

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Human Resource Conference Room
Public Service Building – 3rd Floor – 625 Murray Street
625 Murray Street, Alexandria, LA

June 7th, 2018 – 10:00 A.M.

Members Present:

G.G. Metoyer
Herbie Flynn
Kendra Gauthier
Joyce Thompson
Amy Cheney
Devon Sanders
Sandra Augustine
Victoria Ortigo
Shirley Branham
Krystal Wimbley
Marvin Daniel
Kenna Lavalais
Dianne Bonin
Edna Woodard

Opening Prayer: Amy Cheney

Shirley Branham: Director of Community Development stated this is our Annual Community Development meeting and the purpose is to go over the 2017 – 2018 CAPER. CAPER means Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report, a recap of performance we did this year with our HUD funds, and is one of the requirements from HUD. You may review this document on the city web page.

INTRODUCTIONS: New board members and their bio, Joyce Thompson, Cenla Area Agency REP, Victoria Ortigo, Youth Rep and Devon Sanders, CLASS, AIDS/HIV Rep. and returning board members thanked them for their continuing support.

Shirley: There will be a 15 day comment period ending June 20, and a public hearing June 11, 2018 at 3:00 pm. Then will be presented to city council June 26 for introduction.

Obstacles:

SHIRLEY: In the past HUD has been very late in funding our grants. 2017 money was to be received in May or August, we did not get funds until October 2017. The city financed everything until we

received our funds. Our fiscal year ends on April 30.
Talked about HUD trying to re-track our determination to allow and

count demolition low-mod activity as a national objective. This has been going on since 2015, has not heard from them as of yet. We did have a discussion in March and we are still waiting. If we were allowed to count demolition as a low mod area benefit, we could spend our complete CDBG awards on demolition activities and clean up all these blighted areas throughout the city. But there are rules and currently we can only spend 30% of our grant. Can only do 10 houses and spend 90,000 dollars. Kenna gets 4-5 burned structures a month.

2017- 2018 Budget:

CDBG – \$480,116
HOME – \$174,000
CODE ENFORCEMENT – \$48,000
DEMOLITION –\$97,000
MINOR REHAB -\$179,00
ADMIN – \$80,000
HOME MAJOR REHAB -\$130,000

Shirley: HUD requires we assign monies to a CHDO and we still do not have a CHDO. The contract terminated with our previous CHDO in 2016. These funds are sitting there and we cannot spend it.
HOME ADM – \$17,000 we burned that about the first month.

2017 – 2018 Accomplishments:

Shirley: Thanked the staff for their hard work. In 2017, 227 applications were processed 117 in April and in May we did another 114 applications this let us know there is a high demand for owner occupied structures in this city that needs some work done and looking for assistance. We had estimated we would do 30 houses, but we did 43 houses, totaling \$210,000, Major Rehab, we had estimated 2 houses and we did 4 totaling \$160,000, Demolition, the city gave us \$80,000 and we did 14 demolitions, with city funds totaling \$112,000. 25 properties were demolished with CDBG funds \$102,000, we demolished 39 properties and it does not make a dent. We are trying.

Shirley: In code enforcement Kenna and Marvin accomplished 89 complaints. She explained the complaint process from step 1 to how it is ranked to the completion of the complaint received. We send letters to the owners to start the process.

16 – Owners demolished with their funds
2 - Owners rehabbed their properties
1 Owner Boarded up. Further discussions were on this.

CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE

Shirley: We were trying to do a Home Buyers Assistance Program, for persons trying to buy a home, also with Closing Cost Assistance etc. Was not able to develop this program. We had to have a Homebuyer seminar in order to do that.

We had 43 persons to sign up and 8 persons showed up the day of the seminar and no one applied for a loan. We would have given them up to \$30,000 for a home. Talked about what we found out later. The credit scores were so low, even if they would have applied, we could not get them qualified. We were working with Red River Bank.

We talked about doing a Credit Counseling Program, to work with them for a year to improve their credit scores to make them eligible to qualify. The closest counseling would be 2 hours away and a year long program. Housing Authority is trying to do the same thing. Abandon the project for now and maybe later look at it later. Further discussions were on this.

Shirley: Our remaining budget as of May 31, 2018 is \$580,000 from 2017. Discussed this. Stated this year we are geared up to spend this amount. Any questions on old business?

Joyce: How do you determine if a house needs repairs or demolish or would you have to come and do an application first?

— —
Shirley: We have the Rehab Program, Krystal will tell you about this.

Krystal: we have the application process. On the 1st day, we had 150 persons to come in. Takes applications according to HUD guidelines, income, ownership, number in family and other requirements. Stated Marvin goes out and does an inspection to check the feasibility, structural issues etc. then we base this on what they might need. Could be plumbing, roofing, heating, electrical, carpentry etc. Whatever is the highest need, this is what we send out for bid. Applications are taken on a first come first serve basic. We send flyers to all churches, neighborhood groups etc.

Shirley: This means that the application has to be completed first and then prioritized. She then asked Kenna to discuss demolition process.

Kenna: We go on a complaint procedure. Marvin go out and does an inspection to see if the property can be rehabbed or demolished. Demolition will be 50% or of the structure to demolish or rehab. Stated, there are other factors taken in consideration also, such as locations, is it near a school, how long has it been vacant, is it causing issues in the neighborhood etc.

Shirley: Marvin goes out and does a ranking process for those properties severely burned, they will be a priority 1. Ranking goes from 1-3 explained. Our goal is to get the most dangerous ones down first.

Amy: Asked Kenna does she get in touch with the owners who might be out of town?

Kenna: Yes, once we get information, we have to do an ownership research, so we can notify them

of the violations on their property. They have 30 days to respond on what actions they will take. After the 30 days if no response we have to continue with our action until we condemn the property and then the city demolish it.

Shirley: We legally have to notify the owners and give them the 30 days, also notify all the legal owners of this property also We put it in the Town Talk as well. Explained the process. Further discussions were on this.

Joyce: In Arkansas if you do not keep up your property they will fine you for your grass.

Shirley: This is a different department in the city, the other part of code enforcement. Gave things they do. Further discussions were on this. Appreciate you all for asking questions on behalf of your communities. Any Questions?

New Business:

2018 Events

Shirley, We still do not have our 2018 funds, but the good news we did get an increase for our CDBG and HOME funds programs will be almost \$90,000 this year. Then another Email came in that the Senate Sub Committee gave another increase for 2019-2020.

Shirley: Talked about the Neighborhood Groups and Citizen Advisory Committee input. Shared with them the combining of all target neighborhood groups meeting at on time. Our last meeting was November 2, 2017, we gave them a survey to fill out on what they would like to see done with community development funds, this is how they ranked it. 1.Minor Rehab, 2. Major Rehab, 3. Demolition, 4. Code Enforcement Street Overlay, drainage and Legal Succession were next. Stated, this is how we decide show we will spend the funding.

Shirley: Our next neighborhood meeting will be November 1st at 6:00 p.m. at Bolton Ave Community Center.

Shirley: One of the other things we talked about was drainage, because persons properties are being damaged over and over.

Stated, the discussion was not on the city drainage, but where does this water drain into to get out of the city? Engineers found that some of the city exit drainages were stopped up, this is why the water in the city could not drain. They have been working with the parish to get this solved. If we get 6 ins in a day or two there will be a lot of people getting flooded again because of this. The city did allocate 4 million dollars. Further discussions were on this.

2018-2019 Entitlement Expected. See Handout.

Shirley: We expect to spend:

Demolition- 104,220 – 8- 10 houses

Minor Rehab – 176,070 -20-30 Houses

Program Delivery and Adm. Which is a HUD rule. Explained

Legal Succession – 52,110 We are trying very hard to implement this program, explained about clear titles etc.

Program Planning & ADM – 86,850

Major Rehab – 177,202- 3-4 Houses

Shirley: Still has the CHDO money. With the increase we should be able to do, Minor Rehab – 70 Houses, Demolition – 15 Houses, also the city has given us another 80,000 for demolition.

Shared with the group if the city tears the house down, it has to be tested for asbestos and has to be abated, but if the owner tears it down you do not have to have it abated nor removed.

Victoria- If the person let the city do it do they still own the land?

Shirley – Yes, a lien is filed against the property, if the property is sold the lien has to be paid off. We never take possession of the property , this is another big question, and is why we want the legal succession program.

Joyce - If it cost the city 10,000 or the owner 2,000 to tear the property down, why can't the owner apply to the city for the 2,000?

Shirley – A very good point, this has come up before. In preparing our 5 Year Plan, we need things that will be helpful for our communities. Also for our 2020 Plan, can we loan money to rehab or tear down? We are really looking at this. Stated, if we go that route, we will not have a lot of money to do rehab. Further discussions were on this. Thanked them for their input.

Shirley – Our next meeting will be January 10, 2019 at 10:00 am to go over our Annual Plan. Asked the committee if they would spread the word out on the date and time for our neighborhood meeting and to reschedule them. Some are still having their at the same time as ours it would be better.

Victoria – Asked about the newsletter for the city?

Shirley- Cynthia Jardon is in charge of that.

Any Questions? Thanked the committee for coming.

Meeting Adjourned