

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING**

APRIL 9, 2013

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL
Conference Room A**

6:00 P.M.

Present: Vice Chairwoman Dani Rooney, Algene Bailey, Constance Carmody, Alison Hamilton, Lynne Langley, Bob Layton, Alicia Weaver

Absent: Chairwoman Nancy Emerson (excused)

Staff: Dave Allen, David Moore, Adam Cannon

Vice Chairwoman Dani Rooney called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Next, the committee unanimously approved the minutes from three previous Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings on February 12, 2013, March 5, 2013 and March 12, 2013.

Next, Mr. Moore advised the Committee that a meeting scheduled with HUD representatives had been cancelled but will be rescheduled. Community Development staff looked forward to meeting with them as it was an opportunity to share the work of the City and the Citizens Advisory Committee. Mr. Moore indicated that Bob Shumeyko is very approachable and was seeking a dialogue, as he has in all of the entitlement communities, concerning Portsmouth community development issues and CDBG programming in general.

In addition, Mr. Moore indicated that the City participated in a media event to promote Community Development Week. The department was approached by the CDFA (Community Development Finance Authority) to help with organizing for the event and invite Mayor Spear to give a speech at the Cross Roads House in support of continued CDBG funding and to highlight past projects. This effort resulted in an article in the Portsmouth Herald.

Mr. Cannon gave an update on the Strawberry Banke Accessibility Project. He indicated that Strawberry Banke can start work on the accessibility ramps at any time and are aware of the regulatory requirements as they move forward. Ms. Weaver stated that she will be excited to see the project finished. Mr. Cannon also informed the Committee that progress on Ranger Way is going smoothly and that the City will be receiving the preliminary design plans and opinion of cost shortly.

Following the program updates, Mr. Moore discussed the Draft FY13-14 Annual Plan and Budget and gave an overview of the budget. The budget included funding for the on-going programs funded through CDBG including the Housing Rehabilitation program and related administrative costs, the Residential Accessibility Grant Program, the Non-Profit Loan Program, Public Service Agency Grant Program, and General Administration. In addition, funding is identified for the construction of the Ranger Way Streetscape Improvements, design for the Atlantic Heights Emergency Access Route; design and construction of the Maynard Park Playground Improvements; Emergency Power Source for Non-Profits; and the City Hall Accessibility Improvements.

The committee wanted to fully support the ongoing CDBG-funded programs that assisted individual households including the RAP and Rehab programs as well as the Portsmouth Non-Profit Loan Program, Public Service Agency Grant Program and General Administration line items. There was brief discussion on the public facilities related projects. Finally, the CAC revisited its discussion relative to the recommendations for the Public Service Agency Grant program. After a detailed discussion about the merits of all of the agencies and their contributions to the community and service to individuals and families that earn low or moderate incomes the CAC voted to adopt the roster of grant recipients under the Public Service Agency Grant program.

Mr. Moore reminded the Committee that \$5,000 less is available for FY 2013-2014. Vice-chairwoman Rooney stated her support for funding existing agencies this year and recommended the Committee evaluate its system for making awards as funds continue to dwindle. Mr. Moore stated he expects the funds to continue to decrease for the future. Mr. Bailey noted the excellence of Portsmouth's process and others in the Committee agreed the process was good. The Committee discussed the challenge of providing all worthy agencies with funding and at the same time decreasing the impact of the funds by spreading them over too many agencies.

Ms. Langley moved to recommend the attached roster of the Public Service Agency Grant allocations to the City Manager for FY 2013-2014. Prior to the vote, Ms. Hamilton stated her support and belief in the work of the Food Pantry and discussed how the need for food is becoming even greater and greater. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend the attached roster of FY 2013-2014 Public Service Agency Grant awards to the City Manager.

Mr. Moore clarified that even though an agency may not be selected for funding for operational needs, there is always the opportunity to make a request for other assistance through the CDBG program. He also stated that the Committee could further discuss the application and award process, including reviewing the grant making within the Welfare department, for comparison.

Ms. Carmody asked if the City is going to provide matching funds for the City Hall Accessibility Improvement project and about the elevator funded as part of an earlier accessibility project at City Hall. Mr. Moore replied that the City is going to provide a match of \$100,000 included from the Capital Improvement Plan. He also noted the project is complex and the building is within the Historical District. The elevator was renovated in the late 1990s/early 2000s, but that many people are having difficulties using the elevator.

Next, the Committee discussed timeliness of projects and the leveraging of funding. Mr. Moore indicated that HUD requires projects to be completed in a timely manner and evaluates each grantee's progress on this goal each April.

Mr. Moore reminded the Committee that the City still does not have a final figure from HUD for its entitlement grant for the upcoming year. He reminded the Committee that the City has been planning for a 10% cut. On Tuesday, May 2nd there will be a public hearing on the Annual Plan and Budget in Conference Room A of City Hall at 6:30pm. A 30-day comment period on the draft budget will begin shortly. Mr. Moore encouraged the Committee to invite other people to attend the hearing or to contact him for more information. He added that though there is not a final entitlement grant figure, the Committee can vote to recommend an Annual Plan and Budget to the City Manager.

Vice-chairwoman Rooney adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.