

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 2, 2013  
CITY HALL WEST CONFERENCE ROOM  
CITY OF WYOMING, MICHIGAN

MEMBERS PRESENT: Krenz, Reeder, Sturim, Ziembra

MEMBERS ABSENT: Turner

STAFF PRESENT: Rynbrandt, Director of Community Services  
Lucar, Planning and Development Dept.

OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Patterson, Executive Director of Compassion This Way

Call to Order

Chairman Reeder called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Sturim, supported by Ziembra, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Prior Committee Minutes

Motion by Krenz, supported by Ziembra, to approve the prior meeting minutes of November 7, 2012. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

There was no public comment.

Kent County EVIP Grant and Wyoming, Grand Rapids, Kent County Study Group (Re: Efficiencies, Service Sharing, Consolidation Study) Update

Rynbrandt noted Kent County has received the State EVIP grant to finance a consultant to perform studies on possible efficiencies, service sharing, collaboration and consolidation of community development services between the City of Wyoming, City of Grand Rapids and Kent County. The request for proposals for consultant services has not yet been finalized. Sturim, Ziembra and Krenz had expressed interest in serving on the study committee and participating in the process. Rynbrandt will provide more information when available on the time of day the meetings will be held.

Grant Making Recommendation Cycle Sub-recipients Presentation & Follow-up Information

Compassion This Way (Taft Adopt-a-Block): Brian Patterson, Executive Director of this organization, gave a presentation on the goals and accomplishments of the Taft Adopt-A-Block program. He indicated two key components for neighborhood development – partnerships and an on-site consistent presence. They started the program in July 2011, so they are now in their second year. They received \$15,500 in CDBG funds for FY 2012-13, which included \$10,000 for rent and utilities and \$5,500 for facilitation costs. Some major goals have been to reduce crime, increase employment, increase school performance and foster social equity. Some key services they provide are a food pantry, K-12 tutoring, an adult literacy program, community events, an on-site information center and neighborhood networking. Their future plans for 2013 are to expand the English as a second language tutoring program, offer parenting classes, expand the youth learning programs and offer summer camps for youth.

Rynbrandt referred to the memorandum from Police Chief Carmody outlining the effectiveness of the Taft Adopt-a-Block Program.

Sturim asked if the Feeding America organization provided the food for the food pantry. Patterson responded affirmatively, along with the Buist Community Center in Byron Township.

Rynbrandt clarified that federal dollars cannot fund church planting or other church related services. Patterson noted CDBG funds would not be used for that purpose.

Sturim asked if their presence has helped reduce the crime in the neighborhood. Patterson believes the crime activity has gone down, especially related to drugs. Rynbrandt pointed out there used to be a real problem with graffiti in this area, and this has been reduced.

Chairman Reeder believes the program has been successful, but there is more that can be done. The organization needs more support and participation by the community.

Home Repair Services: Rynbrandt referred to follow-up information provided after their November presentation. Regarding the question of whether HRS is the only provider of various services, Executive Director Dave Jacobs submitted the following information: Air Sealing – weatherization assistance provided by one other organization; Foreclosure Prevention – this service is provided by one other organization; Minor Home Repairs to low-income homeowners – HRS is the only provider; Access Modification to low-income homeowners – HRS is the only provider. Rynbrandt pointed out there is not an apples-to-apples comparison of providers. There may be organizations that provide a few of these services, but HRS has been the leader in minor home repairs for low-income homeowners.

Fair Housing Center of Western Michigan: Rynbrandt referred to follow-up information provided after their November presentation. The Fair Housing Center provided a more detailed budget breaking down how funds are being spent, but the Committee indicated they would have liked to see it broken down further. Rynbrandt and the Committee agreed there may be a higher than desired amount being attributed to administrative costs. Sturim thought it would be nice to see a percentage breakdown in each line item compared to the City of Grand Rapids. Ziemba did not like that 46% of the Center's casework was conducted under contracts with the City of Wyoming, compared to 33% with the City of Grand Rapids. He thought the number for the City of Grand Rapids should be higher. Rynbrandt noted in the future the Letter of Intent should be required for existing sub-recipients as well as new ones. Firm budget numbers can be requested at that time, breaking down administrative costs.

Salvation Army – HUD Continuum of Care: Rynbrandt explained she had asked the Salvation Army to submit a Letter of Intent to request funding. In receiving HUD CDBG funds, the City of Wyoming must support efforts to reduce homelessness. There is a section in Wyoming's CDBG Five-Year Consolidated Plan devoted to homelessness efforts, which has been weak in the past. Wyoming is now part of the regional HUD Continuum of Care (COC) which receives about \$5 million in federal funds per year to allocate to direct service providers regarding programs to remediate and eliminate homelessness. The HUD COC takes in funding applications from about 60 organizations. The HUD COC has to identify one entity to be the fiduciary of funds, and that organization is the Salvation Army. Rynbrandt serves on the steering committee for the HUD COC, which is the Coalition to End Homelessness. In the past Wyoming has not contributed towards the administrative costs of the Coalition. It is necessary for Wyoming to contribute and support their efforts in order to meet the requirement of the CDBG Five Year Consolidated Plan. Rynbrandt pointed out there has been an increase in homelessness in Wyoming. Chairman Reeder noted there are currently 54 homeless children within the Wyoming Public Schools system. Rynbrandt indicated the Salvation Army's application is for up to \$10,000 in funding. She noted Wyoming has had the highest number of foreclosures in the County, which has contributed to the increase in homelessness. The Committee agreed to consider this request for possible funding.

Suggested One-Time Projects List/Recommendation: Rynbrandt outlined a list of possible projects and gave the City Manager's recommendations as far as priorities. When closing out past activities, HUD has determined there is between \$250,000 - \$275,000 in funding available for one-time projects. This money needs to be spent in FY 2013-14 in order for the City not to be penalized by HUD for having too much money in reserves. She had asked City department heads to come up with recommendations for projects based upon HUD criteria and eligible target areas. The City Manager reviewed staff suggestions and made his recommendations, which include: 1) Pinery Park Little League Restrooms/Concession - \$120,000; 2) Pinery Park Fitness Trail Equipment Replacement - \$20,000, 3) Veteran's Park Arches - \$16,000; 4) Wyoming

Senior Center Auditorium and Parking Lot Improvements \$110,000. The overall total is \$266,000.

Sturim asked if Pinery Park Little League has contributed money in the past. Rynbrandt said yes, for such items as the initial development of the ball fields, lights, sanitary sewer and water lines to the concession building and the utility costs during the season.

Sturim thought the sidewalk ramps for persons with disabilities should be a priority in low/moderate income areas. Rynbrandt said they could work with the Engineering Department and Disability Advocates of Kent County to come up with priority locations. Sturim also favored providing security lights for the Housing Commission row housing.

Chairman Reeder thought a better list of projects could have been developed since most of these items can be provided by other organizations or with tax dollars.

In reviewing the recommended list, Rynbrandt noted that there may be a concern related to the purchase of equipment for the fitness trail. Said equipment purchase may be encumbered by additional HUD regulations. Lucar will investigate. Rynbrandt would discuss with the City Manager the funding of security lights for the Housing Commission row housing. She asked the Committee members to e-mail her with any other thoughts or ideas. In the interim, she will be preparing the budget recommendation based upon the City Manager's recommendations.

### Informational Items

**Foreclosure Data:** Rynbrandt referred to this information which was presented earlier in the meeting. She also noted that many of the foreclosed homes have turned into rental housing.

**City Council Retreat Report:** Rynbrandt referred to the presentation materials relative to the Community Services area, which includes efforts and accomplishments during the last ten years.

**2013-2014 Grant Award Status:** Rynbrandt noted HUD has not released the 2013-14 grant award amounts yet due to continued federal budget negotiations. She will be building the budget around the same amounts as last year and will make adjustments accordingly.

**2010 Census Data Use Update:** Rynbrandt indicated HUD has not yet released the 2010 Census low/moderate income area data. Use of the 2000 Census data is still required, which limits where funds can be spent. Staff believes more areas could qualify for funding in Wyoming based on the 2010 Census.

Committee Member Recruitment

Rynbrandt asked the Committee, if they know of anyone interested in serving on the Committee, please have them fill out an application in the City Clerk's Office.

Committee Member Concerns and Suggestions

There were no concerns.

Public Comment in General

There was no public present.

Adjournment

Motion by Sturim, supported by Ziemba, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

(Tentative next meeting: **February 6, 2013**)

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Kimberly S. Lucar  
Planning & Development Department