

## CITY OF PORTAGE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

Minutes of Meeting, April 4, 2013

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Sandra Sheppard, Chair

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**, Effie Kokkinos, Ray LaPoint, Elma (Pat) Maye, Nadeem Mirza, Edward Morgan, Sandra Shepard, Amanda Woodin

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Diane Durian

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kelly Williams, Tim Wilger (Youth Advisory Committee Liaison)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist

**CITIZENS PRESENT:** Kris Miller, Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by LaPoint and supported by Kokkinos to approve the March 7, 2013 minutes as written. Motion passed, 7-0.

### OLD BUSINESS:

1. Human Services Application for Funding - Revisions to Form: Maye excused herself from this presentation due to a conflict of interest as she is an employee of the Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan (FHCSWM) a sub-recipient of funding from the city. The Board felt the application revisions as suggested by staff would clarify applicant information and help streamline the Board review of the applications. Woodin moved and Mirza supported a motion to accept the revisions as recommended by staff. Motion passed 6-0.

### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Public Hearing - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program: FY 2013-14 Annual Action Plan: Chair Sheppard opened the public hearing. Georgeau provided an overview of the plan and summarized proposed activities with the funds available next fiscal year. In review of the comparative budget table, staff noted the city has not yet been formally notified of its entitlement grant amount for FY 2013-14, but anticipates at least a 7.4% decrease in funding. Sheppard asked if the city anticipated the reduced funding. Georgeau indicated yes, and that reductions are due to changes in poverty rates, but mostly sequestration of the federal budget. In response to Sheppard, staff also explained the differences in various city budget funds, such as the General Fund, CIP Fund, CDBG Fund, etc. Mirza requested clarification regarding the manner in establishing low-income neighborhoods shown on Map 1. Georgeau explained the areas are established based on Census data calculated for HUD, and that the areas shown are the "upper quartile" neighborhoods of the city, with the highest percentage of low income households. In response to comments by Mirza and Morgan, staff explained that the areas selected for Down Payment Assistance are those that are currently, or were previously, designated as low-moderate income areas and/or areas with home values that would be affordable for program participants. Chris Miller, Director of Enforcement for the Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan, inquired regarding areas of the city with a higher concentration of minority households and the identified impediments to fair housing within the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (A/I) report. Georgeau indicated that the Consolidated Plan and the A/I report does address census tract block groups with higher areas of minority population, and also summarized the identified impediments to fair housing. Mr. Miller also inquired if the city has any programs to make homes more affordable in affluent areas to encourage integration. Staff indicated the Down Payment Assistance Program targets assistance to affordable housing areas, but that the city does not have any programs or statutory authority to require home sales at affordable prices outside of the CDBG Program. In response to Sheppard and Woodin, staff also indicated that home foreclosures have brought down the value and price of home over the past several years within the city and region. As no further comments were received, the public hearing was closed.
2. Fair Housing Activity Update - Presentation by Bob Ells, Executive Director, Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan: Maye excused herself from this presentation due to a conflict of interest as she is an employee of the Fair Housing Center of Southwest Michigan (FHCSWM) a sub-recipient of funding from the city. Ells presented an overview of the FHCSWM including educational and training activities, code enforcement cases, update on the

pending conference April 12, and targeted activities for Portage residents. The Board had several questions regarding the complaints, the average number of complaints, and complaint tracking. Portage complaint numbers can fluctuate greatly from year to year but cases are all tracked and documented. FHCSWM employees Maye and Kris Miller also provided input in addressing Board questions.

3. 2012-13 Goal Update and Proposed 2013-14 Goals - Board Discussion: Board briefly discussed the goal update and proposed goals with staff providing a brief history on the Board's goals. Woodin then moved and Morgan supported a motion to approve the 2012-13 Goal Update and 2013-14 Proposed Goals as presented. Motion passed 7-0.
4. Kalamazoo Transit Authority LAC update – Maye: Maye attended the March 2013 meeting but the only significant business conducted was the election of officers. A brochure on the upcoming May 7<sup>th</sup> transportation millage was passed out for the Board's information.
5. Summer 2013 Meeting Schedule: Sheppard indicated to the Board that if the activity on the current agenda was settled, there was no reason to meet again until August unless otherwise notified. Maye supported the cancelation of the May, June, and July Board meetings; Woodin supported. Motion passed 7-0.

**STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist