CDBG Allocation Committee

February 27, 2025
8:00am-9:30am
Remote Meeting via Zoom

In Attendance:
Robby Perkins-High, Chair, Todd Morse, Vice Chair,
Wendy Harmon, Natalie King, Teale Smith, Lawson Condrey
Staff: Mary Davis, Rowen McAllister

Meeting Minutes

Roll Call

Motion to Approve the minutes from the last meeting from Teale. Todd seconds. Unanimously passes.

Discuss Social Service Scoring and Committee Letter to City Manager
Staff shared the updated draft version of the letter with the committee. It outlines the funding requests and total deficits, as well as the final rankings for the applications. The letter highlights the requirements of the process and other guidelines that the committee was working within. Staff stated that the letter has the following Development Activity projects recommended at partial or full funding based on the scores of the Committee: Tyng Tate Playground, Cumberland Ave sidewalks, Business Assistance Program, Resource Hub and Tate Street Sidewalk Improvements. Staff also stated that the following Social Service applications are recommended for full or partial funding based on Committee scores: Quality Housing Coalition, Wayside, Hope Acts, PFD's Mobile Medical Outreach, and Greater Portland Family Promise. Maine Needs, Maine Health, and Presente scored above the 75 point threshold for the New Applicant Set Aside. Maine Needs was recommended at full funding with a few extra thousand dollars available for the second ranked application. Staff acknowledged the number of high quality applications that have gone unfunded this year. Staff then introduced the last section of the letter which the committee will use to offer additional comments regarding the ranking and process.

The Committee first talked about the New Applicant Set Aside and generally members were comfortable with the existing language in the letter regarding the intent and value of the Set Aside. Members wondered if the 75 point threshold is fair. Overall, the Committee agreed to move forward. One member raised the idea about possibly separating Social Services into different categories. Another member wondered if staff could ever socialize some of these unfunded applications to other foundations or funders.

Members discussed how to recommend the Cotton St funding as well as the $3,000 left over from the New Applicant Set Aside which by default was recommended to Maine Health. The minimum application request is $10,000 so the committee has an opportunity to move those funds to a different application. Members were generally in agreement to the extra new Applicant funding and the Cotton St funding going to the next ranked application, Greater Portland Family Promise application.

Members acknowledged there is such a close point difference between funded and unfunded projects. The last part of the letter addresses ideas the Committee may have to approach different ways of allocating funds. Members generally agree that the Task Force should explore how close the scoring is. Members discussed the lottery idea that was carried over from the past letter. Some members felt that the lottery idea would create more avenues for political decisions, and reduce the role of the allocation committee in providing the rankings. The Committee agreed to remove reference to the points, but leave the reference to the lottery in the letter.

Todd moved to approve the letter as final, Teale seconds. Roll call vote passes the motion, unanimously.

Staff confirms they will send the letter to the City Manager and the applicants alerting them of the funding recommendations. Staff confirmed the meeting for next week is cancelled due to the vote today on the letter and because no other action was needed. Staff outlined the rest of the review process for the applications, and noted they would be sending out an email within the week to schedule the meeting with the City Manager and the Committee for the end of March. Staff thanked the Committee for their time and attention to this process.

The meeting adjourned.