

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Housing Opportunity Fund Advisory Board for the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh. City of Pittsburgh YouTube channel.

June 3, 2021

Members Present: Lena Andrews, Oliver Beasley, Jamil Bey, Joanna Deming, Jerome Jackson, Theresa Kail-Smith, Knowledge Build Hudson, Sonya Tilghman, Derrick Tillman (Vice Chair), Diamonte Walker, Adrienne Walnoha, Kellie Ware (Chair), Megan Winters

Staff Present: Breanna Benjamin, Jeremy Carter, David Geiger, Vethina Hage, Lisa Korade, Shaina Madden, Evan Miller, Brett Morgan, Jamie Reese

Others Present: Meghan Aitken, Chad Barnett, William LaMar, Heather Watson

#### **A. Roll Call**

Kellie Ware called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

#### **B. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from the May 6, 2021 Meeting**

Adrienne Walnoha motioned to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2021, board meeting as written and previously distributed. Sonya Tilghman seconded. Lena Andrews recused herself. The motion carried.

#### **C. Public Comment**

No public comment.

#### **D. Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) – Recommend to increase HAP contracts**

Jeremy Carter recommended to increase HAP contracts by the following:

- I. Hilltop Alliance in the amount of \$150,000 from \$950,000 to \$1,100,000.
- II. Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh in the amount of \$200,000 from \$600,000 to \$800,000

These agencies have spent down their previous contracts through 2020 and are able to take on more projects at this time.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 22 (2021)**

Adrienne Walnoha motioned to approve increasing HAP contracts by the following:

- I. Hilltop Alliance in the amount of \$150,000 from \$950,000 to \$1,100,000.
- II. Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh in the amount of \$200,000 from \$600,000 to \$800,000

Megan Winters Seconded. The motion Carried.

#### **E. Advisory Board Administrative Items**

K. Ware reminded the board members that the Special Session to review Rental Gap Program (RGP) – Request for Proposals (RFP’s) is next week (June 8 at 11:00 am).

J. Carter advised that for the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, staff will be prepared to walk the Advisory Board through the current process of how projects are evaluated and asked that any requests to focus on specific items be emailed to his staff.

#### **F. Annual Allocation Plan Community Survey**

K. Ware explained that every year we reach out to the community for feedback, information, and input on how to spend the following year’s allocations, and that it is time to start looking at the survey and what the RFP looks like for community organizations. She suggested that since we did have a lighter agenda, the Advisory Board could utilize the time to review and talk through the survey.

Vethina Hage presented the timeline and events for the 2022 Annual Allocation Plan (AAP) Community Survey.

K. Ware stated that the second phase is currently underway, and things are getting lined up so that feedback can begin to go out at the end of the month.

Joanna Deming said she is curious about the online-only effort, and wanted to know, since some things are opening up, why we did not participate in various events to be a physical presence for those who are not online-savvy.

Jamil Bey responded by saying that there are still communities in Pittsburgh where fewer than 25% are vaccinated.

J. Carter responded to J. Deming’s question by explaining that the URA is following the guidance of the URA’s Coronavirus Action Team, and at this point, in-person events are not permitted.

Derrick Tilman asked if there are any other engagement opportunities outside of the survey.

V. Hage answered that, throughout the process, virtual community meetings will be held to collect feedback and to provide information on the annual allocation plan on HOF programs. She also stated that HOF staff will be providing community outreach opportunities to connect directly with community members.

K. Ware asked if some of the contractors and consultants are prohibited from doing in-person events or is it that the URA itself cannot hos in-person events.

J. Carter replied that his team will have to check into that.

K. Ware commented that with a lot of mixed messaging around guidelines, it is best to be cautious. She told the Advisory Board to email any comments, questions, concerns, and thoughts on the survey to V. Hage.

## **G. Programmatic Expenditures and Impacts**

V. Hage presented the chart and map for the Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program. She indicated that about 80% of the funds have been committed or closed to this point. She stated that a majority of the first-time homebuyers fall between the 80% and 115% range, and 107 of the program's first-time homebuyers fall between the 51% AMI and 80% AMI range.

V. Hage presented the chart and map for the Homeowner Assistance Program, stating that 88% of funds are committed, but if you consider those on the waiting list you could say 100% of funds are committed. She added that the 2018 to 2020 funds have been fully committed. She concluded by saying that about 231 households have been served by this program to date.

V. Hage presented the chart and map for the Rental Gap Program.

V. Hage presented the chart for Programmatic Expenditures and Impacts which provides a complete picture of where HOF funding stands. She included a chart of Dollars and Households/Units.

K. Ware asked if the Demo Dollars is the Legal Program.

V. Hage answered no, that it is separate.

Derrick Tillman asked if there has been an increase in applications for programs other than HSP.

J. Carter said yes, the Homeowner Assistance Program has been overwhelmed with demand since COVID-19. He added that 20 to 50 calls are received each week for this program.

Shaina Madden commented that in the last year applications for the For Sale Development Program slowed down due to projects getting derailed or being put on hold. She followed that by saying that the program now has a steady stream of applications coming in, which are being processed and will come before the committee in the next couple months.

## **H. Announcements**

J. Carter announced the following:

- Homeowner Assistance Program (HAP) waiting list is now open.
- Housing Stability Program (HSP) – Special Session Coming Soon (Late June)
- The next HOF Advisory Board Meeting is Thursday, July 1, 2021 at 9:00 AM.

## **I. Adjournment**

D. Tillman motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.