

Maine
Cumberland County

CUMBERLAND COUNTY – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES: March 14, 2019

MEETING LOCATION: City of Westbrook

Attendees: Tom Gruber- Committee Chair (Cumberland), Daniel Stevenson (Westbrook), Scott LaFlamme (Yarmouth), Tom Poirier (Gorham), Tom Bartell (Windham), Stephanie Carver (GPCOG), Bill Girgioux (Standish), Matt Sturgis (Cape Elizabeth) Travis Kennedy (Cumberland County), Georgiann Fleck (Bridgton), Brian Dudley (Long Island), April Humphrey (Yarmouth), Tom Hawley (Naples), Kathy Tamberelli (Town of Gray), Art Howe (Harspswell), Sandy Warren (South Portland)

Staff: Kristin Styles, Cumberland County Community Development Director, Sandra Warren, South Portland/ Cumberland County Community Development Coordinator.

1. Welcome & Introductions: Information Meeting and no voting was conducted. The meeting began at approximately 2:00M.
2. Kristin presented to the committee four handouts, which included the review team recommendations, application summaries, Home Program informational sheet and the newest Cumberland County low- Moderate Income Areas map. Kristin began by discussing the updated census tracts for the region, specifically how those pertaining to area wide benefits has changed. With the updated maps very little of Cumberland County qualifies as an area wide benefit. However, the County still maintains the exception Rule, this will allow for the County to qualify an area at 50.2% vs the current national standard of 51% or higher. For the current application cycle this will have little effect on those application, and any projects award funds last year but have yet to begin their projects, will not be subject to this change. Kristin notified the group that if they would like a more detailed map of their area she would be happy to have the County's IT department create that for anyone interested. Tom Bartell, asked if the area of little falls which lands between the towns of Gorham and Windham still qualifies. To which Kristin replied yes.
3. Home Budget- Mary Davis will be presenting at the March 21, 2019 meeting to discuss the Home Budget in more detail and to answer any questions you may have. Mary is expecting to see level funding for this year. One major change to the HOME program will be the elimination of the Housing Rehab Program run by the City of Portland. The biggest push for this is the lack of homes being completed each year by the program. Due to the strict regulations of HOME, only two or three households are able to benefit from housing rehab each and the remaining funds and time are put towards the administrative burden a

program like this bares. This does not mean they cannot use CDBG funds, they will be using CDBG to put combine with some of their Lead funds to conduct lead abatement. The County is in support of the removal of that program, and funds that were put towards this instead will go into affordable housing development. Last year we had about \$346,000.00 towards affordable housing developments. This year we are looking to put the full \$473,000.00 into affordable housing development. We do have to set aside a portion of those funds to designated CHDO (Community Housing development origination). Scott LaFlamme (Yarmouth) asked for confirmation that Brunswick and the City Portland are a part of the Home Consortium but not CDBG. Kristin stated that was correct. Tom Bartell (Windham) asked for more information on the elimination of the Housing Program, what does this mean for our constituents. Are there any programs left, Kristin reply Yes, the City of Portland is still conducting a Lead program, and they are currently using some old CDBG funds from the County to complete housing rehab. This does not stop an agency from applying for CDBG rehab funds. Sandra Warren (CC/South Portland) stated that Community Concepts is still running a housing rehab program and can provided individuals with services living in Cumberland County.

4. CDBG Recommendations: Kristin indicated to the group that the County is not aware yet of what the funding will be however, for the review process last year's final allocation numbers were used for this process. Specifically the amount less Bridgton and South Portland. April Humphrey (Yarmouth), asked way the amount is \$779,947 if we receive 1.55million. Kristin explained that the County's Program administrative cost, and the two set asides are taken out of the 1.55 million and this is the balance of these funds once those calculations are imputed. This of course does not included Brunswick or Portland.
5. Tom Gruber, Chair of the review team, outlined the team's process for making its recommendations. The group geared the discussion towards projects that were recommend for reduced or no funding. Overall, we received twenty-one applications, one of which was withdrawn from this year's cycle. Projects not recommended for funding were the Harpswell- Orrs & Bailey Island Communication Tower, Cumberland County Core work Life unlimited Job readiness, Cumberland County ISS Care Coordination and Harpswell Planning for sea Level Rise. Kristin briefly went over the scoring criteria, which is also outlined within the application. She mentioned to the committee, if the MOC would like the review team to look at or change the scoring/ distress scores, this would be a good time to start the conversation prior to next year's application process beginning. For this year we fully expended our total allocation of \$779,947, this broke down to \$138,442 for a Public Services cap and \$38,500 for planning. Of the twenty applications we received 16 were provided funding. The MOC was given a summary of all the applications the County and review team scored. The top ranked applications were Yarmouth Community Center and the Standish Community Center. Both of which were planning grants, which are scored a little differently, then the other applications and as such explains why they were also ranked higher. Overall we had a lot of really great applications this year and Kristin noted she felt the review team did a great job disbursing funds. April Humphrey asked about the funding levels and how the breakdown works. Kristin explained that Cumberland County with the except of Brunswick and Portland have joined together to form an urban county. Prior to this some areas were already receiving CDBG funds, such as South Portland, Westbrook, Bridgton and Portland. Westbrook decided to join the pot and South Portland and Bridgton made an agreement that they would join the county as long as they received a portion of the total allocation each year, which we call a set a side. Therefore, after taking this into account, funds then breakdown

into categories of Public Services which is capped at 15%, Planning and Admin at 20% and the rest goes into the categories of Public Facilities, Infrastructure and Housing. Daniel Stevenson asked about Contingency provisions. In the event of an increase in funding;

- i. fully fund all partially funded programs in descending order;
- ii. outstanding additional funds will be given to the Harrison Food Bank Rehab, up to a total award of \$175,000;
- iii. outstanding additional funds will be given to OBI Communication Tower.

In the event of a decrease in funding, subtract funding from the lowest scored applications, in ascending order. Tom Bartell from Windham asked to clarify if the \$175,000 was additional funding or up too. Kristin stated this would be up to \$175,000. April Humphrey from Yarmouth asked about the funding amount for their grant and why this was not funded fully. Kristin clarified the reasoning behind reducing the funding amount for this was because of the planning grants expenditure requirements are very limited, and Yarmouth already having a location, It was anticipated that the higher award amount might not fully spent down with in the twelve month period. Scott Leflamme asked about the change to the Census track and how this will affect the applications we received this year. Kristin noted that one of the applications received by Gorham will now need a local survey completed in order to qualify. However overall the effect on this year's applications have been minimal. Tom Bartell (Windham) noted that the map does not accurately reflect the little falls area and its qualification. Kristin will update this information with the County's IT department, whom assisted our department in creating the map.

6. Tom Gruber Committee Chair asked Kristin about administrative fees, she stated those are capped already and cannot be changed. Daniel Stevenson stated he would like to see the County spending more on admin then planning grants. Daniel feels that the planning grants are easier to come by via the state and or other options and that CDBG should be the last resort for this and as such, the County should reduce the planning grant amounts.
7. Tom Gruber Committee Chair thanked the County Staff and review team for all there hard works this year. The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00PM.