

Community & Economic Development Committee

Wed, Nov 09, 2022 4:30PM • 12:59

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:03

Hello, and welcome to Community and Economic Development Committee. Wednesday, November 9 2022. First, we will call the meeting to order and take a roll call of membership.

Alderson Vaya Jones (District 10) 00:19

Vaya Jones District 10.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:21

Nate Wolff District 12.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 00:23

Maiyoua Thao District 7.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:27

We need a motion and a second for approval of the minutes from the previous meeting.

Alderson Vaya Jones (District 10) 00:32

Motion to approve.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 00:33

Second.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:34

All those in favor say aye. Aye.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:40

All right, public hearings and appearances. We don't have any.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 00:47

Moving on to action items. 22-1437 request to approve the preliminary 2023-2024 Community Development Block Grants community partner funding allocation recommendations as specified in the attached document.

Unknown Staff Member (I would guess Nikki Gerhard, Community Development Specialist) 01:04

I don't need to push it. All right. So we came last month to get the staff budget, internal budget approved for the grants as well as some internal admin and contracts. So now we just need to get the preliminary community partner applications allocations approved.

So there were nine total applications submitted. And those were sent to you in your packets. There were quite a bit seeking public service. Unfortunately, due to our 15% cap, we were only able to allocate a total of \$88,417 to programming and services, resulting in only four out of the six applications being funded. And then there were an additional three non public service organizations that were funded with their proposed budget. So with that, I would seek approval on the preliminary allocations by the CDBG advisory board.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 02:24

We have some people here who would like to speak I believe. We'll start with Chip.

Chip Wood (Rebuilding Together Fox Valley) 02:34

Would you like me to use the microphone or can you hear me okay?

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 02:36

Yeah. Okay. Yes, for the recording, basically

Chip Wood (Rebuilding Together Fox Valley) 02:44

I'm Chip with Rebuilding Together Fox Valley. I want to thank you for our continued partnership and give a little update about the progress that we're making because of our partnership. This year alone, we've made 884 home modifications and repairs. We're on track to break 1000 this year, which we're really, really proud of. 448 of those modifications or repairs in 53 homes have been just in the city of Appleton itself there. So the the partnership that we have is really making an incredible difference from us. I encourage you all at some point to come on downstairs. We're just in the basement here too, and see all the thank you notes from all the very, very grateful people that we've been helping because of it. And we're just extremely grateful for continuing to partner with you and everything that you do. So thank you for for our continued work together.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 03:25

Thank you, Lisa. Hi, Lisa.

Lisa Strandberg (Pillars) 03:34

Hi, good to see you all. Again. I'm Lisa Strandberg, Executive Director for Pillars. And just here to thank the team for recommending almost \$13,000 in funding for our prevention program. We serve about 300 individuals (and half of those are children) to help them avoid the shelter stay. We operate two shelters and this prevention program is meant to keep folks housed and out of shelter. So Thanks for considering the recommendation.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 04:05

Colleen?

Colleen Bies (WWBIC) 04:06

Hi, I'm Colleen with WWBIC. And I just want to say thank you for our allocation as well. We're very excited to provide technical assistance to small business owners in the Appleton area that have been struggling even since COVID, that continue to struggle. And so with this allocation this year we're really excited to help over 20 or more--hopefully a lot a lot more small business owners--with getting them some technical assistance in helping them grow their business, be more sustainable, be able to help build this community, and create jobs in this area as well. So thank you.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 04:45

Thank you. John, you're up. Amy, you're on deck.

John Weyenberg (Habitat for Humanity) 04:55

Good afternoon, everyone. John Weyenberg, CEO of Habitat for Humanity in the Fox Cities. Thanks for allowing me to a couple minutes to speak. I just want to thank you for your past support. Habitat has been very fortunate to be a beneficiary of CDBG funds for a number of years. And we've utilized those funds to provide affordable housing opportunities for families in our community, specifically on the homeownership side. And we partner with the many wonderful agencies behind me and others in the community as well to make sure that we address the affordable housing needs in our community. Those have only grown exponentially in the last few years due to the impacts of Covid, and inflation, and all of those other factors that create challenges for us.

John Weyenberg (Habitat for Humanity) 05:36

But this specific application is to help us purchase blighted homes in the city of Appleton, or homes that have been neglected over a period of time, rehab those homes and turn them into homeownership opportunities for families in our community. And that's just one piece of the broader program that Habitat offers throughout the Fox Cities. But this is a vital role. Homeownership is such a critical element for families to build equity and break that cycle of poverty. So thank you for your past support. And I appreciate your continued support as we move forward together. Thanks.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 06:07

Thank you for your work.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 06:08

Okay, sorry, I do. Director Harkness.

Director Karen Harkness (Community And Economic Development) 06:22

Thank you chairperson. I just wanted to take this opportunity to first and foremost, thank my staff, because going through the CDBG process is something that happens all year long. This is the culmination of that process. And I don't know if everybody in the room knows how special Appleton is and how we share our CDBG dollars with the community. We are one of the few that makes sure that it gets pushed back out into the community to be able to meet those basic needs, those critical needs for the socially--it's, it's our safety net, right for, our social infrastructure. It's helping that most vulnerable population in our community. And it really takes the community to be able to bring things like this together.

Director Karen Harkness (Community And Economic Development) 07:15

But it starts with this team here at this table with Nikki with Monica. And then those of you (Maiyoua this year) got to serve on the CDBG Advisory Committee, where we bring in people from the outside, right, to give us their perspective and to listen, to review, learn about all of these wonderful community partners that we have--their needs, and how they're supporting this community. I only wish that I had won the lottery of a little over 2 billion so I would have that to share and add to the pot of money that all of these organizations just do such wonderful things. And then I just wanted to say thank you to the committee, because you're going to carry this recommendation to the Council and bring it full circle to fruition so that we're able to help our community and support those in the most vulnerable needed positions in the community.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 08:17

On that, just going back a little bit. Both, Israel and Kristen are excused. I just wanted to point that out for the record. Yes go ahead Alderman Jones.

Alderman Vaya Jones (District 10) 08:28

I don't know how this microphone is going to work. So just just before this meeting started, I got a phone call. You turn off clerk?

Alderman Vaya Jones (District 10) 08:41

Just before this meeting, I had gotten a phone call from one of our hospitals social workers. And we had a patient who was in a precarious situation. And she said, "Vaya always knows someone. What, what's your idea?" and I literally started talking about Lisa's staff at Pillars and how we can go to them and they will help us with this. I have to echo the incredible organizations that help the most vulnerable in this community. But I want to take it a step further. Because the people sitting in this room are leaders, are innovators, try and find sustainable

ways to help people. And I think that we would be remiss not to applaud them for just being really good human beings and really good role models for myself and those in my peer group. So I'm just calling John Weyenberg old. That's my goal here. So thank you again for your hard work. But thank you even more for being such great leaders and just taking care of those who who work for you. So thank you

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 09:49

Aldersperson Thao.

Aldersperson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 09:50

Thank you chair. I would like to add that I have sit in this committee for four years now. And I'm so proud of our staff for all the hard work that you have done for our community. You play a such a great team, you work so hard together, you understand our community's needs. And you share the values with everyone in our community. You want to be there and make a difference and make our community better by partnering with our partners in the community. And this is a great things that you're doing, and I'm very proud of you and all the work that you put in here at city and working with community partners.

Aldersperson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 10:34

I'm so glad that I had the opportunity to sit on this committee and learn a lot about the process and also learn about organizations that apply to the block grant. And it was eye opening for me. I got to learn a lot too. And I would like to thank all the organizations that apply. I am so proud that we have such a great community. We're working hard together, we're working together to provide to make our community better. It's not just one or two, but we all come together and service the needs in our community. And I will encourage you to continue working hard and working, like more and more so that our community can become better. And it's not that we're not better we are, but we need to continue working at it and to better service our community every day. So I'd like to thank you all to for all your hard work. And I'm glad that you're taking the time and you're willing to be there to serve our community. So thank you so much.

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 11:44

What they said. But seriously, things have been hard at the last few years in this city for a lot of people and across the country and in different municipalities, and different municipalities have been struggling and how to deal with that. And Appleton is lucky to have a staff and people in the community running things that know what they're doing and can get people through these hard times. So I want to thank all of you and the people on our committee as well. Because we have faced these challenges, and I think that there's we're getting to the other side and I think it's going to be much better on the other side. Thank you very much.

Aldersperson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 12:31

I will move to approve.

Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 12:33

Second.

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 12:34

All those in favor say aye. Aye. All right, the ayes have it. All right.

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 12:43

Moving on to information items, we don't have any. Which brings us to number seven, adjourn. All those in favor say aye. Aye. We are adjourned