

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 20, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Robert Curwen, Chair; Angel dePara, Co-Chair; Evette Brantley, Lydia Martinez; Michelle Lyons (6:10 p.m.)

**OTHERS:** Renu Gupta, Grants Department; Kelly McDermott, Grants Department; Dawn Twistol, Grants Department; Mark Anastasi, City Attorney; Council Member Andre Baker

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Curwen called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Committee Minutes of December 15, 2009.**

These were not discussed.

**24-09 Grant Submission: re: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency Block Grant Competitive Program to develop an Energy Efficient Capital Buy-Down Loan Program.**

Ms. Twistol came forward and said that the City was applying for a national competitive block grant for capital buy down for 6,000 households and a number of businesses in the greater Bridgeport area. There will not be any matching funds, but there is community leverage funding needed. Ms. Twistol reviewed what this meant and how it would be calculated. The grant is for a variety of energy saving measures for the audited homes. This is not replacing programs that assist families that do not have the funds to work on energy efficiency, but for the residents who are reluctant to follow the energy efficiencies because of the cost involved. This grant could reduce their costs significantly. Community Capital Fund (ComCap) will be working on the business aspects.

*Ms. Lyons joined the meeting at 6:10 p.m.*

Housing Development Fund (HDF) will be handling the residential funds. There are

three outreach mechanisms, one through UI through normal channels; another is through advertising and the third to the Conservation Corp.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 24-09 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY BLOCK GRANT COMPETITIVE PROGRAM TO DEVELOP AN ENERGY EFFICIENT CAPITAL BUY-DOWN LOAN PROGRAM**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The chairman requested this item be placed on the consent calendar.

**25-09 Grant Submission: re: U.S. EPA 2010 Brownfields Job Training Program**

Ms. Gupta came forward and said that the Brownfield Job Training Program has been received by the City in past years. This will provide training for 69 unemployed or underemployed people. The trainees, who will be chosen from those residents receiving food stamps who have expressed interest will receive training in lead and asbestos. Social Services will be overseeing the two year program. This program also involves leverage from those who are receiving food stamps. It has been a successful program in the past and some of the previous graduates have gone on to do lead and other abatement in identified homes.

*Council Member Baker joined the meeting at 6:16 p.m.*

Council Member Lyons asked how the trainees were selected. Ms. Gupta said that it would be done through Social Services.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 25-09 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE: U.S. EPA 2010 BROWNFIELDS JOB TRAINING PROGRAM.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The chairman requested this item be placed on the consent calendar.

**26-09 Grant Submission: re: U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Health Homes Demonstration Project.**

Ms. Gupta said that the City was applying for the Healthy Homes grant, which the City has not applied for before. Over a two year period, 275 homes should have health hazards removed. Council Member Brantley asked who would be overseeing. Ms. Gupta said that it has not been determined at this time. Ms. Twistol said that the City was looking to cross train their inspectors, but things are still unclear. The funds will be used to cross train everyone in Health Homes, so a housing inspector could be trained. The fund will not pay for staff. Council Member Curwen said that he had concerns about which department would be overseeing this.

Council Member Lyons said that there was already a shortage of inspectors and she was concerned that this was just adding another layer to their jobs. She also had concerns about the funding. Ms. Gupta then said that it would be a certificate cross training program so the inspectors could identify problems. Council Member Lyons asked for a list of the inspectors who will receive the training. Ms. Twistol said that the funding was for homes. Council Member Martinez said that she would like to have information to pass on to her community.

Council Member dePara said that he saw it as better equipping the officers to identify various situations. He said that when he accompanied a housing inspector onsite, he saw various aspects of problems in the homes. Council Member Lyons said that her concern was the fact that the City doesn't have enough inspectors to do regular inspections. Council Member Brantley said that she saw the need for this grant in her daily work.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 26-09 GRANT SUBMISSION: RE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH HOMES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**  
**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The chairman requested this item be placed on the consent calendar.

If these three grants are awarded to the City, the Council Members should be notified. Ms. Twistol said that she thought it would be good to send notifications through the Council Members when any grant is awarded.

**Informational Presentation re: CDBG Process/Best Practices by Offices of Housing & Community Development.**

City of Bridgeport  
Economic and Community Development  
And Environmental Committee  
Regular Meeting  
January 20, 2010  
Page 3

Ms. McDermott introduced herself and said that she was the Acting Senior Manager of the Grants Department. The annual allocation process will start very soon. Ms. McDermott then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the various types of grant funding the City receives.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) must benefit low/moderate income individuals and/or households; addresses the prevention or elimination of slums or blight and finally meets a particular urgent community issues, like disasters.

Eligible Activities and funding categories include: housing; public infrastructure, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, public service (social services program 15% maximum) and program administration.

ESG – Emergency Shelter Grant – This provides services for those who are homeless in Bridgeport. The services provided can include, employment counseling, medical and psychological counseling, substance abuse treatment and counseling.

Housing Opportunities for People with Aids (HOPWA) is used for provide housing for those members of the community with AIDS. This is a regional program, and the City is required by law to consider all application from the surrounding area also. When asked about the allocation funding, Ms. McDermott said that she believe that it might be a formula calculation. This is focused on maintaining housing and supportive services for those with HIV/AIDS.

The HOME program is a Federal block grant to State and local governments designed to create affordable housing for low-income households. This is a revolving application cycle and the department will recommend categories with recommended funding. Projects that Bridgeport has engaged in include the Jessica Tandy housing project and the Park City Hospital project. HUD is particular about the amount of funding that can be allocated to a project. Council Member Brantley asked how far the Park City project had progressed. Ms. McDermott said that both Jessica Tandy and Park City are close to completion, but have not obtained their C.O.s yet. Council Member Martinez asked for application information.

Ms. McDermott then gave an overview of the application process along with a timeline and a review of how the grant funding is allocated.

*Ms. McDermott then distributed a copy of CDGB Reprogramming of Funds FY10/PY36 Timeline to the Committee Members.*

She also gave a brief overview of the Section 108 loans and how that program is administered. Council Member Curwen asked for more information regarding the debt service and the recent refinancing of the loans. Ms. McDermott said that when the upcoming PY 36, Ms. Kabal and Ms. McDermott can have a presentation regarding the debt repayment schedule for the Council. Council Member Baker asked for a presentation for the Council members on this.

Ms. McDermott said that a new process had been developed for the scheduling of the public hearings for the grant application funding.

Council Member dePara said that he and Council Member Curwen were working on developing the best method for making the process as fair and equitable as possible. Council Member Curwen said that they were open to all suggestions on improving the method.

Council Member Martinez said that she would like a map of the target areas for the funding.

Council Member Baker said that in the past the Committee had discussed reviewing some of the programs that had applied for CDBG funds. Council Member Curwen said that the Committee's intentions were to develop a policy that would prevent any agency from becoming over dependent on Federal funds. Council Member dePara said there had been lengthy discussions about this issue, but also they want to look towards best practices. Discussion followed.

Ms. McDermott said that there would be a draft document that would be presented for the Committee's consideration and discussion.

**14-09 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development program year 35 Annual Action Plan: Community Development Block Grant Program**

Ms. McDermott explained that HUD had been late in making their decisions and there were some delays from the City because of Steel Point. Because of these two delays, this issue had not been presented to ECDCE until now. There were some conditions attached to the HUD funding last year. She then reviewed the amounts that could be allocated to

the various sections of the program. It will be important to spend down the balance of these funds by allocating these funds to projects that are currently receiving funding. She then reviewed the reallocating schedule with the Committee. Discussion then followed about the various agencies and the possibility of allocating funding.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER DEPARA MOVED \$5,000 CITY OF BRIDGEPORT SS EMERGENCY CODE VIOLATION RELOCATION, AND \$4,111 ALLOCATED TO CITY OF BRIDGEPORT DEPARTMENT ON AGING SENIOR PROGRAM IN PUBLIC SERVICE.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE ALLOCATION OF \$12,147 TO PUBLIC SERVICES PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

**\*\*COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ALLOCATE \$20,000 HALL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE FOR PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND; \$19,478 TO ST. JOHN'S FAMILY CENTER RENOVATIONS**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE DOCUMENT AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The chairman requested this item be placed on the consent calendar.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

City of Bridgeport  
Economic and Community Development  
And Environmental Committee  
Regular Meeting  
January 20, 2010  
Page 6

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport  
Economic and Community Development  
And Environmental Committee  
Regular Meeting  
January 20, 2010  
Page 7