

## REPORT OF THE HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 19, 2003

A meeting of the Human Affairs Committee was held Wednesday, February 19, 2003, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Chairman Lori Cardin presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman Marc W. Plamondon, Vice Chair (arriving late)  
Alderman Stephen C. Liamos  
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner  
Alderman-at-Large David W. Deane

Members of the Committee absent:

Also in Attendance: Glenn Levesque, Nashua Police Department  
Paul Newman, Manager, Urban Programs Department  
Klaas Nijhuis, Deputy Manager, Urban Programs Dept.

### Alderman Tollner

Madam Chairman a couple of minutes ago Alderman Plamondon called in the back and said that he was running a little late. He will be here, but he is presently at a Board meeting.

### Chair Cardin

Thank you.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LIAMOS TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO GO OUT OF THE  
REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS TO TAKE UP R-03-155 AND R-03-158 PRIOR TO THE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
MOTION CARRIED**

### NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

#### **R-03-155**

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner  
Alderman Marc W. Plamondon  
Alderman Lori Cardin  
Alderman Kevin E. Gage  
Alderman Scott A. Cote

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$68,376 OBTAINED  
FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, INTO SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT  
#331-6287 “DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS EQUIPMENT PROGRAM”**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN DEANE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE**

ON THE QUESTION

Chair Dion

Glenn Levesque is here from the Police Department is he would join us.

Glenn Levesque

I am the Grants Manager. This money is finally some of the domestic preparedness money out of the federal government. This \$68,376 will be used to purchase personal protective equipment for each officer currently on the force. With that money we will be able to purchase an air purifying respirator, which is your basic gas mask, a chemical suit, gloves, and boots to protect the officers if they happen to come across any type of hostile environment. As far as the city's share of this there is no match. This grant will end by July 1<sup>st</sup>. All of this merchandise has to be purchased by July 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Chair Cardin

Can you give us an idea of how many suits this will purchase?

Glenn Levesque

Right now there is a approximately 168 that were on the application at the time.

Chair Cardin

Does the committee have any questions?

Alderman Deane

Can you repeat that again?

Glenn Levesque

Right now 168 is what we applied for. If bids come in low we might be able to pick up additional, but the application was for 168.

Alderman Deane

Thank you.

Alderman Tollner

The 168 will be covered by the \$68,000?

Glenn Levesque

Yes.

Alderman Tollner

Okay.

Chair Cardin

Are there any other questions?

**MOTION CARRIED**

**R-03-158**

Endorser: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter  
Alderman Kevin E. Gage  
Alderman Lori Cardin  
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner  
Alderman-at-Large Fred Britton

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES INTO SPECIAL REVENUE ACCOUNT 332-6309 "NASHUA FIRE RESCUE'S RISK WATCH PROGRAM"**

Chair Cardin

I don't see anyone here from Fire Rescue. What is the committee's pleasure on R-03-158?

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO HOLD R-03-158 IN COMMITTEE PENDING CLARIFICATION FROM FIRE RESCUE**

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Tollner

I would like to hold so that we can get clarification of what exactly the funds are going to be for and if there is any requirement on the city's part for a match. There was a little confusion I think the last time that we discussed a grant.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO GO BACK TO THE REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS AND CONDUCT THE PUBLIC HEARING**  
**MOTION CARRIED**

*The Committee went back to the regular order of business to conduct the public hearing at 7:06 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting at the conclusion of the public hearing at 8:18 p.m.*

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Paul Newman, Manager, Urban Programs Department

Re: Community Development Block Grant: Status of Past Funding and Schedule

Chair Cardin

I would like to, at this time, invite Klaas and Paul to come join us and have some conversation on this.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LIAMOS TO ACCEPT AND PLACE ON FILE**

ON THE QUESTION

Paul Newman

The communication is intended to supplement the testimony you heard during the public hearing from the various agencies that have been funded. This speaks to the summary of the status of all of our projects. You have a spreadsheet that shows the increments of funding through the last number of years. Then we have prepared a brief report on those other projects that are funded under Community Development Block Grant like the ongoing housing improvement program, the various capital projects that were not multi-year projects but were freestanding one-year projects such as those on the second page. Then, of course, the human services that are also supported through the block grant.

Generally I expect that all of you in attendance here have been through this process before and I expect you will probably be well accustomed to the steps. I have handed out a schedule there proposed for your consideration as to the progress and sequence of the meetings. This is the first of two public hearings that are held during this annual process to consider the allocation of next year's grant. The second public, which is proposed to be held April 16<sup>th</sup> would be on the actual funding plan, and, of course, that is publicly noticed, and we also invite once again all of the agencies or individuals that may be submitting proposals to come and testify. Prior to that at your March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting that would be the time at which you would all consider sponsoring a resolution to be introduced to the full Board of Aldermen on April 8<sup>th</sup>, back to the committee on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and then final action either the later part of April or the first meeting in May by the Board of Aldermen.

I would like to take a few minutes and go through the status of some of these. We won't read the entire thing to you since you have it for reference. I did want to correct something on the front page. As you may already realize the multi-year commitments, the third one down in that top grouping – Nashua Pastoral Care – I described as the second of two years. It is actually the second of three years, which is correctly reflected on the spreadsheet.

Why don't I ask Klaas Nijhuis to please go through the first section of our report on the housing improvement program.

Klaas Nijhuis

I think how I want to start is to remind the Human Affairs Committee of how CDBG projects get accomplished in the city, and it is through an agreement that we worked out through the consolidated plan where we brought the community together and a number of the agencies, and I think Alderman Cardin was there to witness about 70 individuals work through a plan to figure out the best and most purposeful use for these funds over the five years. We're well into that plan now. That activity is really demonstrative of what all of our projects are and they are partnerships within the community – incredible partnerships between the agencies, their boards,

their business support, and our own city staff. You will see references to the Police Department, their senior relations officer gets involved in a number of projects where there is hardship. CDBG dollars comes to solve some of that hardship in association with our Welfare Department, with our Environmental Health Department, with our Public Health Department. This is the city working in tandem with great agencies, with great people, and it is always rewarding to see these projects move forward.

Housing improvement program is representative of that. You give us about \$150,000 a year to help families who are low income, but own their properties, may own rental properties within those buildings so we are supporting the creating and maintenance of good housing stock, affordable to a large segment of our population through this program. We do typically around 10 units a year. It is both a benefit to the inside of these dwellings for comfort, convenience, and for health and safety. It is an enhancement to the neighborhood itself. This year because of a number of factors we have been able so far to commit funds to 17 properties. There is a demand for our money and that demand right now is because of the economy. We're seeing people coming to us for help with reducing their heating costs through windows and heating plant replacements. For the most part we have been successful in helping them. I note in my report one instance where we have a situation where despite our efforts it is still going to foreclosure, and that is unfortunately a possibility because of the population we serve. Again through partnerships with welfare and the non-profit community we try to save those.

Essentially my report outlines how we do this, how much we do on an annual basis – this year 17 units. All these are secured by mortgages on properties. They are essentially principle only, do upon transfer when the property is no longer a primary residence for the beneficiary.

#### Paul Newman

While you are mentioning that excuse me while I interrupt you for a moment. You will see on the spreadsheet that the flow of repayments is becoming substantial. In the last two years it has been over \$80,000 per year, which provides an ongoing monies coming back to the city for reallocation. It is constantly getting recycled achieving new benefits.

#### Klaas Nijhuis

As we invest in these properties the property appreciates along with the market appreciation. Some families when they are in a position where they need extra capital they are able to refinance and we will subordinate our mortgages. I have been showing you that the trend has been about 3 mortgages a month that we subordinate. The city is always protected of course with both loan to value ratio and through the mortgage itself. That essentially is the housing improvement program as it is deployed in the field, but the housing improvement program is a lot more. It is about building capacity within agencies, it is about the collaboration and building a network and maintaining the network and it is about working towards eliminating homelessness in this community, and a whole lot more. This year it has grown to include the Economic Development Grant that we got from HUD, it has included the management of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund that the Aldermen have set up, and other initiatives as well.

I will move on to the capital projects that are listed. A number of these I have been directly managing or my staff has been managing and I note the improvements to Nashua Soup Kitchen that you supported this year, \$10,000 almost fully expended at this time. Again we are up against issues of contractor availability and the weather cooperating, but generally most of the

projects are well along the way if not completely spent down. Area agency for developmental services received \$18,000 from you last year and that project is done with windows and heating plant replacement. The Nashua Center for the Multiply Handicapped is an instance where the project, once we got into it, was clearly much more than what they had anticipated so they have a \$3,500 line item standing there, and I believe they will be coming to you for more money to help with the complete roof replacement through that. The Police Athletic League – I will let Paul talk to you on some of the remaining ones.

#### Paul Newman

Thank you Klaas. The Police Athletic League – CDBG funded the acquisition of the property at 31 Cross Street in the year 2000. Of course that continues to function as a community center in that neighborhood. The Boys & Girls Club this was funding in the past year and we expect that we will endeavor to tie that into a larger paving project to accomplish the paving around the apron of their building on Grand Avenue.

Attached you have a memo from Nick Caggiano the Superintendent of Parks describing their plans for the various recreation projects that have been funded through CDBG. There is some balance left for Memorial Park Lighting, which they propose to reallocate. They would suggest supplementing the funding at Sullivan Park, which is currently \$20,000 by an additional \$10,000 to really make that project work. Then Haines Street fields they are going to apply that to a batting cage and other ball field equipment at that site. Lyons Field that will be coming up this summer to install fencing and netting to protect the neighbors' properties from stray baseball. Finally the Belvedere playground received funding of \$10,000 and that will be used to purchase benches, tables, and other playground equipment. This memo will be on your list of possible projects for consideration as these proposals come in. He is not looking for any action from you all at this point in time. I will invite him to the meeting to discuss these – to your next meeting.

#### Alderman Plamondon

I have spoken to Paul Newman and I have also spoken to Nick Caggiano regarding the fund balance for Memorial Park lighting. If you might recall last year I transferred \$20,000 from the Nashua Heritage Rail Trail into this project for the lighting. Now that I see that there is a balance remaining I would like to see those funds reverted back into the Nashua Heritage Rail Trail. I didn't know there was any money left over. I was going to ask for the full \$20,000 back into the Nashua Heritage Rail Trail. There is a lot of money that will be spent this year on the Heritage Rail Trail. I can go into more detail on it. I don't know if this is when you want to hear it.

#### Chair Cardin

Is there a plan in place to do something at this point Alderman Plamondon because we haven't seen – I don't know if they have seen a plan or a request for the amount of funding.

#### Alderman Plamondon

If you want me to go through it I can go through a lot of the things that are going on, and I might say that when I spoke to Nick Caggiano he had no problem whatsoever in having the funds going back into the Heritage Rail Trail.

Chair Cardin

I don't know that we need all the details Alderman Plamondon. I guess what I am asking basically is if there is a plan were the funds requested through CDBG because I know there is a deadline for requesting funds.

Alderman Plamondon

Right now what I am stating is I would like to see this fund balance go back into the Nashua Heritage Rail Trail and it won't be...

Chair Cardin

You are talking about the \$11,259.19?

Alderman Plamondon

Yes. I believe there is currently \$16,000 remaining in the Heritage Rail Trail.

Chair Cardin

Of CDBG money?

Alderman Plamondon

Yes.

Chair Cardin

Is that on the spreadsheet that I missed?

Paul Newman

Yes. It should be there – it was a total of \$36,000 that was originally appropriated for a skate park on the rail trail and \$20,000 as Alderman Plamondon pointed out, was transferred to the Memorial Park Lighting. The previous years FY '00 and FY '99 have been spent towards the original development of the trail. Nothing of the \$16,000 has been spent.

Chair Cardin

Certainly when it comes time to decide what we will fund that will certainly be brought up.

Alderman Plamondon

I just wanted it for the record that I would like to see that money go back in.

Alderman Deane

This is a question through the Chair to Paul Newman. What have we had for requests so far this year?

Paul Newman

I don't think we have any actual formal proposals yet, but we have had a number of inquiries and intents to apply. I can just capsize them. Some inquiries which may or may not result in a concrete proposal, but Keystone Hall of Harbor Homes, which Keystone Hall is now under the umbrella of Harbor Homes, have inquired about capital funds for adapting their facility at the end of the Pine Street Extension for a specialized sort of transitional housing for – they would get operating support through the state for I believe certain clientele that they can't now deal with in a group dorm sort of environment. They are working to subdivide some rooms there. They will be able to speak to that better than I.

The Air Agency – potentially they had applied last year and the Board of Aldermen funded a certain part of that proposal so they may reapply for that. You heard from the Senior Center. The Hunt Building Trustees have apparently been discussing a proposal. Nashua Center for the multiply handicapped, which Klaas described for a roof in the realm of \$40,000. Micro Credit New Hampshire is looking to expand a program. I think Klaas had heard about this that they operated in Manchester?

Klaas Nijhuis

They operate here in Nashua as well all ready. It is more likely that will be social service related funding coming down in November or December.

Paul Newman

It might qualify as Economic Development outside of that cap on human services so we are not quite sure yet. Of course Public Works through the requests for the parks improvements. There have been a couple of requests that probably would have been for operational program support. They have been advised these are new parties that have not been familiar with the Review & Comment application process that of course happened back in December and early January. They now know the cycle and I expect would probably be looking at that next year.

Alderman Deane

The deadline is March 7<sup>th</sup>?

Paul Newman

Correct.

Alderman Deane

Thank you.

Paul Newman

We will have the summary of those and we will put a copy of the proposals in a binder in you Legislative Office for reference and then summarize that as far as eligibility and so forth as we have in the past.

Finally there is a section of our report on human services. As you know CDBG is used to support 4 agencies; Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, which goes toward operating their homeless shelter, and we have summarized the statistics on the operation of that so far this year. Briefly it represents about 532 bed nights that CDBG has supported. The Nashua Area Health Center and Greater Nashua Council on Alcoholism first providing low cost primary health care services to low or moderate income Nashua citizens who lack insurance or are underinsured. Then the Greater Nashua Council on Alcoholism operating at Keystone Hall undertakes outreach to individuals who are struggling through recovery and abuse. Then finally the Boys & Girls Club Hispanic Outreach Program – this helps to pay a portion of the cost of an outreach worker position to reach out to the Latino community in Nashua. Those programs are all ongoing on a regular basis fully operating.

We will be sending you all with your next agenda the summaries of proposals that came in and please let us know if there is any other information that would be helpful in the meantime.

Alderman Tollner

You may not know this – have you received an inquiry from CASA?

Paul Newman

Yes. That was one of the agencies that had inquired about programmatic or operating type funding. I am in contact with Althea Valentine at CASA. I did send her background information on the Community Development Block Grant so that she could educate herself and the agency – the organization could – they weren't that familiar with it at this point.

Alderman Tollner

I was at a presentation about a month ago. I was impressed because I knew really nothing about it before going to the presentation, but it is a great group and they do have a number of fundraising efforts. After that presentation I suggested that they call one of you and I am glad to see that they did.

Paul Newman

Yes, we have exchanged phone calls and e-mails.

Alderman Tollner

Great.

Chair Cardin

Is that one of the groups that you recommended to apply for the 505 through Review & Comment?

Paul Newman

I expect that is what they would be most interested in.

Alderman Tollner

Thank you.

Paul Newman

You're welcome.

Chair Cardin

Thank you very much. I would like to get a sense of the committee as to what we would like to do with the amount of the CDBG grant for Human Service programs. In the past few years we have given the full 15%.

Alderman Deane

I would just assume continue with the 15% that we have done – that we did last year anyway, which was my first time.

Alderman Plamondon

Ditto.

Alderman Tollner

I think we should keep doing what we did last year. I think that was a good idea.

Alderman Liamos

Let's make it unanimous.

Chair Cardin

Okay so the full committee would sponsor a resolution for the 15% of CDBG. Okay. Terrific then we will do that.

**MOTION CARRIED**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES – None

DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO ADJOURN  
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Alderman Stephen C. Lamos  
Committee Clerk