



DRAFT
Select Board
CDBG Subcommittee

Date: April 15, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM to 11:15 AM

Location: Virtual Meeting Held Via Zoom

Minutes

Present: Adam Chapdelaine, Select Board Member Dan Dunn, Sarah Lee, Select Board Chair Diane Mahon, Chris Potter, Jenny Raitt, Toni Sacco, Erin Zwirko.

Jenny Raitt opened the virtual meeting by reviewing the process for remote participation in light of the state of emergency in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Jenny opened the public forum for those attendees that had comments.

Lynette Martyn noted that she is interested in the learning more about CDBG and the Town's response to the pandemic. She is glad to see a portion of the CDBG funds providing rental assistance. She suggested a number of ways to advise Arlington residents on its availability and requested information on the public comment period. She wondered if the information could be provided in multiple languages. Select Board Member Dunn explained that there will be time for public comment between this subcommittee meeting and when the final funding recommendation is made to the Select Board. Select Board Chair Mahon indicated that she is working with Jenny and the Town Manager to determine when the funding recommendation comes to the Select Board.

Lynette Culverhouse was curious about how the Town will obtain input from low- and moderate-income households and businesses. She also asked if there was a representative who was low- to moderate-income serving on the subcommittee.

Jo Anne Preston noted that the cross walk from Chestnut Manor over Chestnut Street to the Russell Common lot is unsafe. She stated that she has been discussing a potential project with the Arlington Police Chief on how to improve the crosswalk.

Jenny closed the open forum and provided an introduction of the CARES Act and the CDBG funding that will be allocated to Arlington. She noted that the process is still unfolding through HUD and the local Boston office, and noted that there are a number

of waivers provided to streamline the typical funding process. Jenny asked Erin to provide an overview of the current funding recommendations.

Erin noted that a memo has been prepared with the staff recommendations that cover three items to be discussed with the Subcommittee. The first is the CDBG-CV allocation that Arlington will be receiving in the amount of \$659,903. The staff recommends programming the funding for business assistance for microbusinesses, rental assistance, and for public services that are responding to the pandemic. She noted that the CARES Act removes the public service cap. Erin explained that a substantial amendment would have to be completed to program this funding, but a waiver is allowed to reduce the public comment period to no less than 5 days.

The subcommittee members recommended reducing the amount of funding per household that is eligible in order to help more households. There was also discussion regarding the fact that there is no equivalent eligible activity for homeowners and the care needed to prevent the duplication of benefits.

Erin then provided an overview of the Housing Corporation of Arlington's (HCA) request to cancel the \$150,000 solar project that was funded for this year. Erin noted that Ms. Hallett, HCA Executive Director, provided a letter explaining why the solar project is now infeasible, and that she requests that the funding be reallocated to the capital improvement program and to supplement HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program. Erin explained that this substantial amendment would be bundled with the amendment needed for the CARES Act funding. She also noted that the Homelessness Prevention Program is open to any Arlington resident, not just those who live in HCA units.

The final item to be presented to the Subcommittee is the reprogramming of prior years' funding to be able to support Arlington EATS and the annual curb ramp program. Erin explained that HUD provided a favorable response in support of funding the fit out of Arlington EATS new space at 117 Broadway. The subcommittee did not fund this project earlier this year because of ongoing conversations with HUD. Erin also explained that CDBG has historically funded the annual curb ramp program, but unfortunately, an application was not received from either the DPW or the Disability Commission. Jenny explained that these funds from prior fiscal years were programmed in FY18 to help restart the Housing Rehabilitation Program. The program struggled to restart over this past year and will not be able to move forward at this time. The funds will still need to be expended per HUD timeliness requirements, which is why staff are recommending reprogramming the funds. Both Select Board Chair Mahon and Select Board member Dunn requested semi-annual reporting on unspent funds, and recommended developing a policy regarding the use of unspent funds.

There was then discussion about Ms. Preston's comment about improving the crosswalk on Chestnut Street. The Town Manager reported that DPW will repaint the crosswalk as the paint is faded and worn. He also noted that the Town's transportation planning process suggests that Ms. Preston's letter (attached) will be forwarded to the Transportation Advisory Committee to make design recommendations for the crosswalk

and street. Select Board Chair Mahon recommended that this should be an agenda item from the Select Board's April 27th meeting.

Following the completion of the discussion, Select Board Member Dunn made a motion to recommend funding of the three items under discussion with the amendment that the rental assistance be no more than \$2,000 per month for eligible households under the CDBG-CV projects. Select Board Chair seconded. Via a roll call vote, all members of the subcommittee voted yes.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.