



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
January 11, 2022  
MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Brittany Fleenor  
Raymond Hill  
Ella Kane  
Vernon Perry Jr.  
Matthew Slagle  
Marjorie Tester  
Steve Willinger  
Dan Witcher

**Members Absent**

Shauna Nefos Webb

**Others Present**

Regina Edwards, Bristol Housing  
Lisa Cofer, United Way of Bristol  
Cherith Young, Staff  
Christina Blevins, Staff

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call**

The Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) meeting was called to order on January 11, 2022 at 5:32 p.m., by Chairman Steve Willinger. Chairman Willinger welcomed everyone to the meeting. Christina Blevins called the roll and those present/absent are noted above.

**II. Approval of Minutes, November 9, 2021 Meeting**

Chairman Willinger asked for any amendments or changes to the November 9, 2021, meeting minutes. Raymond Hill made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2021 meeting as presented. Vernon Perry Jr. seconded the motion. All present were in favor.

**III. Guest Speaker**

Chairman Willinger welcomed Lisa Cofer, Executive Director of United Way of Bristol as the guest speaker. Mrs. Cofer thanked CDAC for allowing her to speak and wished to update the CDAC on COVID CARES funding that the United Way is administering for the City as we have two separate grants in place. Mrs. Cofer stated that the CDBG-CV Round 3 funding allowed the City and the United Way to establish the COVID CARES Act Partnership. This partnership allows qualified individuals/families help with utilities and food vouchers if they are in a financial hardship due to COVID-19 she noted.

To date, the program has helped 21 families with utility payments, for a total spent of \$7,358.55 and 17 families helped with food vouchers for a total spent of \$2,680.00 on TN side alone. The United Way also partnered with Bristol, VA on a similar program but Mrs. Cofer stated she didn't have those numbers with her. There is an application process and a check-list to verify documentation. The utility payment goes directly to the provider for the family if qualified. The UWB verifies that other local funding is utilized first as these funds are used as a last resort for the community. Food Vouchers to Food City are also given for qualifying participants depending on the number in the household. Recently the UWB is seeing the local need escalating as federal funding decreases. Mrs. Cofer discussed the qualification process and how to apply through the United Way's website.

The second program Mrs. Cofer discussed was the CDBG-CV Round 1 funding for the Homeless Quarantine Program. This funding allowed the UWB to work with local hospitals and Homeless Shelters to identify COVID + homeless individuals. The UWB works to get them off the street into a hotel/motel, and provide food and transportation as needed to try and stop the spread of the virus. Mrs. Cofer noted that in Bristol, TN the program has served 12 individuals (7 males and 5 females), for a total of 132 nights in a hotel/motel, 336 meals and 1 transportation ride. She stated that 9 individuals in Bristol, VA had been served for a total of 64 nights in a hotel/motel, 192 meals and 4 transportation rides. Mrs. Cofer discussed the challenges with putting COVID + individuals in a hotel/motel.

Mrs. Cofer praised the Bristol community for networking and working together to help community folks in need. She also added that other communities have reached out to her about working with their clients and homeless issues as well as other needs.

Mrs. Cofer discussed the current campaign goal and a plea to CDAC to consider extending or allowing additional funding for the Homeless Quarantine Program, as it's a great need, and UWB will need continued help in meeting the need.

Mrs. Cofer gave a quick update on the Air Filtration system program that Bristol, TN has asked UWB to help facilitate. These are not CDBG funds. The City's general fund is being used to fund this program. UWB has given out approximately 200 air purifiers for Bristol, TN residents. Bristol, VA is not offering the same type of program. UWB is referring citizens, they are unable to help, to First Presbyterian Church. They are working on a similar program. To qualify for the air filtration system, families must meet the low-to-moderate income guidelines much like CDBG.

Chairman Willinger thanked Mrs. Cofer for her leadership!

CDAC discussed air filtration specification information and general discussion on "last resort" funding, approved utilities in CDBG-CV and community issues around Broadband/internet services offered.

Christina Blevins discussed giving the CDBG-CV Round 1 funding extension to UWB for the Homeless Quarantine Program. Staff approved the extension request as UWB is using the funding on an as needed basis and the new COVID-19 variant. Mrs. Blevins added that Believe in Bristol's Technical Assistance Training grant was the only other CDBG-CV Round 1 funding that has not been used. Believe in Bristol was able to get training paid for through other resources/grants and has asked the City to re-direct those funds. Mrs. Blevins stated that in April she plans to bring re-allocation ideas to the committee to discuss.

Mrs. Blevins added that the Homeless Quarantine Program and a request from Second Harvest Food Bank have been the only two new requests received for additional/continued CDBG-CV funding. CDAC discussed CDBG-CV documentation and making sure that COVID-19 response is the priority (prepare, prevent and respond) in this re-allocation discussion.

#### **IV. Old Business**

None

#### **V. New Business**

**ARCH – Point-In-Time Count:** Christina Blevins discussed ARCH conducting the annual homeless Point-In-Time Count (PIT) on January 26 and 27, 2022. She added that though she didn't know all off ARCH's plans, this is not an abbreviated version of the PIT Count that took place last year. Mrs. Blevins distributed a list of items ARCH is asking for from each community, including items for backpacks such as general hygiene items and snacks. ARCH plans to hand out backpacks and goodies to individuals who participate in the PIT count survey. Mrs. Blevins asked CDAC to help with those needs if possible.

**Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI):** Christina Blevins stated that every five years the City is to complete an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), showing that we are promoting and working to improve Fair Housing in our community to the best of our ability. The Northeast Tennessee/Virginia HOME Consortium will also be asked to start working on their particular AI. Mrs. Blevins noted that she will compile data and email findings to the committee to review and add to the discussion.

#### **VI. Other Matters**

**CDBG & HOME Staff Monthly Reports/Program Updates:** Christina Blevins stated that she emailed the committee the CDBG and HOME staff monthly report for November & December 2021. Mrs. Blevins reviewed several items of interest on the monthly report including several emergency and substantial rehabilitation projects. Christina mentioned that windows are still taking 12-14 weeks for delivery, once the contractor has ordered them, so projects will be granted a contract extension if materials are not readily available.

CDAC discussed details regarding last meetings discussion at 115 Delany Street. Mrs. Blevins was able to work with the United Way and Bristol Faith in Action to help get two space heaters for the home. Several service organization's numbers, including Upper East TN Human Development Agency and Legal Aid services, were also provided. Mrs. Blevins spoke to BTES and ultimately the client did not want to move forward with the heat-pump loan program through BTES. Ella Kane gave an update on the family at 115 Delany Street and noted that was her daughter. Mrs. Blevins did not know that was Mrs. Kane's daughter and added that due to conflict of interest CDBG would not be able to help her at this time.

**Bristol Housing Update:** Regina Edwards gave an update for Bristol Housing. Mrs. Edwards stated that Bristol Housing recently lost a long-time employee due to COVID. She also noted the window and door project at Edgemont Towers is slowly progressing. She was happy to answer any questions if any, from the committee.

**VII. Announcements & Adjournment**

The next CDAC meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2022.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

APPROVED:



Steve Willinger, Chair



Christina Blevins, Recorder