

CUYAHOGA FALLS CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Community Development Committee Meeting

April 6, 2015

- Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Mr. Weinhardt, Chair, at 7:24 p.m. A quorum was present.
- Approval of the Minutes Approval of the minutes was deferred.
- Agenda Items
- Temp. Ord. B-28 An ordinance approving the Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2015, and declaring an emergency.
- Proponent testimony was offered by Deputy Community Development Director Sara Leedham. Ms. Leedham stated that this is the second year of the five-year plan. This marks the first year that the fiscal year of the program will be in alignment with the City's fiscal year. FY 2015 begins January 1, 2015. The City will receive \$602,659 from the federal government. The money will be spent on programmatic compliance, housing rehabilitation, a study concerning opening Front Street to traffic, and economic development incentives.
- The Chair stated that only a synopsis of the plan had been provided, and asked if a full copy of the Annual Action Plan is available. Ms. Leedham stated it is not available. It has not yet been submitted to HUD. Typically, a final copy will be provided once it has been approved by HUD.
- The Chair asked if this is happening because of the change in the program fiscal year.
- Ms. Leedham stated that the plan is submitted annually, but in previous years it would have been submitted at the end of May for a fiscal year starting July 1. The fiscal year now starts January 1.

The Chair asked when the Report will be submitted in the future. Ms. Leedham stated that the City has 60 days to submit the Plan once Congress passes its budget. An exact date is not known since it is contingent on when the federal budget is passed.

The Chair asked Ms. Leedham to explain the nature of an additional \$178,134 of "NSP" monies. Ms. Leedham stated that these are monies that the City received several years earlier and which are limited to infill housing and housing rehabilitation activities.

The Chair asked how many applicants there are for home improvements. Ms. Leedham stated that there is currently a waiting list of about 45 people. The Chair asked what the approval criteria are for these applicants. Ms. Leedham stated it first come first served, based upon completed applications from those qualified. There is not enough money to grant all the applications that have been received.

The Chair asked what date the Annual Action Plan is due to be submitted. Ms. Leedham stated it is due April 11.

The Chair asked what procedures determine whether the City receives the money. Ms. Leedham stated that the City submits a 5-year plan that is updated annually. As part of the process, the City seeks input from the public, the administration, and Council to generate the projects and activities to be done. The Plan is sent to HUD. HUD has approximately 45 days to approve it. Once approved, HUD sends a Grant Agreement to the Mayor for his signature. Funds are then made available in the City's account.

The Chair asked whether the federal government must pass a budget before HUD can give the City approval. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct. The Chair asked whether he is correct that there is no way to determine when the federal government will pass a budget. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct. The

Chair asked if there is a possibility that if the budget is not passed until September, whether the City would not get any money at all. Ms. Leedham stated that the City would get the money in September after it is approved.

The Chair asked how long it would take HUD to approve the City's plan once Congress has passed a budget. Ms. Leedham stated she did not know this information.

The Chair asked if HUD always approves the City's plan as submitted. Ms. Leedham stated that the amount of money available is based on formulas. The amount of money is known at the time the Plan is being finalized. What is not known is when it will be received.

The Chair asked if the ordinance is based on the assumption that a budget will be passed and HUD will approve the Plan. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct.

The Chair recognized Mrs. Pyke, who asked for a list of qualified households based on income. Ms. Leedham stated she would provide it. Mrs. Pyke asked if the Plan will be submitted electronically to HUD. Ms. Leedham stated that it will be. Mrs. Pyke asked Ms. Leedham to provide a copy of the Plan. Ms. Leedham stated that once it is submitted, it can be downloaded.

Mrs. Pyke requested a breakdown of the \$101,655 to be spent on programmatic compliance. Ms. Leedham stated that salaries, pensions and insurance, workers compensation and office supplies is \$88,708. \$3,000 is for advertising. Banking fees will be \$750. Court costs and fees are budgeted at \$2,000. \$1,000 is budgeted for training & education. \$1,000 is budgeted for travel. Memberships, misc. expenses, office equipment maintenance, publications, and periodicals are budgeted at \$7,475. \$2,400 is budgeted for temporary labor for any additional

administrative assistance. \$7,242 is budgeted for telephone costs.

Mrs. Pyke asked whether any of this money has been committed. Ms. Leedham stated that none of the money will be committed until the City has received approval from HUD.

Mrs. Pyke asked if the City has hired a CDBG Coordinator. Ms. Leedham stated that the City hired Kelly Crawford Smith as of March 30.

Mrs. Pyke asked out of the 45 people on the wait list, how many new applications for assistance have been sent out. Ms. Leedham stated that 14 applications have gone out. Mrs. Pyke asked if the City is still contracting with NDS. Ms. Leedham stated that NDS will be used for income qualifying applicants, and they will do other components of the rehab program.

Mrs. Pyke asked how the City can treat applicants as "first come, first served" when some home improvements sought are primarily aesthetic, while others are critical to keeping a homeowner in a livable house. Ms. Leedham stated that the City is in the process of revising that program. The City is looking for critical factors that would justify pushing someone to the top of the list, such as lack of electricity or water, or heat in the winter.

Mrs. Pyke asked if any emergency grants will be made with the \$189,000 in the housing rehabilitation program. Ms. Leedham stated that no emergency grants are planned. Instead, there will be a 0% deferred interest loan with no payments until the sale or transfer of the property. Mrs. Pyke asked what the maximum loan amount will be. Ms. Leedham stated it will be \$25,000. Mrs. Pyke asked if the recipient would need to reside in the home for a period of time after the loan is made. Ms. Leedham stated that the previous program required a 2-year residency.

Mrs. Pyke asked how much money has been spent on senior snow removal and how many residents were served by that program. Ms. Leedham stated she did not have this information, but would provide it.

Mrs. Pyke asked what the \$17,500 budgeted for infill housing will be used for. Ms. Leedham stated that it is for land acquisition with 2 or 3 homes slated for development. Mrs. Pyke asked for the addresses of these properties. Ms. Leedham stated she would look to see if there is a list.

Mrs. Pyke asked whether the Phase 1 of Cochran Road Sewer Project is the only infrastructure project planned. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct.

Mrs. Pyke asked if architectural and engineering services budgeted are solely for Front Street. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct.

Mrs. Pyke asked if the City will be using Vincent Curry for fair housing activities. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct. His company name is Fair Housing Advocates. Mrs. Pyke asked for his contact information. Ms. Leedham agreed to provide it.

Mrs. Pyke asked if the Plan will be submitted on April 11. Ms. Leedham stated this is correct. Mrs. Pyke asked what will happen if the Council does not approve it. Ms. Leedham stated the Plan would be submitted and it would be implemented once the Council approves. Mrs. Pyke asked if the City is ready to submit the plan. Ms. Leedham stated that the City is still waiting for other factors to be completed. Mrs. Pyke asked if the Council's approval is a formality. Ms. Leedham stated that the administration wants the Council's buy-in for the Plan. These numbers are merely revisions of what was discussed in the Fall. Mrs. Pyke stated that in the Fall, the Council was assured it would receive a copy of the final Plan. Ms. Leedham stated there is no final Plan because it has not been submitted.

The Chair stated he does not want to vote this out of committee until he has a clearer understanding of the consequences that would ensue if HUD does not approve the Plan.

Ms. Leedham stated that HUD will approve the projects listed. The Chair stated that the project list provided to Council is not the full Plan. Ms. Leedham stated that the Council is missing only the narrative and "some filler paper."

There was no opponent testimony. There was no public comment.

Motion by Mr. Colavecchio to release Temp. Ord. B-28. (No second.)

Motion by the Chair to hold Temp. Ord. B-28 in committee. Seconded by Mr. Pallotta. Motion adopted 2-1, Mr. Colavecchio objecting.

Non-Agenda Items

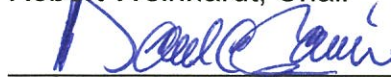
None.

Adjournment

Without objection, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.



Robert Weinhardt, Chair



Paul A. Janis, Clerk of Council