

**Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC)  
Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, April 3, 2023 – 5:00 PM (Hybrid)**

Lower-Level Conference Room 23 Union Street Norwich, CT 06360

Zoom Meeting ID: 837 8318 0630 Passcode: 978720

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83783180630?pwd=U1c1cTZ6aDNnZFN5SjBXdU9ZMG1LUT09>

**Members Present:** Les King (Chairperson), Mark Marcy, Larry Rice,  
Angela Duhaime (remote), and Gemma Fabris (remote)

**Members Absent:** Sean Barnes

**Others Present:** Sydney Phelps (staff) and Tianne Curtis (staff)

1. The CDAC was called to order at 5:01 PM.

Chairman, Les King, deferred to the Director of Community Development, Sydney Phelps to review the CDBG-CV guidelines and recapture process. The Director stated that the Office of Community Development recaptured unspent funding previously allotted for Small Business Assistance (SBA), the Taftville Walking Track, and the ARC of Eastern CT for a total recapture of \$200,586.16. The Office received 6 applications for a total cumulative request of \$368,385.68. Tonight the CDAC will hear presentations from applicants before deciding on how to reallocate recaptured funding. Each project selected must be an activity that prepares, prevents, or responds to the coronavirus pandemic. The Committee's recommendations will then be posted in the paper for a 30-day public comment period before presenting their determinations to the City Council through a public hearing.

2. The presentation schedule for the meeting was as follows:

5:10 PM	TVCCA—Homeless Prevention Program
5:20 PM	NHS—Senior Accessible Medical Care & Education
5:30 PM	Thames River Community Service—Young Parent Housing Stability
5:40 PM	St. Vincent de Paul Place—Cold Food Storage
5:50 PM	Big Brother Big Sisters—Community-Based Mentoring
6:00 PM	DPW—Taftville Sidewalk Improvements

**TVCCA—Homeless Prevention Program: \$20,000**

Jon-Paul Mandelburg, Housing Director for TVCCA, presented the *Homeless Prevention Program (Reducing the Spread of Covid)* application. The program intends to prevent the spread of Covid-19 by providing financial assistance to stabilize housing conditions and divert from the need for shelter utilization. By preventing overcrowding that occurs when at-risk families “double up” or have to utilize shelters, the service works to prevent the spread of Covid-19 by promoting safer isolation methods. This program additionally responds to the economic burden placed on many families due to the global pandemic which resulted in job loss and/or reduction of hours for many Norwich residents. The program projects to assist 45 Norwich households.

**NHS—Senior Accessible Medical Care & Education: \$170,000**

Director of Norwich Human Services (NHS), Kate Milde, and Director of Community Health at Hartford Health Care (HHC), Joe Zuzel, presented the *Overcoming Covid-Related Disparities with Accessible Medical Care & Education for Norwich Seniors* application. The program aims to provide health services for Norwich's seniors through the Rose City Senior Center's (RCSC) existing clinical space. NHS is leveraging ARPA funds utilized to transport seniors to and from medical appointments. NHS is partnering with HHC to provide accessible medical screenings, health education, professional referrals, and Covid-19 vaccinations. Their program package is ready to launch and involves a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), overhead costs, liability coverage, IT supports and admin fees through HHC. The proposed package intends to serve 1100 Norwich seniors.

**Thames River Community Service—Young Parent Housing Stability: \$22,275**

Executive Director for Thames River Community Services (TRCS), Uduak Enyiema, presented the *Increased Housing Stability for Young Parents Post-COVID* application. The program provides increased stability for young parents, ages 18-24, who are experiencing job loss, housing insecurity, and mental health adversities as long-term effects of the pandemic. Some examples of services provided through the program are conducting individualized assessments, creating career goals, preparing resumes, and cultivating effective life and communication skills to encourage employment and ultimately housing stability. Committee Chairman, Les King, asked about the application's tie back to pandemic response and TRCS reported that housing and job insecurity stemming from the pandemic have become life-long obstacles for their clients. Committee member Gemma Fabris noted that stabilizing housing for families is also a preventative Covid-19 measure as it promotes separate living quarters and thusly reduces the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

**St. Vincent de Paul Place—Cold Food Storage: \$46,413.68**

Jillian Corbin, Executive Director of St. Vincent de Paul Place (SVDPP), and Peter Gail, a SVDPP volunteer, presented the *Cold Food Storage* application. They are requesting funding to purchase an outdoor freezer/cooler to store fresh and frozen food, a pallet jack to move shipments, and shelving to store dry food to expand their organization's capacity to meet the 40% increase in demand the food pantry has seen as a result of the pandemic. Jill defined the meaning of "community", as a collective feeling of support and care shared between a people and spoke to how this is cultivated daily at SVDPP. They have seen the economic effects of the pandemic manifest most apparently as food insecurity, a need that continues to grow as emergency SNAP benefits and free SEAT ride programs end. While they distribute over 16,000 pounds of food to the community weekly, SVDPP does not have the space to hold the food that they need and they are often forced to turn food donations away that could be well utilized by the community. They have secured ARPA funds to cover 2/3 of the cost and are requesting CDBG funds to complete the funding needed to expand this vital public service. SVDPP is non-denominational and expects to serve 1,065 new Norwich patrons if funded.

**Big Brother Big Sisters—Community-Based Mentoring: \$10,000**

Ryan Matthews presented the *Community-Based Mentoring* application for Big Brother Big Sisters (BBBS). They are requesting funding to expand mentorship services to 10 additional children in Norwich. Matthews attested that 1 in 3 children do not have a stable non-parental role model to look to and that BBBS mentorship helps to cultivate self-efficacy, self-confidence, and social skills in children. Mentors meet with children 6-10 hours a month and participate in community-based activities and events together to procure long-term positive outcomes. NHS Youth & Family partners with BBBS to identify and refer children struggling with adverse mental health, behavioral control, or poor academic performance, negative outcomes that have seen documented increases amongst youth populations since the pandemic. Matthews relayed that funding is for volunteer staffing supports for a year of mentorship, but reported that once enrolled, engagement with BBBS can continue up to a child's 26<sup>th</sup> birthday. BBBS stated that they are confident in their ability to administer their request for funding within 2 months.

**DPW—Taftville Sidewalk Improvements: \$119,697**

Patrick McLaughlin, Principal Engineer and Director for Norwich's Department of Public Works (DPW), presented the *Taftville Walking Path Improvements* application. The project was previously approved under CDBG-CV but the subrecipient forfeited the allotment sighting insufficient funds to complete a true improvement to the track. This proposal expands the existing track to a 10ft wide, paved, multi-use track at the local Taftville Park, and adds digging drainage dry wells to keep water from pooling in different areas of the 1,000ft track. The track is located in a low- and moderate-income census tract and is adjacent to the Taftville Fire Station and Sacred Heart School. The CDAC inquired about the cost increases and asked if the labor could be completed within the department within a 2-month time frame. DPW relayed that they have to borrow their equipment from Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) and instead planned to put the project out to bid. The CDAC asked about the possibility of submitting a phased approach due to the cost of the improvements, which DPW sighted that the prep work should happen right before paving rather than waiting for an extended period of time.

3. Communications

Committee member Angela Duhaime signed off the meeting at 6:07 pm.

DPW handed a request to re-appropriate funds between their approved projects to the Director of Community Development. The request will be disseminated to the CDAC via email for review before the next meeting. The formal request will be entered into the record, presented, and discussed during the communications portion of the April 6, 2023 meeting at 3:30 pm.

The CDAC began deliberations at 6:15 pm. After lengthy review the CDAC committee votes to re-allocate the recaptured \$200,586.16 as follows:

\$	20,000.00	TVCCA Homeless Prevention Program
\$	101,897.48	NHS Senior Accessible Medical Care
\$	22,275.00	TRCS Post-Covid Young Adult Housing Stability
\$	46,413.68	SVDPP Cold Food Storage
\$	10,000.00	BBBS Community-Based Mentoring

Motion was made by Mark Marcy, seconded by Gemma Fabris, to recommend the approved funding as presented to the City Council for final approval. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Motion was made by Mark Marcy and seconded by Larry Rice to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sydney Phelps,  
Community Development Director