

Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 28, 2023 – 5:30 PM
Lower-Level Conference Room 23 Union Street Norwich, CT 06360

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

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

1. The CDAC was called to order at 5:30 PM.

Community Development Director, Sydney Phelps, introduced herself to the CDAC and briefly reviewed the Community Development Department's role to manage compliance with HUD and the CDAC's role in the allocation decisions and public comment portion of the annual CDBG process. A handout summarizing key points was issued to all CDAC voting members (attached). Sydney noted that the actual entitlement award for Program Year 49 (2023-2024) is \$806,276.

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

5:40 PM	Children in Placement - Guardian at Litem (GAL)
5:50 PM	Immigration Advocacy Support Center (IASC)
6:00 PM	Three Rivers Community College Food Pantry
6:10 PM	TVCCA Homelessness Prevention
6:20 PM	Madonna Place COPE
6:30 PM	Safe Futures
6:40 PM	The Lefty Cycles Project Inc.
6:50 PM	OIC of NLC

Children in Placement (CIP) – Guardian at Litem (GAL): \$25,000

Executive Director Janet Freimuth presented the application and an additional handout to the committee. CIP is requesting operating funds to recruit additional Guardian at Litem volunteers and provide staff support to serve Norwich's abused/neglected youth. CIP works with DCF referrals and within Superior and Probate Court and assigns attorneys based on income levels to vulnerable children during custody cases. Reported that they take 100% of the cases assigned and that they currently have 34 regional cases, 13 of which are Norwich children. They anticipate serving 35 youths from the City of Norwich. Mark Marcy noted a funding discrepancy within the application under Part III, Table A. Agency Financial Data where CIP wrote receiving \$25,000 for PY48 when they were awarded \$20,000. He requested that CIP correct the discrepancy for submission to the Director to present to the CDAC.

Immigration Advocacy & Support Center – CLEAR: \$8,000.00

IASC Atty. Joseph Marino presented the application. He thanked the Committee for valuing the legal services they provide to Norwich's immigrant population, particularly the Haitian Community. Funding helps IASC offer their clients a sliding scale fee for services rendered. IASC partners with UCFS twice a month to offer accessible office space in Norwich to meet the increased demand for TPS, work permits, citizenship renewals, and other immigration-related legal pursuits. They intend to set up office hours at Adult Education this September. Requesting funding to expand the CLEAR program and assist with increased demand from Norwich's Haitian residents to complete legal paperwork to apply for the newly established Immigration Parole Program. They anticipate taking on 40 new cases, providing 60 consultations, and offering at least 3 educational informative sessions.

Three Rivers Community College Food Pantry: \$15,000

Aliyia Ziegler and Jordan Shanet presented from the Food Pantry Task Force. They are requesting funding to continue the College's food pantry which provides grocery items and meals to enrolled students. The pantry does not receive funding directly from the institution, but from the student government and through fundraising efforts. The CDAC requested more information as to their process for tracking demographic information, verification of residency in Norwich, and household income to be submitted to the Director for presentation to the CDAC.

TVCCA – Home Again: \$20,000.00

Jon-Paul Mandelburg, Housing Director for TVCCA presented for the Home Again Program (Homeless Prevention & Diversion Program). The program continues to focus on homelessness prevention for low-income families by providing grants and case management to avoid eviction, maintain stable housing, and provide emotional supports during crisis. They reported that 60% of those served through the Home Again Program are Norwich residents.

Madonna Place (COPE): \$15,000

Claire Silva, Executive Director presented for the COPE Program which provides mental health and parenting resources to Norwich residents to prevent crisis situations. They perform comprehensive walk-in screenings to objectively assess the prevalence of substance use disorders and mental health disorders. They prioritize referrals to many partnering agencies for concerns that cannot be addressed internally and have partnered with OIC for a 9-week program.

Safe Futures-Norwich Domestic Violence Response Team (NDVRT): \$15,000

Margaret Soussloff (Chief Operating Officer), Christine Foster (Director of Child & Family Services), and Kevin Barney (Regional Law Enforcement Victim Advocate) all attended to present the NDVRT program. They are requesting funding to support the response team and counseling office space in Norwich for families affected by family violence. The program provides counseling, legal support, transportation, safety plans, and shelter referrals for victims and their families. They often receive referrals from DCF, Superior Court, Safe Connect, and 2-1-1, and the program maintains a good working relationship with the Norwich Police Department. Larry Rice asked if they hold any influence over the decisions of Judges and court personnel and they stated that they do attend legislative sessions to advocate for policy reform.

Lefty Cycles: \$15,000

The applicant was not present at the meeting, rescheduled to the March 30, 2023 meeting.

OIC of New London County: \$30,000

Roberta Travers, Director of Education presented for OIC. She thanked the CDAC for funding the pilot program last year and spoke about how the program used CDBG funding to leverage investment from the Department of Early Childhood to jumpstart 3 cohorts instead of the single cohort originally proposed. OIC works closely with Norwich Works, Three Rivers, and youth populations. They are expected to partner with Mitchell College soon. The program assists unemployed and underemployed Norwich residents to receive credentials equivalent to 6 college credits in Early Childhood toward CDA certification which allows them to participate competitively in the workforce, increase their employability, and pursue a livable wage.

3. Communications

The CDAC reviewed the following meeting schedule to confirm quorum:

- CDBG PY49 Presentations: Thursday, March 30, 2023, @ 5:30 pm (In-person)
- CV Presentations & Deliberations: Monday, April 3, 2023, @ 5:00 pm (Hybrid)
- CDBG PY49 Supplements & Public Comment: Thursday, April 6, 2023, @3:30pm (Hybrid)
- CDBG PY49 Deliberations: Thursday, April 6, 2023, @4:30pm (Hybrid)

4. Motion was made by Mark Marcy and seconded by Angela Duhaime to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sydney Phelps,
Community Development Director