

CITY OF PORTAGE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

Minutes of Meeting, September 6, 2012

CALL TO ORDER: Approximately 6:40 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Diane Durian, Angela Manahan Ilori, Nadeem Mirza, Sandra Sheppard, Kelly Williams,

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Marc Meulman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cody Dekker, Ray LaPoint, Elma (Pat) Maye, Tim Wilger (Youth Advisory Committee Liaison)

STAFF PRESENT: Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist, Vicki Georgeau, Director of Community Development

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Durian and supported by Ilori to approve the August 2, 2012 minutes as submitted. Upon voice vote, motion passed 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

FY 2011-12 CDBG Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report – Public Hearing: Vice-Chair Sheppard opened the public hearing. Staff provided a summary of the contents of the CAPER document, and provided an overview of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program performance in comparison to five-year goals, and specific activity performance in comparison to the FY 2011-12 Annual Action Plan. Mirza inquired regarding the number of applications for housing programs received in comparison to projects completed. Staff indicated that approximately 20 applications were received during the course of the year, and while most were determined income-eligible, several did not proceed with their projects or their projects were not yet completed prior to the end of the fiscal year. In addition, staff noted the number of projects completed was less than the projected goal due to reductions in funding and transition with regard to staff providing program delivery activities. Mirza asked if CDBG funds can be used to address emergency needs, such as responding to severe weather. Staff indicated yes, but the city would have to demonstrate no other resources are available to address an urgent community need, and the Annual Action Plan would have to be amended and approved by HUD. With regard to repairs needed to address housing damage caused by severe weather, Emergency Repair Grants are currently available through the CDBG Program. Sheppard inquired with regard to the poor economy and if the city has observed an increase need in for assistance. Staff indicated that there has been a steady stream of applicants for home improvement assistance, and an actual increase over the past several months in home buyer assistance applicants. With regard to the increase home buyer applicants, this trend is a sign that the housing market may be improving. Williams inquired if the city has been adversely impacted by the Kalamazoo Promise. Staff indicated the city experienced an increase in population over the past 10 years, and while the growth has been slower than prior 10-year periods, no negative impact is evident. Mirza inquired about more specific data regarding population growth rates in Kalamazoo County and the metropolitan area. Staff indicated a report was prepared on 2010 census data that is available on the city web site. As no further comments were received, the public hearing was closed. Staff explained the CAPER document would be revised to reflect public comment and submitted to HUD not later than September 15, 2012 as required.

City of Portage 50th Anniversary Celebration: Sheppard inquired if there were any suggestions. Williams questioned what funding was available and if any events were planned. Staff responded that \$5,000 was budgeted, a winter half-marathon was being planned, and a community concert was planned and fundraising would be needed for a big name concert performance. Durian suggested that Metro Transit be incorporated into events by use of buses, making a visible presence to advertise their use for city residents, or perhaps have a day where citizens could ride for free. Also, an effort should be made to showcase the human service activities and support available in Portage. Williams suggested a park appreciation event to acknowledge the contribution of the parks to the quality of city life, and perhaps buttons be provided that

say “I love Portage Parks!”. This type of event would showcase that Portage is a beautiful and well maintained place. Ilori suggested expanding existing holiday and Taste of Portage events to include a 50th anniversary theme. Mirza suggested events that involved the city and the Portage Public schools, a parade of notable homes, buildings, and/or places in Portage, or highlight notable athletes and other people who come from Portage. Sheppard suggested that Portage do something that incorporated historical figures and Portage history, and that utilizing area billboards and newspaper articles to display beautiful aspects of Portage living.

Red Ribbon Week (October 23-31, 2012) activities – Board discussion: Staff gave a brief history of Red Ribbon Week for the new Board members and explained that Board typically works with the local schools to have a group of school kids come to Council and meet with the Mayor for the Red Ribbon Week proclamation. The Board suggested that the Youth Advisory Representative, Tim Wilger, contact his classmates to see if he could recruit students to the event. It was recommended Mr. Wilger report to the Board on October 4, 2012.

Metro Transit ADA Advisory Committee – Update by Board member Meulman: No updated was provided as Meulman was not present.

OLD BUSINESS:

Human Services Information & Referral Resources video- Presentation to the Board- Information only: The PMN video was played for the Board.

Local Housing Anti-discrimination Ordinance – Board discussion: As no information had been prepared by the Board for review, there was no discussion on this agenda item.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist