



*APPROVED*

**MINUTES**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 28, 2024, City Council Chambers**

**400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**

**Call to Order:** At 6:03 p.m., Chairperson Anne Heinze-Silvis called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call:** The roll was called by Grants Management Division Manager, Breaden Belcher. A quorum was present.

**Commission Members Present:** Anne Heinze-Silvis, Rev. Robert Freeman, DeShawn Williams, Chris Diana

**Commission Members Excused/Absent:** Patricia Jones

**Others Present:** Breaden Belcher, Grants Management Division Manager; Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Williams moved to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2024 Regular Meeting. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

**Additions to the Agenda:** There were none.

**Public Input:** There was none.

**Staff Report:** Nick Olsen, Community Development Coordinator, spoke about attending a CDBG training organized by the National Community Development Association in Columbus, OH in April.

Mr. Belcher provided an update that federal CDBG and HOME allocations had been announced, and that funding for Urbana's programs was down 21% from previous years. He mentioned that there were nationwide cuts to programs, but that carryover funds from previous years should help to prevent any service reductions in the coming year. Commissioner Freeman asked if the 2020 Census would have impacted the level of funding. Mr. Belcher said he thinks that is a reasonable assumption, but HUD explanation of funding levels is limited.

Mr. Olsen and Mr. Belcher provided an update on the Neighborhood Cleanup event that took place on May 18, 2024, and which is funded through CDBG. 115 households attended the drop-off site, and 78 households with seniors or persons with disabilities received a courtesy collection.

Mr. Belcher announced that the City of Urbana Grants Management Division had hired Cameron Messmer for the position of Community Development Specialist, and spoke about Mr. Messmer's previous experience managing housing programs, and stated he would be starting on June 4, 2024.

**Unfinished Business:** There was none.

**New Business:**

1. 810 E University Loan Modification

Mr. Belcher explained that 810 East University Avenue is a home that received assistance through the City's no longer active Whole House Rehabilitation program (funded through HOME) in 1992. The original agreement required the household to pay back loan funds if the home were to be sold and the loan had not yet been repaid. CDC has the power to modify the loan so that it may be forgiven at the point of the sale. The current homeowners are considering selling the home and have inquired about forgiving the loan.

Commissioner Freeman asked for clarification about waving the loan. He stated he would have concerns about forgiving the money to the property and potential investors as opposed to the household.

Commissioner Williams asked about the initial intention of the loan agreement. Mr. Belcher explained that the assistance came with a 5-year affordability period that the Commission would have the option of forgiving after that point.

There was general discussion over the feasibility of keeping a lien on the property and whether the initial assistance has served its purpose.

Commissioner Freeman motioned to approve loan forgiveness at the point of sale. Commissioner Williams seconded. In ensuing discussion, there was general agreement that more information on the financial situation of the home and the household would help the Commission make a decision. This initial motion failed due to lack of a vote.

Commissioner Freeman motioned to table discussion of the item more information could be provided. Commissioner Williams seconded. All present voted in favor and the item was tabled for continued discussion at a later meeting.

2. Housing Program Manual Amendment

Mr. Olsen provided an overview of Housing Program Manual Amendments related to HUD's new rule requiring consideration of radon as part of the Environmental Review process for projects receiving federal assistance. He explained that this would require testing and potential mitigation for rehabilitation and new construction projects. Because radon mitigation has the potential to significantly increase project costs, the proposed Program Manual amendment would increase assistance caps for housing rehabilitation programs by \$5,000 in instances where radon mitigation is required.

Commissioner Freeman motioned to approve the proposed amendment, noting that he understands radon is a major health concern. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Commissioner Diana stated that based on his experience, he expects many properties will require mitigation. All present voted in favor and the motion was approved.

3. A Resolution Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Subrecipient Agreement Community Development Block Grant Agreement - Rape Advocacy, Counseling, & Education Services - Survivor Services-Trauma Therapy

Mr. Belcher provided overview of RACES' social service programming, and explained that \$30,000 in CDBG assistance was being recommended to fund the organization. He explained that CDBG public services funds are subject to a maximum expenditure cap. He also provided an overview of Youth Services Grant application and selection process, and explained that other selected Youth Services programs would receive general City funds.

Freeman asked why no funding had been recommended for the USD 116 Tiger Academy program this. Mt. Belcher discussed the scoring rubric used by the Youth Services review committee, and also stated that City Council would still need to approve the recommendations. He clarified that the current item was only to provide CDBG funds to the RACES program.

Commissioner Williams motioned to approve the proposed funding for RACES. Commissioner Diana seconded. All present voted in favor, and the motion was forwarded to City Council with a recommendation of approval.

**Study Session:** There were no Study Session items to discuss.

**Adjournment:** Chairperson Heinze-Silvis adjourned the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Recorded by:

Nick Olsen  
Community Development Coordinator