

JOINT COM DEV & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES from MONDAY, OCTOBER 25TH, 2021 [meeting began at 6:00 P.M.]

CD PRESENT: Chair Callahan, Cerra, Oswald, Jessie, Mitchell

FINANCE PRESENT: Chair Stewart, Tollett, Baird, Jessie, Davis

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Dir Deery, Safety Service Dir Brubaker, Finance Dir Pileski, Asst Finance Dir Farrell, Asst Dir Calvert, Engineer Schneider, Parks Dir Reardon, CD Manager Almobayyed, Sanitation Supt Eye, CMG Supt Strohsack, Asst Law Dir Breunig, Councilperson Keys and Simmons

1. Approval of the OCTOBER 12th, 2021 JOINT Community Development / Finance Meeting Minutes.

Moved by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Baird to approve the above meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED

2. The matter of the PY 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Action Plan Update. *3RD ~ PUBLIC HEARING* [NO ACTION THIS EVENING]

Referred By: Community Development Director Scott and Almobayyed

Chair Callahan read the 'call to public hearing'.

CD Manager Almobayyed said this is in regards to the CDBG PY 2022 Application. The Com Development Office received all the applications and they are presenting the funding requests that were received. The Public Comment period will begin on October 29th and they accept any and all comments and that comment period will end on November 29th and those comments will be presented to the committee members at the Joint Meeting on November 29th. A vote will be taken by the committee members and full council will consider this matter at the full Council Meeting on Monday, December 6th. A spreadsheet with all the requests were passed out to committee members and put up on the overhead projector.

Ms. Almobayyed said they are about \$98,000 over on the public service cap. The department has put together some changes so that they can be within the budget as a whole and also within the budget for the public services activities.

The suggested changes were for the public facilities engineering Rockford drainage project, reducing from \$380,000 to \$111,000. They have had conversations with engineering and they will be able to use that amount of money to do a project.

They also zeroed out the public facilities generation house drive improvements. The department spoke with HUD and as the project is proposed, it's not eligible for CDBG funding. They will work with that organization on a different scope of services and a different grant.

They will reduce the Save Our Children budget from \$16,000 to \$10,000.

They also became aware that Good Knights Bed Blitz Program have declined consideration for funding.

The last change was to move Elyria Senior Programing into CDBG Covid along with the Salvation Army Utility Assistance Programing and the Neighborhood Alliance Programming.

After these changes were made, we were able to accommodate everyone's requests.

Ms. Almobayyed completed her presentation.

Mr. Tollett asked Engineer Schneider if the balance of those funds for the Rockfern draining project could potentially come out of the Infrastructure bill that will be passed soon?

Engineer Schneider said that may be a possibility, but it would be something that we would have to apply for and he didn't know what the would be for those funds.

Chair Callahan asked if there are any more proponents, there were none.

Chair Callahan asked if there are any opponents and there were none.
Chair Callahan declared that this Public Hearing has been held.

3. The matter of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidation Annual Action Plan Substantial Amendment.

PUBLIC HEARING *[NO ACTION THIS EVENING]*

Referred By: Community Development Manager Almobayyed

Chair Callahan read the 'call to public hearing'.

CD Manager Almobayyed said this is the substantial amendment for the covid funding that was received back in 2020. It's the same funding allocation. They've been allocating them in the appropriate public services as they see the changing needs of covid and Elyria residents. These are currently within the public comment period and it ends November 8th. That is also the date where these items will be voted on by committee and then to be voted on by full council on November 15th.

Proposed changes are to increase senior services programs and to move programming into CDBG covid. Also to move Neighborhood Alliance, Meals on Wheels and Wellness checks for seniors to CDBG covid. Also to increase the Employment Training activity. Another change was to increase the subsistence payments, proposing to fund Salvation Army - EPU assistance program under the CDBG covid. And lastly they will create the homeless program activities so the City can have a warming shelter this winter. They pulled the balance from the youth services activity and the economic development activity, which weren't being used.

They wanted to organize their budget to better serve the resident's needs.

Ms. Almobayyed completed her presentation.

Chair Callahan asked if there are any more proponents, there were none.

Chair Callahan asked if there are any opponents and there were none.

Chair Callahan declared that this Public Hearing has been held.

4. The matter of Adopting The American Rescue Plan Essential Services and Business Services Policy & Procedure Manual.

Referred By: Community Development Director Scott

Presented by Economic Development Dir Calvert. Ms. Calvert this is adopting the American Rescue Plan Essential Service and Business Service Programs policies and procedures manual. These programs have already been created they are for business assistance and public service assistance, similar to the programs which were created under the CARES Act. The budget amount for each of these programs is \$500,000, which has already been approved. What we're asking to be approved this evening is the policy and procedure manual. The manual will allow us to have documented policies and procedures which can be followed by staff as well as the public to know how these funds are being managed.

Dir Calvert completed her explanation of this program.

Chair Stewart said this falls in line with the CARES Act and he thinks it's similar to the policy manual that was done for that, checks and balances.

Mr. Tollett said he would include what came up in regards to taxation, RITA tax and how it's paid and it would good to have that included.

Law Dir Deery asked the exhibit for the policy and procedure manual will go thru another revision?

Dir Calvert proposed that they add the language to include that and if it can be added at the council meeting or if it will need to come back to committee?

Dir Deery said that is up to the committee. If they would want to see what the final manual language looks like in it's entirety before they vote on it.

Mr. Tollett asked if this will hold up this process if we have to make that revision?

Ms. Almobayyed said that it does say that the applicants have to be current on their taxes or do we need to specifically state RITA taxes?

Mr. Tollett said he thinks the committee would be happy with that added in the language.

Chair Stewart said he thinks it was declaring what was paid for the RITA.

Dir Deery asked what it is that they are doing and what this other body is.

Chair Stewart said it was in regards to Elyria Economic Development Committee, which is the conversation that they are having for the small business loans. That committee had met earlier this day, prior to this Committee Meeting.

Asst Finance Dir Farrell said they wanted the taxes to be current, it's a requirement for the application process.

Ms. Almobayyed said they will review the policy and procedure manual and make sure that it is in there and her office will bring it back to committee.

[This matter was tabled at this evening's meeting and will be brought back to the next Joint meeting which is scheduled for Monday, November 8th].

5. The matter of Elyria Parks & Rec Projects for Discussion; Aquatic Center, North Splash Pad, South Tee Ball Field and Oakwood Stabilization.

[For Discussion Only]

Referred By: Mayor Whitfield

Parks Dir Reardon said that she and Mr. Hoagland are here to present what has been done with Issue 6 money and discuss items that are still in the Master Plan.

Pat Hoagland of Brandstetter Carroll, Inc. gave a power point presentation which was also passed out to the Committee Members and is also available upon request.

Mr. Hoagland began with the Master Plan which was prepared in 2016 and had a lot of public input. Mayor Whitfield had asked for this plan to be updated since much has changed.

They will discuss what the priorities from that 2016 plan were and what has been accomplished from that plan. It was a 10-year plan and we're about half way thru. And there are recommended 2022 projects.

Mr. Hoagland went over the list of Master Plan Priorities; upgrading existing parks, new walking & biking trails, programs for teens and seniors, upgrade athletic fields, splash pads, new outdoor aquatic center, indoor pool, land for parks and open space, community centers, new parks and facilities, gym space and indoor courts, fitness programs, community events & concerts, dog parks.

The family aquatic center at East Park was recommended back in 2005. And also included in the 2016 Master Plan. Currently the city only has the 2 pools which are in constant need of repair, probably \$500,000 worth of improvements need to be made just to keep them up and running. They are also considering a splash pad at North Park, possibly a baseball themed facility at that site. He went over some over things that still need to be done. The trails at West Park along with a restroom and pickle ball courts were part of a grant the City was awarded.

Some of these projects which haven't been completed could be funded by Issue 6 dollars and some by CDBG funds could be used at South and West Parks. Other ways to funds some of these projects are other grants, sponsorship and naming rights for facilities and private donations.

Some things have changed since 2016, which is the reason for this update.

Those changes are; youth football no longer uses Academy Court, Little Leagues have consolidated, Cascade has been redeveloped, growth of women's hockey, old Oakwood School has been acquired, growth continues in the west, schools have redeveloped and sites have been vacated.

Mr. Hoagland went over results of the recent survey, unmet facility needs and unmet program needs. Then he went over the recommended 2022 projects; East Park Family Aquatic Center, North Park Splash Pad, West Park Trails, Oakwood Community Center, South Park T-ball Field & multi-purpose fields.

Mr. Hoagland's discussion went on about the outdoor aquatic center. Currently, with the 2 pools open, the City is operating at a loss of about 144,000 per year and getting only about 6,000 patrons to the pools each year. Those number are down from the 2019 numbers and the reason is there is a baby pool and then a large pool that starts at 3 and a half feet deep, nothing in between. There is about 11% of the residents who go to the swimming pools. These sort of facilities in Westlake, Avon Lake and Avon have much large percentages of their populations attend these pools.

The other idea is the splash pad at North Park. There are currently 4 ball fields at North Park which are leased to Little League North and they are not using all of those fields. The idea is to take one of those fields and develop it into a baseball themed splash pad which would have tremendous attraction and draw people from other areas.

Mr. Hoagland completed his presentation and asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Mitchell had a few questions, 1st question was how was East Park decided for the Aquatic Center and why not West Park?

Mr. Hoagland said the 0 to 1 mile radius and then a 1 to 3 mile radius around each of those pools, those are the primary markets your tracking from. East has the highest number of residents within that area. South is second and West is the lowest, for people who could easily walk or bike to the facility. There is room at West. When all 4 pools were open, East, by far always had the best attendance.

The 2nd question, between an indoor and outdoor center are two separate things. You can have tremendous programming at an indoor facility; water aerobics, swim teams, etc. The cost is around 10 million and the City would lose around \$250,000 per year operating this kind of facility.

The City could break even with an outdoor facility. It would have to be marketed correctly. The cost for an outdoor aquatic facility would be around 4 to 5 million. Most people think about swimming in the outdoors in the summertime. The indoor pool will not have as many people throughout the year than you would have in an outdoor pool. An option would be to partner with a healthcare provider to get sponsorship.

Mrs. Mitchell said she will push for West Park. She also asked, why not a centralized location as opposed to East Park? South Park and West Park haven't had a pool in years.

Mr. Hoagland there was a recommendation for a central location made in 2005. If there was a good central location. If it's put downtown, it might be central but there aren't residents in the downtown. So if it's in a neighborhood with lots of residents that will support that pool. There has not been another good central location suggested.

Mr. Tollett said that East was, based on housing, East is almost dead-center in Elyria today.

Mr. Oswald asked if the pool would be handicapped accessible?

Mr. Hoagland said yes, definitely.

Mr. Oswald said that it's not always about money, but there is a big difference

from an indoor and an outdoor facility. An indoor facility could have year-round activities. And if we could partner with a healthcare that could be a good partnership.

Mr. Hoagland said there is a demand for both. If you build an indoor pool and don't do anything to your outdoor pools, the demand will still be there. People still want to swim outdoors in the summertime. He said you wouldn't want to develop the indoor facilities and not do the outdoor facilities.

Mrs. Davis had a suggestion, starting from the Police Station, take all that area that connects to Cascade Park, we can have an inside pool right next to Cascade Park, where people come from all over to go to.

Mrs. Mitchell said there has been tremendous growth on the West Side also. There are 3 new developments that are being built now. She continued and said, where ever it will be, how are we going to pay for it? And even if we get the money to build it, we still have to pay maintenance, insurance, lifeguards, where will that money come from?

Finance Dir Pileski wanted to remind Council that our largest taxpayer is transitioning out of Elyria. When it's said and don out income tax revenue will drop by 1.5 million dollars and an undisclosed amount for tax on that net profits, which can't be disclosed, because that's confidential. So it may prove to be difficult to maintain our current level of operations with that type of loss of revenue, so just be sure to keep that in mind.

Chair Stewart thanked Mr. Hoagland. He went on to say that their will be more conversations that the committees will have in regards to the funding mechanisms that we're discussing. These are important and we need to take our time. The ARP Funds and the Issue 6 Funds are there, but ARP won't be there after 2024. We will have to have a plan in place. These are great ideas, but bottom line, can we afford it. He welcomes additional conversations and discussions in regards to these projects.

Mr. Hoagland said they could build an outdoor aquatic center for around 4.5 million, which would include design fees and permits. And an indoor facility would cost around 10 million.

Mr. Tollett asked if Avon and Avon Lake's facilities break even?

Mr. Hoagland said yes, they do. Westlake is new and they don't break even because they have a resident only policy.

Mr. Tollett said that we're operating at about \$140,000 a year loss.

Mrs. Mitchell asked about the idea of using Oakwood as a senior center and where are we in that process? Currently Save Our Children is interested in leasing it. The building needs work, where are we with that?

Parks Dir Reardon said the building is not owned by the City yet.

Law Dir said the property transfer is being finalized and should be in the City's possession soon. [will be early November] she said that her office has not reviewed any documents from Save Our Children yet.

Dir Reardon said they've had discussions with Save Our Children, so there are talks going on. There would be lots of different programming space.

Mrs. Mitchell said that she has gotten complaints from seniors who want to see programming moved around to the different facilities. Is there a reason why we stopped doing that?

Dir Reardon said that she has heard that, so they have taken that under advisement and they are in discussions regarding moving to the rotation until they figure what is going on with Oakwood.

Mr. Oswald said that Westlake was always our competition and when you drive thru Cities like Westlake and Avon and you see these beautiful parks and libraries, those are what bring people in. Sure they pay more taxes, but that makes those areas more desirable. Now that Elyria is growing and there is more taxes and we can pay for more things. If we could find the money to do this, it could be a big draw to our city.

Chair Callahan said it was an excellent presentation and he wanted to thank everyone for the great discussion and looking forward to continued discussions on these topics.

Chair Callahan deferred to Law Dir Deery.

Dir Deery said an Executive Session has been called to discuss possible real estate acquisition by the City and matters involving a TIFF.

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mrs. Mitchell to take a roll call vote to go into Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED

A Roll-Call was taken to go into Executive Session at 7:20 P.M.

Community Development Committee: Callahan, Mitchell, Cerra, Oswald, Jessie (ALL AYES)

Finance Committee: Stewart, Tollett, Baird, Davis, Jessie (ALL AYES)

Motion made by Mr. Cerra, second by Mr. Tollett to come out of Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED

A Roll-Call was taken to come out of Executive Session at 8:15 P.M.

Community Development Committee: Callahan, Mitchell, Cerra, Oswald, Jessie (ALL AYES)

Finance Committee: Stewart, Tollett, Baird, Davis, Jessie (ALL AYES)

Mrs. Mitchell moved and second by Mr. Cerra to adjourn this evening's Community Development portion of the Meeting at 8:15 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED

[The evening's meetings continued with the Finance Committee Meeting].

Respectfully submitted by,

Colleen Rosado, Council Clerk Secretary

(Committee Meeting attended by Secretary Rosado ~ Minutes were transcribed by Secretary Rosado)