

The logo for Cumberland County, Maine, features the word "Maine" in a red, cursive script font at the top. Below it, the words "Cumberland County" are written in a black, sans-serif font. "Cumberland" is in a smaller size, and "County" is in a larger, bold size.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES: March 21, 2019

MEETING LOCATION: City of Westbrook

Attendees:

Mary Davis (Portland), Brian Dudley (Long Island), Tom Poirier (Gorham), Scott Laflamme (Yarmouth), Tom Gruber- Committee Chair (Cumberland), Greg Sirpis,(Standish), Tom Bartell(Windham), Marty Szydowski (Brunswick Housing), Travis Kennedy (Cumberland County), Bob Pebody(Bridgton), Daniel Stevenson (Westbrook), Stephanie Carver (GPCOG), Bill Girgioux (Standish), , Kathy Tombarelli (Gray), Sandy Warren(South Portland), April Humphrey (Yarmouth), Tom Hawley (Naples), Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth), Scott Hastings (New Gloucester), Brian Sites(North Yarmouth).

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

- 1.) Welcome & Introductions: 19 voting members were present and a quorum was reached. The meeting began at approximately 2:00PM.

- 2.) HOME Budget: Mary Davis provided an update on the current projects and reviewed the proposed budget. Currently the two projects open are in Westbrook one is called Larrabee Commons, and the other is Riverview. Larrabee Commons are new affordable housing units for seniors and Riverview is an existing PHA building under rehab. The funding set aside for FY 2019 Single Family housing rehab voted on by the MOC, has been fully committed and will be spent down this year. Kristin noted the City is on a different Fiscal year cycle and the funds Mary is speaking about are from last year's grant cycle, not the upcoming year we are voting on today. Mary went on to say that commitment of funds for FY 2019 include two additional affordable housing projects, one in South Portland and one Westbrook both are currently under environment review, but will be underway to start construction this year. Kristin noted that the handout given to the committee breaks down these projects in more detail and provides funding amounts as well. Kristin also spoke about the great work the City of Portland's Staff has been doing with the left over single family rehab funds from The Opportunity Alliance, we have a total of seven projects currently underway, one of which is now completed and

all of the seven will be completed by June of 2019. Kristin asked Mary to speak more about why the County and City chose to eliminate this program via HOME funds. Mary discussed with the group the strict guidelines and administrative burden that HOME places on a program such as this. Unfortunately, to add to this burden is the rising cost of construction. HOME is allow to provide \$15,000 per household towards housing rehab cost, the reality we see are homes at or exceeding \$20,000. Some of this is construction cost increasing steadily by 5% each year, some is the age of homes, and amount of repair needed is extensive. Mary stated her team is just not able to keep up with the demand. Kristin noted to the group that this doesn't mean we cannot use our CDBG funds for this type of program, and an agency could apply to use CDBG funds to run a program like this should they wish to. Kristin asked if anyone has any questions about the Home funds? Tom Prior (Gorham), asked if more funding is going in? Kristin stated No \$100,000 would instead be put towards large developments versus single family. Mary stated the budget is based on last year's allocation assuming level funding, as we have not received final funding information yet for 2019. Once we do receive, the actual funding number the budget will be adjusted proportionally up or down depending on the allocation. Committee chair Tom Gruber asked if there were anymore questions, hearing none, committee chair proceeded with the vote. Motion by Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth) to approve the recommendations, seconded by Scott Laflemme (Yarmouth). Hearing no more discussion, discussion was closed. All in favor, those opposed hearing none, motion sustained. Motion moved 19-0

- 3.) Update on CDBG program in Cumberland County as well as South Portland and Bridgton. The handout given to the committee outlines some of the projects completed this year throughout the County. Anyone that would like to speak about their projects is welcome to do so now. Brian Dudley (Long Island) spoke up about his two projects, the wellness center and the wave wake. The Wellness center is now assisting about ten people a day and providers are coming out to the island, which is a tremendous help to our local seniors as it means they do not need to take the ferry to Portland to be seen. Brian went on to say these are some great projects that really help the folks of Long Island and we are truly grateful and happy to be using CDBG to assist in paying for these. Greg Sirpis(Standish), spoke about the Standish Library renovation and what a wonderful project this turned out to be, the handicap ramp allows for locals to continue to use the library as a means of connecting with others reducing social isolation and it turned out great. Kristin stated that the Broadband study is set to be completed in April, and all of the projects are doing well and moving forward. Also set to begin Port Resources housing rehab, Standish playground, and senior van (already purchased, and Westbrook library windows. Kristin asked Sandy to speak about South Portland and Bridgton. Sandy gave a quick over view of some of the highlights, of what South Portland used there, CDBG funds for this past year, and also went over Bridgton's program, specifically, the social services that Bridgton provides for their community and the tremendous help that it provides overall.
- 4.) CDBG recommendations: Tom Gruber Committee Chair thanked the review team for all of their work. Tom went on to discuss the review team's work and noted that there were many great applications and the group was not able to fund them all. Theo asked to discuss the projects that were not being funded. Tom went on to say the two that were not funded were:

- a.) Harpswell Communications tower. The review team would have liked more details on costs presented to them at the time the application was submitted. Additionally, any communications from Town council or Manager discussing the topic as it pertains to other funding sources. They also scored the lowest, and at that point, funds were spent out. The response initially by the presenter was that no other sources had been contacted prior to asking for CDBG. The committee frond upon this approach.
- b.) Harpswell Sea-level rise study- The committee felt this would be a great study, however this is more of a regional issue and other towns should also come on board. There was some talk amongst the members as to this being better suited for grants through the state specifically for the Sea- Level rise.

Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth) asked for clarification on the County wide Homeless prevention program and how the cut came about for this. Sandy Warren (South Portland) noted that the applications has been a reoccurring ask each year, and we try to not have this happen with CDBG funds, as we encourage programs to use funds as a launching pad verse sole source of funding. We received an application form Through These Doors that was a pilot program, and given that Through These Doors was able to demonstrate to the committee that they had used CDBG for a pervious program secured other grants for that and now no longer need to come back each year for this we thought very highly of this. Seeing this as a tremendous advantage, it prompted the committee to take funding from TOA that has been receiving funding year after year and not seeking other sources to match or reduce their ask.

- 5.) Contingency plan. Kristin asked the group if anyone had questions about this provision. Kristin quickly reviewed the provision as follows:
 - a.) In the event of an increase in funding;(1) fully fund all partially funded programs in descending order; (2) outstanding additional funds will be given to the Harrison Food Bank Rehab, up to a total award of \$175,000; (3) outstanding additional funds will be given to OBI Communication Tower.
 - b.) In the event of a decrease in funding, subtract funding from the lowest scored applications, in ascending order.

Tom Gruber stated the review team really liked this plan. Tom Gruber committee chair asked for a motion to approve the contingency plan. Greg Sirpis(Standish) moved the motion, Tom Prior(Gorham) Seconded the motion. Discussion: Theo Holtwijk (Falmouth), asked why the Harrison Food Bank are to receive up to \$175,000 which would be over their ask. Kristin stated it was clear the ask of the Harrison Food Bank was less then what they truly needed and so the review felt if an increase of funds were to be had, to provide these folks with more, as they also demonstrated high level of matching funds and need. Tom Gruber hearing a motion and a second, requested any future discussion, hearing none, Tom Gruber called for a vote, all in favor 19-0, hearing no nays motion carried.

- 6.) MOC by Laws- Kristin has reviewed the Moc by laws over the last few months, this is in part that Kristin is new but also that the laws do need to be updated specifically the 5 regional applications rule. Members suggested that a subcommittee should meet and discuss these changes to present at next year's MOC meeting in the fall. Travis Kennedy mentioned that the review team does meet in May of each year to go over the applications and make suggestions. Tom Bartell (Windham) suggested that the review team should view the application and make changes and that a subcommittee of MOC members should get together and discuss MOC by Laws. Theo Holtwijk

(Falmouth) suggested running both the application and by laws by, the review team prior to bringing it to the subcommittee of MOC members. Kristin asked the group if they would like the MOC to meet in the summer months to go over the HOME funds applications or simply allow Kristin, Mary and Sandy to meet and bring that discussion forward to the MOC via email or should we have a meeting. Theo Holtwijk(Falmouth) suggested informing the group via email.

- 7.) Administrative fees- Tom Gruber spoke about the appropriation of administration fees. Daniel Stevens stated that he felt planning money is something that can be sought out and attained thorough other programs. Daniel went on to say that Sandy and Kristin did not bring this up, he did and that he would be happy to speak to the County administrator about this topic. Daniel went on to say, this is something he feels strongly about as someone whom used to work at the State level. Travis Kennedy stated this is something that should be done internally first at the County level. Many members felt that this was not something that we should be discussing as a group at this time. Daniel stated he would be happy to chat with Jim about this and go from there. Travis Kennedy stated he would go back to Jim about the planning changes.
- 8.) Meeting adjournment at 2:50pm- Kristin notified the group that the County Commissioners meetings are April 6, 2019 and May 13, 2019. Kristin also thanked everyone for his or her time.