

**City of Cleveland Heights
Citizens Advisory Committee
October 20, 2020
Virtual Public Meeting**

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Benson
Cory Farmer
Christine Henry
Gretchen Mettler
Jessica Schantz

Laura Black
Jonathan Goldman
Allison McCallum
T. Nadas
Steve Titchenal

MEMBERS ABSENT

Patrick Akers (exc.)
André Witt

Bradley Eckert

STAFF PRESENT

Brian Iorio

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cory Farmer called the meeting to order. Secretary Jessica Schantz called the roll; a quorum was present.

Brian Iorio announced that Amy Newman Smith had resigned from the CAC.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Cory Farmer announced the start of the Public Hearing for the third round of the CDBG-CV funding. Chairman Farmer solicited public comment from those in attendance. Seeing none, he asked Brian Iorio to describe the substantial amendment related to this funding.

Mr. Iorio explained the proposed allocation of funds for CDBG-CV3. He described that as opposed to the 10% allocated to admin from CDBG-CV1, the administration is requesting that 20% of the CDBG-CV3 funds be allocated to grant administration. The remainder of the funds are proposed to be used for emergency assistance. Both Geshner and the Office on Aging have requested emergency assistance funds for 2021 with the remainder going towards housing assistance. Mr. Iorio described the great demand for emergency rental assistance and mortgage assistance and the potential use of Coronavirus Relief Funds to add to the assistance already being provided.

Mr. Benson asked what the Office on Aging funds are being used for. Mr. Iorio explained that they have been utilizing funds in order to deliver food and supplies to seniors. They are also utilizing funds to partner with Benjamin Rose and

the Heights Emergency Food Center in order to provide access to food support. They have also invested in technology to allow Seniors to stay connected to their community as they socially isolate due to the pandemic.

Chairman Farmer called for a voice vote in order to recommend to Council the proposed allocations that Mr. Iorio described. The CAC voted unanimously to recommend to Council the following allocations: \$39,745.80 for CDBG Administration and \$158,983.20 for Emergency Assistance.

STAFF REPORTS

Staff Recommendations

Chairman Farmer asked Mr. Iorio to explain to the CAC the cuts that the administration made in order to propose a balanced budget of \$1,683,230. Mr. Iorio explained the rationale for the allocations that differed from the CAC subcommittee recommendations:

- CD Admin: The subcommittee recommended full funding minus carryover funds. The CDBG-CV funding will reduce the need for Year 47 funding. The recommendation accounted for an increased reliance on carryover and CDBG-CV funding.
- FutureHeights Community Capacity Building: The recommendation for this did not change but Mr. Iorio noted that he will be asking for a hard limit of 75% for the Director of Community-Building Programs in order to allow for non-CDBG activities. FutureHeights will likely need to divert a small amount of salary for the Executive Director to CDBG in order to accommodate this funding condition.
- HRRC Housing Counselor: This cut was due to budget constraints. Mr. Iorio feels comfortable that HRRC will be able to utilize other sources of funding in order to pay for this position.
- Heights Emergency Food Center: This recommendation was increased slightly due to the increased rent costs for HEFC.
- Open Doors Academy: Both of their programs were reduced to the same level as Year 46. This recommendation was necessitated by both the Public Service cap and the overall budget constraints.
- Homelessness Street Outreach: This was increased to \$20,000 in order to make the project feasible. The likely service provider indicated that they would be unable to accommodate a lower amount due to overhead costs that they would need to cover.
- ADA Curb Ramp Project: this was cut by \$5,000 due to overall budget constraints. This program is fairly easy to scale up or down.
- Shannon Road Waterline and Street Resurfacing Project: This project is being fully funded, however, carryover funds from previous year Street Improvement Projects and Waterline Replacement Projects will be utilized to make up the difference. These carryover funds are already allocated to street resurfacing and waterline replacement and do not need a

substantial amendment or reallocation.

- FutureHeights Cedar Lee Mini-Park: The subcommittee indicated that they would be willing to make cuts to this project in order to balance the budget. A small cut was made to this activity for that reason.
- HRRC Assist Incentive Grant: This was cut by \$5,000 in order to balance the budget. The recommendation is still an increase over previous years.
- HPO Operating/Staff: A cut of \$47,000 was made due to carryover from a vacant Housing Rehab Specialist position.
- LMI Code Enforcement: This was increased by \$8,000 to the full request because of a lack of carryover for this activity and a lack of alternative sources of funding in order to fund this position.
- HPO Strategic Home Repair: The subcommittee recommendation was \$0 due to the lack of projects completed by August. Mr. Iorio explained that since then, many projects have been started and he sees this activity as an important part of the SIO targeting strategy. This recommendation was increased to \$45,000.
- ED Admin: A cut of \$25,000 was made due to carryover funds.
- Storefront Consultants: A cut of 50% was made due to the unlikelihood that we would be able to complete more than 3 new projects in 2021 as a result of limited capacity.
- Strategic Impact Opportunity: This was drastically cut in order to balance the budget. The SIO also serves as CDBG's contingency fund and due to the conservative Year 47 funding estimate, it is likely that this will increase.
- FutureHeights FutureHomes Program: This program was reduced to \$0. This was done largely to balance the budget and also because it is expected that once FutureHeights completes their first project that was funded under Year 46, they will receive Program Income that will allow them to undertake a second rehab. The recommendation is not a reflection on the importance of the activity or the quality of the application.

Mr. Iorio noted that the HPO Strategic Home Repair is actually an SIO program so the amount of funding going to SIO projects is almost \$20,000 over the SIO budget. This is ok because all SIO projects are eligible CDBG projects and because City program years start on January 1st.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HPO is in need of transferring funds to both the Nuisance Abatement Program and Violation Repair Program. A request was made to the Housing Subcommittee to transfer \$10,000 from Short Term Deferred Loan to Nuisance Abatement and \$10,000 from the Downspout Disconnect Program to the Violation Repair Program. Both of these transfers are below the threshold for a substantial amendment. The subcommittee has recommended that the CAC approve these transfers. Steve Titchenal made a motion to approve the

aforementioned transfer. Gretchen Mettler seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

MINUTES

The minutes from the September 15th meeting were approved as amended.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 2021 CAC Recommendations

CAC was reminded that the allocation amount that CAC is using tonight to make recommendations is not a firm number until Congress determines the 2021 HUD budget and the formula is applied to all entitlements. At this point it is estimated that Cleveland Heights will be allocated at least \$1.6M. An additional \$75,230 from the SIO and \$8,000 of unused funds by Central Bible Baptist Church is also available. It will be necessary to cut \$634,167 from the requests and \$392,842 from the subcommittee recommendations to meet the anticipated budget of \$1,683,230.

In addition to the chair, there were 8 members present to begin the voting.

Administrative Activities

CD Administration

Subcommittee recommendation: \$188,392

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$156,000 by Steve Titchenal; seconded by Christine Henry.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Fair Housing Activities

Subcommittee recommendation: \$34,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

GIS

Subcommittee recommendation: \$12,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Future Heights Community Capacity Building

Subcommittee recommendation: \$50,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

The CAC determined that there was no need for Jessica Schantz to abstain from this vote because she is only affiliated with the Heights Observer.

Public Service Activities

HRRC Housing Counselor

Subcommittee recommendation: \$30,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$20,000 by David Benson;
seconded by Jonathan Goldman.

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Office on Aging Senior Services

Subcommittee recommendation: \$30,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Heights Emergency Food Center

Subcommittee recommendation: \$27,450

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$28,000 by David Benson;
seconded by Jonathan Goldman.

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Family Connections

Subcommittee recommendation: \$25,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Open Doors Academy (Middle School Program)

Subcommittee recommendation: \$20,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$15,000 by David Benson;
seconded by Jonathan Goldman.

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Open Doors Academy (High School Program)

Subcommittee recommendation: \$20,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$15,000 by David Benson;
seconded by Jonathan Goldman.

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Start Right Food Program

Subcommittee recommendation: \$10,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Gesher

Subcommittee recommendation: \$10,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Lake Erie Ink

Subcommittee recommendation: \$12,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Bhutanese Community of Greater Cleveland Community Center

Subcommittee recommendation: \$10,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

Homessness Street Outreach

Subcommittee recommendation: \$10,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$20,000 by David Benson;
seconded by Jonathan Goldman.

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

WAVE Mentoring Program

Subcommittee recommendation: \$10,000

CAC voted 6-1-1 in favor of the motion.

The CAC voted on these recommendations as a group. One member abstained. The nay vote was primarily due to the lower funding for Open Doors Academy.

Public Facilities

2021 ADA Curb Ramp Construction

Subcommittee recommendation: \$195,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$190,000 by Christine Henry;
second by Jessica Schantz.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Shannon Rd. Waterline and Street Resurfacing Project

Subcommittee recommendation: \$179,532

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$42,532 by Christine Henry;
second by Jessica Schantz.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

FutureHeights – Cedar Lee Mini-Park Placemaking Project

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$33,510

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$30,000 by Christine Henry;
second by Jessica Schantz.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Severance Tower Local Advisory Council Board – Community Garden

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$14,400

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Housing Activities

Home Repair Resource Center Subcommittee Recommendations:

HRRC Operating Expenses: \$195,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$139,000 by Jonathan Goldman; second by Christine Henry.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion

Assist Incentive Grant: \$20,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$15,000 by Jonathan Goldman; second by Christine Henry.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion

Deferred Loan Match: \$5,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion

Senior Home Stability Grant: \$4,500

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion

Assist 0% Benefit: \$500

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion

Total: \$164,000

Housing Preservation Office Subcommittee Recommendations:

Paint Program:

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$80,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Nuisance Abatement:

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$50,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Violation Repair Program for Seniors:

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$20,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

HPO Operating/Staff

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$319,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$285,000 by David Benson;
second by Laura Black.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

LMI Code Enforcement:

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$42,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$50,000 by David Benson;
second by Laura Black.

CAC voted 8-0-0 favor of the motion.

Total: \$485,000

Economic Development

Economic Development Administration

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$150,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$125,000 by Steve Titchenal;
second by David Benson.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Storefront Consultants

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$50,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$25,000 by Steve Titchenal;
second by David Benson.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Microenterprise Loan Program

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$25,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

FutureHeights Small Business Outreach

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$25,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Strategic Impact Opportunity

2021 Strategic Impact Opportunity

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$100,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$298 by Steve Titchenal; second
by Christine Henry.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

2020: HPO – Strategic Home Repair

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$0

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$45,000 by David Benson;
second by Laura Black.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

2020: Start Right CDC – Good Neighbor Home Rehab Program

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$45,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

2020: FutureHeights – FutureHomes

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$75,000

Motion to amend the recommendation to \$45,000 of non-SIO funds by
Jonathan Goldman; second by Christine Henry

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Later in the meeting: motion to amend the recommendation to \$0 by
Jonathan Goldman, second by Allison McCallum.

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

2020: Family Connections – Parent Café

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$5,000

CAC voted 8-0-0 in favor of the motion.

Steve Titchenal moved that these recommendations, as voted on previously, be put forward as the Year 47 (Fiscal Year 2021) CDBG Allocation recommendations from the Citizens Advisory Committee to City Council. The allocations approved as noted above total \$1,683,230 for Year 47 funding. The motion was seconded by Gretchen Mettler and passed by a vote of 8-0-0.

Mr. Iorio announced that the Council Committee of the Whole, when Chairman Cory Farmer presents the recommendations to Council, has not been set. It will likely occur toward the end of November. Mr. Iorio will notify CAC members as soon as possible. All members are invited to attend.

Gretchen Mettler discussed ways to honor Donalene Poduska's life. She suggested writing a memorial in the Heights Observer and/or Sun Press; having Council and the General Assembly pass ceremonial resolutions commending her service, and creating a memorial plaque somewhere in the City. Mr. Iorio said that he will discuss the ceremonial resolution with the City Manager and dedicating one of the Noble Road benches with FutureHeights and Noble Neighbors.

Due to the length of this meeting and previous meetings, the CAC determined that the November meeting should be cancelled if there is no urgent business to discuss.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Cory Farmer, Chair

Jessica Schantz, Secretary