such as Faithworks.

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YWCA

Request for \$6,700 for Intervention Program
Review Committee recommendation for \$4,000
Speakers: Michael Ladd, Carol Troy

Thanked the Board for its support. Carol Troy replaces Martha Bruenig who resigned last year. Denis Theriault asked if the services provided take place in the schools to which the answer is yes. Also, the Middle School is very excited about the program coming to the school.

St. Martin de Porres

Request for \$15,000 for Clothing Closet & Multi-Purpose Room
Review Committee Recommendation for \$7,500
Speaker: Bro. Irene Richard

Bro. Richard introduced himself to the new Planning Board Members. His program helps individuals who are homeless, no matter what the reason. They welcome them and try to make them feel comfortable. The program strives to help restore these peoples dignity and self-worth. Bro. Richard appreciates all the help received from the City to date. To date they have raised \$17,500 to be used for the Clothing Closet renovations. They need to raise \$14,000 more to reach their goal which they plan to do by July 1, 1998. The Clothing Closet has the help of 120 volunteers. The grant of \$7,500 received from the CDBG Program for FY98 has not yet been drawn down but will be as soon as they meet the goal.

At 7:50 the meeting was closed to public comment. The Board proceeded to discuss the various requests before them. Each member listed the modifications to the Review Committee recommendations that they were in favor of. After all members spoke a vote was taken on all modifications and went as follows:

In the Crib Productions	2-4 (against)
Literacy Volunteers	4-2 (in favor)
Head Start	2-4 (against)
Androscoggin Home Health	1-5 (against)
Faithworks	2-4 (against)

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AWAP

1-5 (against)

Upon further discussion it was recommended that instead of funding Literacy Volunteers through the CDBG Program that the possibility of finding space for them in the non-profit share space proposed at the Bates Mill. This would free up rent expenses and they could then increase the number of hours for the directors position.

MOTION: by T. Peters, seconded by D. Theriault to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council to accept the Review Committee and Planning Board recommendations for the allocation of CDBG funds for FY99 with the following modification: Decrease by \$15,000 the allocation for the Kennedy Park Rehab Project and increase by \$15,000 the Downtown Street Rehab Project.

Vote: (6 - 0) favorable

The first reading of the CDBG recommendations will be on April 21, 1998 with the final public hearing to be scheduled for the meeting of May 5, 1998.

MOTION: by D. Theriault, seconded by T. Peters to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denis Theriault
Planning Board Secretary

ycb