

REPORT OF THE HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 16, 2006

A meeting of the Human Affairs Committee was held Thursday, February 16, 2006 at 9:30 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Chairman Marc W. Plamondon presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner, Vice Chair
Alderman Richard LaRose
Alderman David MacLaughlin
Alderman Michael Tabacsko

Also in Attendance: Angelo Marino, GIS Coordinator
Katherine E. Hersh, Div. Director, Community Devel. Div.
Sheila O'Riordan, Grant Mgr., Urban Programs Dept.

Chairman Plamondon

For those who have waited here, with the committee's permission, I would like to go right into new business so that the people who have been waiting throughout the public hearing to bring that business forward.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO GO OUT OF THE REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS TO TAKE UP NEW BUSINESS
MOTION CARRIED**

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-06-09

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner
Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF A \$500,000 GRANT FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE LAW ENFORCEMENT TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Plamondon

I believe Mr. Marino has been patiently waiting. Please join us. Mr. Marino we have had a lot of conversation on this. This is a Justice Law Enforcement Technology Grant that you and your department have worked on for the last couple of years that will assist Hillsborough County and Rockingham County law enforcement with pictometry. If you will maybe go further on that please?

Angelo Marino

I would be happy to. Thank you for the opportunity. As you all may know, we acquired in 2004 a new technology produced by Pictometry International. It's technical name is electronic field study. What this technology does is it provides us with images of every property, every building in the City of Nashua, but it is not the typical image that you are used to when you see aerial photography, which is just roofs. These images are images from an oblique angle, which give you the sides of buildings. The technology also allows you to, with the click of a mouse, go from a southern exposure looking north to a northern exposure looking south, an eastern exposure looking west or a western exposure looking east. There are other technologies built into the software, which allow you to measure directly on the images, locate features, locate addresses. You can also incorporate your GIS data layers within this software so it is a tremendous aid.

The Fire Department uses this software just about every day. The Police Department has utilized it in drug enforcement division when they plan tactical events. In addition to those public safety uses, every department within City Hall can utilize this software. There is no limit on what you can do with it. The software comes with a site license so there is not an additional fee to deploy the software and the images. You can do that as many times as you want. The software currently is used in the Building, Planning, and Zoning offices, Code Enforcement, Assessing, Risk Management, Engineering, Public Health. It has a tremendous advantage because even though the images are static and they are taken as of a certain date, it offers a tremendous advantage. The biggest advantage is in public safety where the images are taken during the day so the scenario is that if you wanted to deploy this software and the images in the dispatch center you would be able to deploy it and with the click of the mouse and a few keystrokes at 3:00 a.m. when the power is out in any particular area of the city you would be able to see a daylight image of the property where an incident is happening.

It can be deployed in laptop computers so that you can use it in command vans, vehicles, it has a tremendous advantage. We saw the advantage two years ago. We have been working with Pictometry International to assist other communities and to gain some of this technology because they have been very good to us in providing services as well as technology and training, and what this will do for us is we will be able to utilize all of the images that are gathered in this program. For our mutual aid agreements with other communities we will already have images of those communities so that before we even roll an apparatus because we have been called on a mutual aid call, we will know what then property looks like so that we will be able to hit the ground running when we get there. It is a tremendous advantage for us, a tremendous advantage for other communities in Hillsborough and Rockingham County.

The nice thing about it is it doesn't cost us a dime. We don't have enough money to do everything that we wanted to do in Hillsborough and Rockingham counties, but we are going to be able to provide service to some communities and the communities that want these images, the low level images, the images without detail, we have put a plan together so that there is essentially a minor matching amount of funds that they have to provide. I have already got I believe 9 or 10 communities that have committed to spend the money to acquire this imagery with their match, and as we progress in time I believe we will get many more of the communities, and they will be able to utilize the same software that we have.

As I said it is not going to cost us a dime. It is a recurring program yes, but in two years if we don't want to continue with this technology we can walk away from it. Beyond that if you have any questions about how it works, what it does or if you want to see it – it is deployed on the assessing counter – you can walk up to the assessing counter and see it any day of the week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I have done I believe two demonstrations in this Chamber of the technology, but not for the newer Aldermen. I know they might not have seen it. We find it to be a tremendous time saving device, and the benefit of the public safety aspect where if it could save one life I think it is worth whatever we pay for it.

Chairman Plamondon

You mentioned 9 or 10 communities. Do you know any of them offhand?

Angelo Marino

I will read them for you – the Town of Derry, Town of Hampton, Town of Hollis, Town of Londonderry, City of Manchester, New Castle, New Market, Newington, Portsmouth, Seabrook, and Stratham. Those are the current communities that have definitely committed. We are still working with many of the other communities to try and gain their support. As a matter of fact I had to cancel a meeting to do a demonstration in the town of Brooklyn. They are very much interested. I think they will probably come on board as soon as we can demonstrate the technology to them.

Chairman Plamondon

How often are the flyovers?

Angelo Marino

They can be as frequent as you want them to be. It gets to be expensive if you do them every two years. The benefit of doing it every two years is you have a history because you can look at what was there two years ago and what is now and actually do comparisons.

Chairman Plamondon

I understand that Senator Gregg was a major proponent and supporter of assisting us in acquiring this grant.

Angelo Marino

Yes it was through Senator Gregg's office that we were able to obtain the grant. He was really very helpful in getting us this grant.

Chairman Plamondon

Is there any feasibility for Aldermen to get access to this other than the one computer in our anteroom?

Angelo Marino

It is feasible. The images are relatively large, and it would be difficult to install them for the Aldermen without having them access them through a server. It is possible that we could allow you through the Citrix server to utilize the images. I can check on that, but the problem with seeing the images is without a high-speed connection it is very difficult to see the images because they are large and it takes a long time to paint.

Chairman Plamondon

I have broadband 6 meg download speed, and can handle it.

Angelo Marino

I will check to see if it is feasible and within current policies to allow that through Citrix.

Chairman Plamondon

The reason I mention it is even very recently I have a situation where I am trying to help two neighborhoods and a street in the middle of two neighborhoods – parking issue, however parking is at a premium, I use the software for one the site was already surveyed and you can't have parking well through the software I looked and I may have a solution. That is what showed me through the Pictometry and I was able to take measurements and then go again and have a meeting with, in this case, the traffic department, brought copies, brought the measurements, and I might have a viable solution, however, I wouldn't have had that avenue had I not had this software. It would have been much easier for me if I could have gone through a city server and seen it at my home.

Angelo Marino

Pretty neat stuff isn't it?

Chairman Plamondon

Yeah it is.

Angelo Marino

It is relatively intuitive – half an hour of instruction and you know how to use this stuff.

Alderman MacLaughlin

Thank you Mr. Chairman. As I listen it sounds like a fascinating technology, but we do have Pictometry already?

Angelo Marino

Correct.

Alderman MacLaughlin

In your view, is this a want or is this more of a need – this advanced?

Angelo Marino

It is Pictometry – it is the same stuff. It is the same stuff except with enhancements. I think it is both a want and a need. When you see the efficiency that is gained by using this software I think it is definitely a need. I spoke with the Planning Department who have to do site reviews – they don't have to jump in their car and do that and run out there and spend the time traveling back and forth. If they want to look at an intersection they can do that from their computer in the office. The Fire Department utilizes it for site review. They utilize it for pre-planning. It allows us to do our job a whole lot more efficiently. Yes it is a want, but I really put it in the category of more needed in order to be able to do your job that much more efficiently.

Alderman MacLaughlin

If we take this on does it replace what we have now or if we decide we don't take this one do we lose what we have now?

Angelo Marino

What this is going to get us is essentially this is going to get our flight pretty much for free. It will replace the 2004 images with 2006 images. We will have the ability to compare 2004 to 2006, we will be able to get build out scenarios, we will look at growth scenarios, and the license that we have currently with Pictometry is really just going to be continued, but it will include the two county region. The license is structured for 6 years with two-year increments. After the first two years, you have several options. You can either decide to fly again at the prices that were quoted during your original two-year agreement, you can decide to buy out the agreement and utilize what you have and you pay either a 15% or 20% cost of what the then current flight cost would be to use and continue with what you have, but it becomes dated, or you can walk away from it and say we don't want it anymore come and take it away and we won't use it anymore. Those are the three options.

We had originally planned to do another flight anyway in 2006. We currently have the money that we will redirect to something else, and some of that money might be used for a couple of other technologies that Pictometry will allow us to take advantage of – there is a compression software that will allow us to take the 30 gig file that we currently have for the City of Nashua and compress it down to about half that size so it will go on mobile data terminals that will go in fire trucks. There is a change detection software, which will allow you to compare and actually mark the properties that have been changed from one year to the next. There is a change analysis software which allows you to put modules, put the images from 2004 and 2006 side by side on a computer terminal so that when you pan across the images actually change across that center line so you can see what has happened. We were planning on doing this anyway. This will just get us the product for our next flight at a much reduce cost.

Alderman MacLaughlin

Thank you.

Chairman Plamondon

Is there a layer in the software where individual properties can have data collection such as permits issued, police service calls, or notices from the Fire Marshall's Office?

Angelo Marino

All of those things are possible, but you have to bring them in from the GIS. If they are in your GIS and you bring that information in you can query on that information to display it. It doesn't do intelligent queries like a typical GIS would do. It is not a GIS it is an enhancement to GIS.

Chairman Plamondon

Thank you.

Alderman Tabacsko

On the grant itself that we are talking about tonight – it sounds to me, correct me if I am wrong, what that does is it is a two county project and we will be the beneficiary of getting this next set of images for the city in that whole process?

Angelo Marino

Yes. As administrators we get to keep some of the money, of the \$500,000, to administer the project. That is where we will be directing some of that money is towards the flight that we would have to pay for.

Alderman Tabacsko

If we weren't involved in this and we were just looking at re-doing the 2006 data on another flyover, what kind of cost is associated with that?

Angelo Marino

Approximately between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

Alderman Tabacsko

And then two years down the road or ...

Angelo Marino

Another \$15,000 or \$20,000.

Alderman Tabacsko

That we are still in that same cost we are just skipping one cycle by doing this?

Angelo Marino

Yes. The license agreement we originally signed guaranteed the prices for the entire 6-year period. The neat thing is they guaranteed the original prices, but the prices have come down because of some new technologies with the cameras that they are using. They no longer have to fly with two different cameras – they just use – all five cameras are mounted on the same plane.

Alderman Tabacsko

That was actually going to be my next question is how do they actually do this.

Angelo Marino

There are two sets of images; one is low level taken from about 2,500 feet and then there is a high level, which gives you a broader area. That is taken from about 5,000 feet.

Alderman Tabacsko

Thank you very much.

Alderman LaRose

I am a little confused so bear with me. Technology isn't a very strong suit of mine. The \$500,000 is for the license, the software, and the fly over am I right?

Angelo Marino

Correct as well as the administrative fee that the city keeps.

Alderman LaRose

So after the 6 years are we back to purchasing the license over again?

Angelo Marino

After the 6 years if we wanted to fly again we would have to pay for another flight. Once you have the software you have the software.

Alderman LaRose

The software should be good for a long period of time.

Angelo Marino

The software is good. They have already come out with a revision to the software. As long as you fly again you get to keep the software and utilize it or again you can buy out at that 15-20% price and keep the software and use the old images.

Alderman LaRose

I think I understand. Thank you.

Chairman Plamondon

Are there any other committee questions? Thank you Angelo.

Angelo Marino

Thank you.

Chairman Plamondon

The motion on the floor is to recommend final passage to the full Board. Is there any other discussion?

MOTION CARRIED

R-06-11

Endorsers: Mayor Bernard A. Streeter
Alderman-at-Large James R. Tollner
Alderman Marc W. Plamondon

**RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF A \$3,000 COMMUNITY ARTS
DEVELOPMENT GRANT FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE COUNCIL OF THE ARTS**

MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Plamondon

Director Hersh would you like to come join us?

Katherine Hersh

Actually I was here because you were talking about Community Development Block Grant and Home Funds tonight, but I do know something about this resolution so I would be happy to speak to it to the extent of my knowledge.

Last Spring, Jay Minkarah, who is the city's Economic Development Director, worked to organize three workshops with the arts community both with the performing arts, the visual arts – the broader based arts community. He worked with them to and actually had a professional facilitator work with them to begin to develop an organization because together they are far stronger than working separately. They went through numerous organizations participating in these three workshops, and they put together committees. Those committees worked over the summer and came back in September and started to put together the framework for the organization.

They have a web site now. They are working to make sure that they can do ticketing together, on-line ticketing for shows and activities and things like that in the city. They are moving forward with their effort to really be organized and work together for the benefit of the arts in the City of Nashua. They were successful in getting this grant, which is towards this continued assistance to help them to form that organization. There is a consultant that is doing some work to identify the community needs and the community opportunities to help to guide them through this. That is part of what this grant will be for.

Chairman Plamondon

Thank you. Are there any questions from the committee? The motion on the floor is to recommend final passage of R-06-11.

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION BY ALDERMAN TOLLNER TO RETURN TO THE REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS

MOTION CARRIED

COMMUNICATIONS

From: James R. Tollner, Vice Chair, Human Affairs Committee

Re: Allocation of CDBG Grant Money – Review & Comment Commission

Chairman Plamondon

Before we move on this there is something I want to say on this. I am not opposed to continuing the 15% CDBG allocations to Review & Comment. I just want to issue a wise caution. BY accepting this memo we also accept that we will continue with the 15%. We all know the fiscal situation we are in. My one and only fear on accepting this now might warrant additional review is right now we are looking at a certain number of streets not being paved, sidewalks not being done. My fear is the greatest impact will be within the CDBG areas- our downtown areas that need the most attention. For example, some new things that have come to light particularly in the last year, organized crime units coming up from Lowell and Lawrence – could additional lighting in certain problem areas be helpful? We may not have a kitty to ready into to allocate funds for that. These are things that we just haven't looked at yet. Again I am not opposed to the 15% allocation. Review & Comment does a phenomenal job and you saw a selection of some of the phenomenal organizations that came before us this evening. Again I support this I just in the sake of balance I just have to state that concern specifically regarding the inner city because I don't know what the future is going to hold and I don't think any of us do. I know last summer was very rough in the inner city, extremely so.

Alderman Tollner

For the sake of balance that is exactly what I think this memo states. You are talking 15% of the CDBG money that Review & Comment for the last 7-8 years has been allocated 15%. For the new committee members basically what we do every year is we agree very early in the process, and we are behind the schedule right now because they have already started, is to commit to them and they will probably meet two dozen times, go into painstaking detail and questioning of a good number of those people that came here tonight, asking them about their programs. We have committed to them in the past just 15% of the CDBG money will be for the most part allocated to Review & Comment, and as long as I have been on the Board of Aldermen the Board of Aldermen have recognized their decisions and have not changed a single thing.

I understand some of the comments that you made previously that there is a lot of stuff going on in the city and things like that. That should not play any role here in this 15%. Even though last year there were less funds from the federal government than there were this year, in this communication that we have here tonight, if I am not mistaken there is a grant allocation of program administration of \$55,000, which if I am not mistaken, we can ask Mrs. Hersh, was a portion of the salary of Mr. Newman who I am told isn't going to be here, and then there is an additional \$27,000 for program administration.

I understand that during the next few months there are going to be a lot of discussions on whether these funds should go to people programs or bricks and mortar downtown. I fully understand that and I welcome those discussions because I think they will be quite lively, however, at this particular point in time, Review & Comment has already started their deliberations, and we need to commit to them a certain percentage of allocation of these funds so they can go ahead and do their job, which will take 6-8 weeks. These are a number of

volunteers that donate a lot of time. If we are going to move away from the 15% that we have allocated all of these years that is a drastic change in direction, and I don't think it would affect any money that would be allocated to bricks and mortar as we move forward. This was requested, that is why I sent this to the committee.

Chairman Plamondon

I am sure it was requested. When I first got on the Board we did not give the 15% to my recollection. The focus has been in the past 6 years thereabouts, and understand that 15% is the maximum that we can give by law. This is the maximum amount that we can give to Review & Comment. Again I have no problem with that but I just want the committee to know, and I think if the committee wants to move forward with this I too will support it as well the 15%. Perhaps next year just keep this in mind what we are doing and keep in mind where the kind of summer we have and if we can't reach into funds – hopefully we can find some, but it is just something that I want to express caution over. Is there any other discussion?

Alderman MacLaughlin

I agree that there are infrastructure needs in not only the downtown area but also in outlying areas that we're all aware of. We are not doing enough repaving and maintaining of our roads. What we do is done well, but certainly there is always a need for more, and yet with all of the cutbacks from the federal level this past Presidential term, it just appears that people are getting hurt by the government that they are paying for, and to some extent there has got to be a level at which human services will be provided without inflicting further pain. This seems like it is a priority thing obviously, but if there is a certain level of service that the people of this city have grown I hate to say used to, but they rely on for their existence let's say then this may be the practice that we need to continue with because if that is reduced along with the reductions at the federal level along with the increased tax burden faced by the residents, we are really saying something quite different to the people who are here in Nashua that your government may or may not be there for you when you need the help the most. That is kind of where I am at at the moment.

I would love to see some roads paved. In particular I have some in mind. We can all name some roads we would like to see redone, and let's hope that we are able to find a way to do them, but it is like now we are going to have to really balance priorities; do we, as Alderman Tollner just summed it up is it bricks and mortar or does it go to people. We are really facing that tight tight debate now. It is not a pleasant place to be. It is even less pleasant if you are the person depending on the aid. I am inclined to go along with the motion.

Chairman Plamondon

Maybe to just also make my point clearer. Brick and mortar type allocations would have to be in the CDBG approved area, which is our downtown, Ward 3, French Hill area. The money would have to go to a specific area. When I mentioned sidewalks, the situation might be a handicapped individual and there isn't a curb cut and the sidewalks in bad disrepair. These are typically areas where development has happened years and years ago and we had the sidewalk quadrant fund and because of no development there has been no money going in there so there is no money to go after assistance in sidewalk repair in the inner city area where you haven't

had that development. Hopefully now we are in a redevelopment phase and can have some monies put into sidewalk funds. Again I support this, but I just have to play the devil's advocate.

Alderman LaRose

A motion has to be made, which hasn't been made.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO ACCEPT, PLACE ON FILE AND ALLOCATE 15 PERCENT OF THE CDBG MONEY TO THE REVIEW AND COMMENT COMMISSION TO DISBURSE TO THE LOCAL NON-PROFIT AGENCIES
MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Plamondon

I should also mention this year's CDBG allocation – the last number I have is \$758,264. Is that about correct?

Alderman LaRose

Shouldn't we accept the communication from Ms. O'Riordan and then go on from there?

From: Sheila O'Riordan, Grant Manager, Urban Programs Department
Re: Community Development Block Grant/HOME Funds: Public Hearing
and Comments of Past Performance – Thursday, February 16, 2006

MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO ACCEPT AND PLACE ON FILE

ON THE QUESTION

Alderman Tollner

I agree with Alderman LaRose we need to accept the communication. We are not going to go into a very length discussion tonight right because we are going to go through this in great detail at a future meeting correct?

Chairman Plamondon

I hope not. The motion is on the floor.

MOTION CARRIED

Kathy Hersh

I would just like to make a couple of short remarks about the fact that there have been some changes in Urban Programs, which you are probably all aware of. Paul Newman who was the Urban Programs Manager for 30 years retired from the city this month. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude for all of the commitment that he has made to the city and particularly to the urban areas of the city. In fact, he reminded me that he was hired specifically because the city got CDBG grant funds and that is why he was hired to do that program. He also ended up when

the city first received transit monies he was the person that was given that responsibility and is the person responsible for bringing the transit system to the point that it is today. When you go down Kinsley Street for example in the spring and when those trees blossom you need to think about Paul Newman because he deserves credit for those trees, the sidewalks and the trees on Main Street.

The Neighborhood Housing Services Organization he was instrumental in the beginnings of that in French Hill when that was French Hill Neighborhood Housing Services and many many more things. I wanted to pay tribute to him tonight and thank him for all of the work that he has done for the city.

As you noticed tonight Klaas Nijhuis has joined Harbor Homes as an Assistant Director. Although we have lost in Urban Programs we are still benefiting from his great service and passion for the city through his work at Harbor Homes.

There are some changes. Sheila is the Grants Manager and she is taking on the responsibility of CDBG and Home Funds. All of the details as we go into this whole process she will be the person that will be providing all of the detail information. I thought maybe Sheila might just give you a brief comment on the schedule so that anybody that is listening or still watching might at least know what the schedule is and be able to participate if they would like.

Sheila O’Riordan

This evening was the first meeting for the current CDBG session. It was the public hearing to discuss past performance. The CDBG applications are out in the community and due back by March 6th. At March 16th at your meeting we will be presenting to you a proposed suspending plan that will be open for your deliberation, and then in April, and I don’t recall the exact date, there is another public hearing, and that is the hearing at which people who have applied for funds, some of the same people that you saw this evening, will come before you and talk about their specific program that they are seeking funding for, and typically it is at that meeting where the committee will recommend that it be approved and go to the Board of Aldermen. That happens at the Board of Aldermen meeting at the end of April. The application is due to HUD by May 15th. That is the schedule that we are working with right now.

Chairman Plamondon

Sheila if you could – in past years, Paul had given us, and maybe we can do it pretty quickly in the near future, we have always gotten a timetable...

Sheila O’Riordan

That was included with the packet that came with your agenda. If it wasn’t...

Alderman LaRose

I don’t think so.

Sheila O’Riordan

I apologize it is here and I can make you copies of it. I can e-mail it to each of you whatever is simplest.

Chairman Plamondon

Is that okay just make copies and put it in our mailboxes and we will get it tomorrow?

Sheila O’Riordan

Absolutely.

Chairman Plamondon

Are you finished?

Sheila O’Riordan

Well that pretty much describes the process. I wanted to give you an opportunity to ask me questions that you might have about the program and also to direct your attention to some of the material that I submitted this evening that pretty briefly summarizes the intent of the program. I also wanted to confirm Alderman Plamondon the amount of the annual grant this year is as you said \$758,264.

Katherine Hersh

It is important to know that is a reduction, a significant reduction from last year.

Chairman Plamondon

What was last year? Wasn’t it just under a million?

Sheila O’Riordan

No last year was \$843,086. Just for a little bit of history, our high point was in FY ’04 when our entitlement grant was \$909,000. IN FY ’05 we took a 2% cut, in FY ’06 we experienced a 5% given the previous year, and now with FY ’07 we are faced with an additional 10% cut. Incidentally it is not looking good for federal FY ’07 out FY ’08. It is very early in the process, but they are speculating an additional cut to CDBG of at least 10% and many are speculating more like 15%.

Chairman Plamondon

I have a good friend in Washington and nothing is going to human services at all. If I remember right was it two years ago when we first got a 2% cut that was in the first year for Home Funds so that helped the offset. Wasn’t that two years ago?

Sheila O’Riordan

Actually our first Home year was '04 so that was a good year. We have had HOME now for three years, '04, '05, and '06. We are coming into our fourth year of being Home participating jurisdiction, which is another way of saying we became eligible for entitlement Home funds.

Chairman Plamondon

Is there a dollar amount?

Sheila O'Riordan

Yes there is, and hopefully that is in your packet. The amount for FY '06 is slightly down from FY '05. It is \$554,021.

Alderman LaRose

That was for '06. It is '07.

Sheila O'Riordan

I don't think I brought that with me, but it is right around what '06 was. It wasn't a dramatic change.

Alderman LaRose

Could you include that figure with the other stuff that you are providing?

Sheila O'Riordan

Absolutely.

Chairman Plamondon

So it is right around that same amount though?

Sheila O'Riordan

It is. I am sorry I didn't include it.

Alderman Tollner

In your next submission maybe you or Director Hersh, what is our plan for funding the administrative portion of this grant? I see what the figure was in '06, but with Mr. Newman and Klaas leaving – I don't know whether we attributed any money to Klaas, but what would be our anticipated figure as far as that? Everybody on the committee that also comes out of the CDBG funds. I would think that would be reduced somewhat this year to kind of offset the loss. I think this is the third year that the total grant monies will go down.

Katherine Hersh

We are a position and a half down with Paul and Klaas leaving, and we will be replacing at least one of those positions. We do realize that there is a 20% cap. This current year we are at 19%, and with the reduction in the amount of the grant, 20% obviously is less money than 20% was last year. We will be looking at that closely, but we will be right in around that 20%. Obviously we don't want to go over that 20% - we can't go over that 20%.

Sheila O'Riordan

On the 20% on any of the caps, it is a three-year certification period that HUD goes by so in the 3-year period you can't exceed 20% admin and 15% in the public services.

Alderman Tollner

My concern isn't going to 20% I want to go less than the 20%. Maybe at a future meeting you can let us know – Mr. Newman was here for a long time and very experienced and made one salary level – I don't know who we are thinking about replacing, but if it is someone that is coming in with less experience let's say one would anticipate us not paying them as much so maybe that allocation percentage of that salary compensation might be less than the program administration that we have targeted. I personally would like to see more money go into the programs and less money go into the administration of the programs that we use out of the CDBG money.

Katherine Hersh

I will be happy to give you a breakdown of all of that. Whenever we have programs to administer we have to administer them – if we don't have the people to administer we can't give out the money. One of the reasons why I thought it was very important for you to hear about the housing improvement program tonight is that you got to hear first hand the difference that program makes, but the amount of time that takes. You can't just say to someone okay here is the money to fix you roof you go out and hire them – that is not what you are dealing with, that is not the circumstances that you are dealing with. We do soup to nuts so that those things are done right, done well, the investment is right and that is what it takes to do that. If HUD didn't think that it took 20% to administer these programs then HUD wouldn't allow you to allocate 20%. Certainly I will be coming in with the details.

Alderman Tollner

Maybe we can compare it to maybe what Manchester – if they use 20% and the other ones use 20% maybe 20% is the right number. I don't know what the right number is.

Katherine Hersh

I would be happy to compare what the other communities – for example Sheila and I went to Portsmouth and met with them to understand how they allocate their CDBG funds and how they allocate them to different city projects and non-profit projects and administration, etc. as well as I went to Manchester and met with them and collected that information from them as well. We

also went and met with NH Housing Finance Authority with regard to the Home Funds.

Chairman Plamondon

On city projects, do any municipalities or can we legally – for example my thought is we have an Economic Development Director and no money for him to promote the city for development going to expos or whatever to promote the city – is there any opportunity to utilize a percentage of CDBG funds to promote the city for economic development, to show these potential good paying labor companies look what we have to offer? Is that something that any communities do?

Katherine Hersh

Yes. We can fund economic development out of the administrative costs. For example part of the Economic Development Director we could fund out of the administrative costs. We have funded in the past a long range planner out of the administrative costs. We can fund housing code enforcement officers not even out of the administrative costs but out of CDBG directly. What other positions have we funded?

Sheila O’Riordan

We have funded the grant writer position for CDBG.

Katherine Hersh

There are other opportunities that are currently funded in the city budget.

Sheila O’Riordan

Regarding Economic Development activities/projects, economic development is a huge part of CDBG. There are many activities in the economic development realm that are eligible for funding provided the beneficiaries are the low/moderate income people for whom this grant is intended and/or the area that is being addressed is in blight area or in the targeted area, and the expected outcome of any funded economic development project that is not in the admin area, an actual project is the creation or retention of jobs. If a project comes to us that meets the economic development objectives and would serve the targeted clientele in the target area and was shown to likely create jobs, we would be able to use CDBG money to fund that program.

Chairman Plamondon

We heard this evening the impact of one business, namely Batesville Casket, leaving – the impact on the community and the ripple affect to healthcare and everything else – to not have some monies in place to aggressively go out and look for a replacement, good paying commercial entity – we don’t need any more stores we need some good paying jobs in these target areas. I think that pays for itself over and over including our tax base.

Sheila O’Riordan

I just wanted to point out that a development project in for instance the Batesville area would likely be eligible, but unfortunately a lot of the pre-development costs would be considered planning or admin costs. CDBG is meant more as you know for bricks and mortar. Once a project got up and running and there was to be some acquisition, demolition, rehab or construction that is when CDBG might be able to assist with that kind of a project.

Alderman LaRose

The contingency – now I see some balances – what is the balance in contingency? Is there an accumulated balance or has it been used up?

Sheila O’Riordan

Today that balance in contingency is \$92,130. Historically we have tried to come to the acceptance of the resolution with at least \$50,000 in contingency. The point of that is to have available funds for projects that might experience overrun and also for emergency type situations. In deed we do have \$92,130, and our expectation is to re-program some of that into the coming year.

Alderman LaRose

Thank you.

Chairman Plamondon

Are there any other comments from committee members? Thank you very much for coming this evening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

DISCUSSION

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN LAROSE TO ADJOURN
MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Alderman David MacLaughlin,
Committee Clerk