



UNAPPROVED

MINUTES

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
AND PUBLIC HEARING**

**October 22, 2019, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**

Commission Members Present: Michael Braun, Reverend Robert Freeman, Chris Diana, Abdulhakeem Salaam, Anne Heinze-Silvis and Darius White

Commission Members Excused/Absent: Patricia Jones

Staff Present: Sheila Dodd, Grants Management Division Manager and Alyssa Jaje, Community Development Specialist

Others Present: None

Call to Order and Roll Call: Chairperson Heinze-Silvis called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Alyssa Jaje, Community Development Specialist, called the roll. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: The June 25, 2019 minutes were presented for approval. Commissioner Freeman moved to approve the minutes as written and Commissioner Salaam seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Additions to the Agenda: Chairperson Heinze-Silvis recommended moving the Public Hearing to the end of the meeting.

Ms. Dodd mentioned that according to the bylaws, there should be nine commissioners. Currently the Commission operates with seven commissioners. Ms. Dodd asked commissioners if they would prefer to have nine commissioners, in which two more individuals would be recruited, or change the bylaws to reflect a full commission at seven members. Commissioners had a discussion about meeting quorum—with nine members, only one more person is needed to meet quorum, compared to having a quorum with seven members. Mr. White suggested more members could potentially provide more community voices, however, discussion between commissioners highlighted that recruitment for commissioners has been challenging in the past. Chairperson Heinze-Silvis said the commissioners could decide on the following options: 1) Continue with the bylaws stating the Commission can have nine members, but the Commission can continue to operate with seven; 2) Change the bylaws to state the Commission consists of seven active members; 3) Operate with nine commissions and recruit two more individuals. All commissioners agreed to make a decision at the next meeting.

Public Input: There was no public input. The public hearing was moved to the end of the agenda.

Presentations: Ms. Dodd presented the staff report. To start, the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) has been completed. If any commissioners wanted a copy of the report, staff would email or mail a copy. After completing the CAPER and 2018/2019 fiscal year, Ms. Dodd wanted to highlight how proud she was of all the accomplishments staff achieved, despite turnovers. Some of those accomplishments included completing the Emergency Solutions grant to assist households and individuals experiencing homelessness. However, this grant will not be renewed in the current fiscal year. The Consolidated Social Service Fund (CSSF) grant process underwent many changes. The City worked with Cunningham Township to provide funding to social service agencies through an open, fair, and transparent process. Some feedback on CSSF includes questions if small grant amounts make a meaningful impact. In the future, the Township and City may consider changing the model from funding agencies with strong applications to funding agencies working on a specific issue (i.e. homelessness services). There is potential to change from a one-year grant to a two-year grant. Community Development Commissioners are invited to participate in the CSSF process for the coming fiscal year.

The Annual Action Plan was submitted in May and funding was received in September.

Currently, the City of Urbana has two transitional housing (TH) units, and is in process of obtaining a third. Staff will potentially work with the Housing Authority for case management for TH clients. Once those details are decided, staff will begin to recruit families for the units.

Staff is actively involved in the Champaign County Continuum of Care (CoC). The CoC just applied for funding to expand homeless services.

The Grants Division would like to continue to invest in capital improvement projects with the use of Community Development Block Grant funds. However, there is a lot of staff turnover in Public Works right now, so getting projects to spend money on has been challenging.

The entire Community Development Division at the City is undergoing major staff changes. John Schneider retired and Lorrie Pearson has taken over as the department head. Sheila is now covering various administrative roles in both grants and planning. Randy Burgett will be retiring at the end of the year, with his last day in the office being November 1, 2019. The Grants Division may consider outsourcing Randy's job to other local non-profit agencies or the Regional Planning Commission.

There is still enough money in the Abandoned Properties Program to complete two more demolitions. There have not been any identified properties yet for demolition.

Monitoring of budget, compliance, and commitments for the HOME Program is underway. Staff is continuing to reach out to local agencies regarding the administration of a tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA) program. Moreover, HOME funding requests are being processed.

There will be a Habitat for Humanity home dedication next Wednesday on Columbia Avenue in Champaign. Habitat is on track to begin their next home in Urbana.

Chairperson Heinze-Silvis asked where Pinewood Place will be built. Pinewood Place is a Housing Authority project located at 1606 East Colorado Avenue in Urbana. Construction is set to begin in 2020.

Commissioner Diana commented that the roles of commissioners have disappeared over the years with little explanation as to why it has happened. Ms. Diana asked if there should be more consideration for commissioner involvement. Ms. Dodd suggested that she could bring the grants management budget to the next meeting and commissioners can discuss what they can be involved in more activities and projects. Since the division will be two staff members soon, there is more opportunity for involvement from commissioners.

Ms. Jaje gave an update on the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. The planning process is underway. Staff from both Urbana and Champaign are actively working to recruit meaningful community input for the Plan. Staff would like to have a strong draft ready in January, publish a draft for public review in April, and adopt the final Consolidated Plan in May.

Ms. Dodd concluded the staff report by inviting commissioners to meet with her or Ms. Jaje anytime for updates.

Old Business: No old business items were presented for discussion.

New Business: No new business items were presented for discussion.

Public Hearing: Chairperson Heinze-Silvis opened the public hearing. There was no input.

Adjournment: Seeing no further business, Chairperson Heinze-Silvis closed the public hearing and adjourned the meeting at 6:46 p.m.

Recorded by



Community Development Specialist,
Grants Management Division