



CUMBERLAND COUNTY – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MUNICIPAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES: October 08, 2020- 09:00AM

MEETING LOCATION: Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 944 6599 6576

Attendees: Linda LaCorix & Cortney Kemp(Town of Bridgton) Jim Gailey & Travis Kennedy (Cumberland County), Caroline Pelletier(Town of Freeport), Tom Poirier(Town of Gorham), John Hawely(Town of Naples), Bill Giroux(Town of Standish), Daniel Stevenson (City of Westbrook), Tom Bartell (Windham), Scott LaFlamme (Yarmouth), Andrew Butcher (GPCOG)

Staff: Kristin Styles, Cumberland County Community Development Director,
Sandra Warren Cumberland County Community Development Coordinator, *City of South Portland*

1. **Welcome & Introductions:** 10 voting members attended and a quorum was **not** reached. Committee Chair Tom Gruber was not present, Kristine Styles called the meeting to order at 9:05AM. Our next meeting, our annual Fall Moc meeting with be on October 29, 2020.
2. **Update on 2021 CDBG Application and Process-** Kristin notified the committee the updated application would be available for MOC members to view at our fall meeting. This application will mirror the CDBG-CV, we used this past spring. In terms of projecting our annual funding from HUD, we are unsure as to what we will receive concerning this year. We will continue are normal process of looking at last year’s final allocations and using those as our guide.
3. **CARES Act funding and CDBG-CV Process**
4. **Round 1** – Update on status of projects from Round 1. Below is a spreadsheet that highlights all of the programs funded under round 1. This includes data on the agency that was granted funds, the dollar amount granted to them and the current progress of the project based on data we received from those agencies. During this portion of the MOC meeting Kristin Styles reviewed these data points and asked *Andrew Butcher* from GPCOG whom was present at the meeting to speak on how the Small business grant was coming along. Andrew spoke to this and provided the group with a brief summary of the Small business programs. Andrew stated how GPCOG utilizes one application and portal for businesses; this streamlines the process and allows GPCOG to identify for the business which programs are best suited for them and which programs can be combined and work together to create the most effective solution for the business. Andrew explained to the group the two CDBG programs currently in place, job creation/ retention and Microenterprise assistance. The Job Creation/ retention program loans of 2,500 per job. Additionally the Microenterprise Program is assist business owners. This program is targeted to assist small

business owners with maintaining operation's. The application portal will close on October 14, 2020 and will reopen as funds are available. GPCOG is offering several non-CDBG funding resources to business. Last week they presented to the business community a webinar on these programs and offer a Q&A for business owners. Andrew indicated this went very well and overall is very pleased with the turnout of this program.

Comments: Committee member *Daniel Stevenson with the City of Westbrook* asked Andrew to clarify Microenterprise assistance if the owner need to be low mod and if Andrew could speak to the \$2,500 if this were forgivable. Andrew indicated the Microenterprise the owner needs to income qualify and with the job creation / retention, the \$2500 is forgivable if compliant with the grant terms and is up to 4 total employees at \$2500 each totaling \$10,000.00. Kristin addressed the committee and stated she was very happy that GPCOG has more for business then just CDBG and that GPCOG provides that additional support to business owners. *Linda LaCroix with the Town of Bridgton* spoke to the committee explaining that Bridgton has its own rental assistance program and would like to understand more about exceeding the amount of time for this assistance beyond the three months currently give. Kristin spoke to this and state that current regulations state that any assistance provided to the tenant beyond the three-months would require that the property show proof that they home is lead safe.

CDBG-CV Round 1 Projects & Goals				
Grantee	Activity	Funds	Goal	Project Status 10.6.20
		\$299,365	Individuals unless noted	
BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS				
GPCOG	Job Creation Program	\$149,265	84 jobs	Project Launched 9/28/20
GPCOG	Microenterprise Assistance Program	\$150,000	25 Businesses	Project Launched 9/28/20
		\$325,632	201	
RENTAL/MORTGAGE PROGRAM				
Bridgton Resource Navigator	Rental and Utility Program	\$63,219	96 households	Project in progress - 10 households helped
The Opportunity Alliance	Homeless Prevention Program	\$215,000	60 households	Project Complete - 182 households helped
Through These Doors	Project Safe Reentry	\$47,413	45 Households	Project in Progress - 19 people helped
		\$164,000	3244	
FOOD PROGRAMS				
Bridgton Resource Navigator	Food Assistance Program	\$6,000	60	Project in Progress - no update yet
My Place Teen Center	Daily Mobile Food Pantry & Wellness Checks	\$48,000	250	Project Complete - waiting on final numbers
SMAA	Meals On Wheels Program	\$65,000	1200	Project in Progress - no update yet
So. Portland Food Cupboard	Covid-19 Response Program	\$35,000	1600	Project in Progress - no update yet
Town of Raymond	Raymond Food Pantry Program	\$10,000	294	Project in Progress - no update yet
		\$96,168	157	
OTHER PROGRAMS				
Bridgton Resource Navigator	Temporary Shelter Program	\$4,000	72	Project has not started
City of South Portland	General Assistance	\$2,1497	15	Project in Progress - no update yet
Cumberland County EMA	CCEMA Emergency Shelter Supplies	\$30,671	70	Equipment Purchase complete - will track beneficiaries
Program Administration		\$35,000		
County	Administration	\$35,000	n/a	On going
All Total		\$920,165		

- A. **Round 2** – No funds for the County, but the State can use their funds to help families and businesses located within the County.
- B. **Round 3** - \$976,929 for use County wide – No set-aside communities. Proposal for use for Round 3 funds – The following is a detailed list of funding ideas presented to the committee. We reviewed these items line by line. I have added to each line item the committee member's comments and County response.

Funding Ideas:

1. **\$200,910- Emergency Shelter Assistance** – These funds would be to cover bed night costs for homeless individuals that are Cumberland County (non-Portland) residents. They would be housed at the stand-alone building next to the County Jail in Portland. The reason this space will be opened up as an over flow shelter is due to social distancing requirement at the City of Portland's Oxford Street shelter. * I have lowered the amount from \$300,000 to \$200,910 because the City has State funding resources that are able to cover a small part of the bed night cost. 15 (men) X \$74 a bed night X 181 nights = \$200,910

Comments: *Tom Bartell Town of Windham* asked Kristin to provide a better understand of the cost if any to Portland for the space provide by the County.

County Manager Jim Gailey was able to speak to this. Jim provide feedback to the community that this venter between the County and the City of Portland is purely a partnership; either side is making no money. *Andrew Butcher of GPCOG* asked for more information on the 15 people. Kristin informed Andrew and the committee that she has had multiple discussion with the Emergency Solutions advisory committee and City Staff that resulted in the creation of data points based on their annual totals of homeless. The ESAC documents the number of people each night and which Town those person come from. Based on this set point Kristin was able to determine an average number of non-Portland residents per night. Andrew thought this was a great approach and is in favor of using funds for this. Andrew also asked if what happens when funds run out. *Jim Gailey* responded by stating it is the hope of both the County and the City of Portland that by using the CDBG dollars we can help stretch funding to get through the winter season, they are also trying to make this a 50 room location instead of the . *Linda LaCroix Town of Bridgton* stated that the towns homeless population will not go to Portland, what are other options for her town. Kristin state she was able to identify based on the documentation provide by shelter staff that at least six residents of Bridgton sought shelter assistance with in the last several months. *Scott Laflamme Town of Yarmouth* agreed that Portland is the Hub for services, county residents that need services will seek them out in Portland where they are readily available. *Bill Giroux Town of Standish* stated that he feels Portland takes the brunt of this issue and that what has been purposed and outlined is well done by Kristin and he is in support of this. Scott Laflamme asked if this would be enough money for his project. Kirstin noted her concerns for putting too much funding towards this project, as there are parameters around ESG funds that are also involved and the use of those.

\$500,000 – Rental Assistance – Kristin Spoke about the rental assistance programs offer by the County and by the State of Maine. Going on to state, that Maine Housing has officially said that no additional funds will be made available for Rental Assistance. The \$17 Million allocated by the state, is gone. Originally, we were under the impression that while the application deadline was Sept. 30th, a new wave of state funding would kick in to help with Oct – Dec rent. This is no longer the case. The County CDBG-CV Round 1 rental assistance funds (\$215,000) are fully expended.

Comments: *Bill Giroux with the Town of Standish*, stated he felt Kristin did a great job with the number to put towards rental assistance, there is a huge need and so much so even Standish is seeing this as a large need. This funds will not cover all of the need but it is what is really need right now. Bill would hate to waste money on pet projects but rather put the money where it is needed. *Scott Laflamme* agreed with Bill and state these funds are really triaging the bigger issue. Making sure people have roofs over the heads in the winter months is critical. I agree with funding this as well. *Tom Bartell* also agrees with funding this and would like to know how funds are distributed? *Kristin* Stated that this process is a first come first serve to anyone in Cumberland County excluding Bridgton and South Portland. Bridgton has their own program and South Portland provide funds to The Opportunity Alliance’s program in the same manner the County did. The Opportunity alliance is our local CAP agency and

they are being used to run the program. This is in conjunction with the State Program, which is also using the local CAP agencies to run the program with their funds. One of the benefits of this collaboration is that we have a joint portal with the State called empower. This portal also has information within it about the person applying data so we can avoid duplication of benefits and it helps the applicant complete the applications. One downside was the amount of applications received when using this system exceed 300 in a day and overwhelmed the two staffers processing the information. There was a lot of information to collect from the landlord and tenants and the team is still backed up. When funds do run out however the staff funds will go back into this program and help those that have not yet received funds. *Tom Bartell* asked if this additional funding will help get us past those 300+ applicants or will these be used up by them? *Kristin* explained that of the 17 million the state has accounted for it does include anyone in the queue that has not yet received funds but applied prior to October 01, 2020. *Tom* asked if this additional funding would come close to helping cover the next three months? *Kristin* explained it would not, based on data collected by the Maine affordable housing coalition it would take 7 Million a month statewide. Our funds clearly will not be enough to help everyone but will help a few folks. *Tom* asked if these were applicants outside of Portland. *Kristin* stated Yes, these are folks outside of Portland they have their own program. *Scott Laflamme* asked about the processing question concerning TOA that is a first come, *Kristin* replied yes. *Linda LaCroix*, with the Town of Bridgton stated that currently Bridgton has its own rental assistance program and would like to know what happens when round three hits. *Kristin* stated that when Bridgton's current program has depleted there funds, the BCC can then direct those applicants to apply with TOA instead. Those folks will be eligible for the County funds at that time. *Linda* further stated that the town likes to provide preferences to residence will there be any look back by TOA to say town x has received X funds and so we should provide town B with more. It's truly an opportunity for all. *Kristin* stated that was correct, they would continue to collect and process them the same way, which is the first come first serve basis.

\$273,000 – Covid related construction – 1-3 bigger scale infrastructure projects for freezers, refrigeration, or other equipment needed to help food pantries handle the increase in demand.

\$3,019 – Admin to cover costs of posting public notices & public hearings – as required

2. **\$200,910 – Emergency Shelter Assistance**

\$350,000 – Public Services projects – We would release an application similar to what we did for Round 1 of CDBG-CV funds. Municipalities and Non-profit organizations would be allowed to apply for assistance for public services projects related to Covid-19.

\$200,000 – Rental Assistance

\$175,000 – Covid related construction

\$51,019 – Admin – 1 part time project coordinator to help with increase in the number of projects.

Kristin explained that we have tripled our workload over the last year and if we continue to put money into smaller public services and project, we will need to hire another staff person. We can get away without one, but would need to have fewer larger projects. This is up to the MOC if they feel we need

smaller projects then we will need money for admin. Otherwise, we can dump this into bigger project, like one or two large construction projects, would anyone like to make suggestions?

Comments: *Scott Laflamme*- my suggestion is use the funds for larger projects and create more efficient use of your time collectively, and would suggest as we go through the next years round of projects looking at applications based on how they can use funds for COVID. Tom Bartell could we develop a list of needs for food pantry's? Then use that to do a single bid process for food pantry that will help everyone. Maybe this could use up many funds. Kristin said yes, we have done our own research and found that there is no shortage of fund, but that there is an issue with getting to folks, boxes are also in high demand because you cannot use reusable bags. We also found that there is a need for freezers and fridge space. We can easily set up a project that could cover something like this and work with the agencies to get the distributed and would be easy to manage. Tom indicated that there is a shortage right now for home appliance not sure, how that is on the commercial side. Linda LaCroix, quick question am I understand that you would have a project that any food pantry could contact you and get boxes or freezers. *Kristin* replied yes, ideally, what we would do with the boxes is give funds to someone like wayside, to let them distribute to local pantries. *Linda* said that sounds great. *Tom Bartell* asked if we know wayside is connected with all the food pantries. *Kristin* replied it is to her knowledge that they are currently in contact with at least 62 pantries in the county. *Kristin* will reach out to them to make sure we are covered, and all towns are in the loop. Both *Tom Bartell* and *Linda LaCroix* want to just make sure there local pantries are given the opportunity and made aware. *Bill Giroux* stated he supports this as purposed.

Kristin purposed the following to the committee and asked if they were in support of this?

3. **\$200,910 – Emergency Shelter Assistance**
\$500,000 - Public Services projects (Covid- related)
\$275,000 - Covid related construction
~~**\$51,019 – Admin – Part time project coordinator**~~

Comments: *Bill Giroux and Linda LaCroix* both stated they were in support of these. *Scott* asked how putting all funds into the larger project effects your staffing needs? *Kristin* stated that when putting funds into the larger projects that her and her staff can manage without hiring on another staff person and will get it done, but to take on another 10-service project we would have to hire someone. *Tom Poirier with the Town of Gorham* asked would this also help expedite the process. *Kristin* stated yes, and it does appear that we are two person short of a quorum to vote. *Andrew* stated he is consensus with everyone, he also has an idea that could help with regarding get help, GPCOG is hiring 14 AmericaCorp employees and would like to chat off line about this and could possibly help provide the volunteering. *Kristin* will follow up with *Andrew* about this.

Kristin asked the committee how we should proceed with the voting process, we current have ten members and need a minimum of two more votes should everyone vote in favor. *Tom Poirier* asked if these additional votes could be sent out to the MOC via email to collect the remaining votes that way. *Kristin* stated she would send out individual emails to members that were not here today and will send the recording of our meeting as well. Will that work for everyone? *Bill Grioux* motioned to implement option 1 and *Tom Bartell* suggested the motion be remain open until the votes are collected. *Linda LaCroix* Seconded the motion. Roll Call vote was taking,

Motion: By Bill Grioux, to Implement Option 1:

- \$200,910 – Emergency Shelter Assistance
- \$500,000 - Public Services projects (Covid- related)
- \$275,000 - Covid related construction

The motion to accepted by the Committee and that this motion will remain open until the minimum required votes are received for the motion to pass. These additional votes will be collected via email.

Roll Call Vote

City & Town	Name of Representative	Vote
Bridgton	Linda LaCroix	Yes
Cumberland County	Travis Kennedy	Yes
Casco	Don Gerrish, Interim Town Manager Town of Casco	Yes
Gorham	Tom Poirier	Yes
GPCOG	Andrew Butcher	Yes
Naples	John Hawley	Yes
South Portland	Sandy Warren	Yes
Standish	Bill Grioux	Yes
Westbrook	Daniel Stevenson	Yes
Windham	Tom Bartell	Yes
Yarmouth	Scott LaFlamme	Yes
North Yarmouth	Brian Sites	Yes

Votes received after the meeting via email are as follows:

1. Matthew Sturgis – Town of Cape Elizabeth (I vote to approve) Rcd at 11:06am 10/08/2020 via email.
2. Tom Gruber- Town of Cumberland (I vote Yes!) Rcd at 11:06am 10/08/2020 via email
3. Brian Sites- North Yarmouth(Yes- in favor) Rcd at 11:16am 10/08/2020 via email
- 4.
5. Theo Holtwijk – Town of Falmouth(Yes-in favor) Rcd at 1:11pm 10/08/2020 via email
6. Kathy Tombarelli- Town of Gray (yes-in- favor) rcd at 09:58PM 10/08/2020 via email

Kristin quickly spoke about the following the committee prior to adjournment. The State CDBG program is looking into using CDBG-CV Round 2 & 3 for Statewide programs in the following categories: Land acquisition of emergency shelters, Business Assistance programs, Childcare programs. Residents of Cumberland County would be able to qualify for business assistance and childcare assistance through the state CDBG program. The State received a total of \$8,675,584 for Rounds 2 & 3.

5. **Adjournment.** Kristin thanked everyone for attending today’s meeting. Kristin will send out the pending motion and provide that information to the committee once a motion is finalized. Motion by Bill Grioux motioned to adjourn; Linda LaCroix seconded the motion, all in favor. Meeting Adjourned at approximately 10:10AM.

