



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
February 11, 2020
MINUTES**

Members Present

Ron Crockett
Ella Kane
Chase Mitchell
Marjorie Tester
Steve Willinger
Dan Witcher

Members Absent

Todd Dolehanty
Spence Flagg
Vernon Perry

Others Present

Steve Scyphers, Bristol Housing
Cherith Young, Staff
Christina Blevins, Staff

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) meeting was called to order on February 11, 2020 at 5:35 p.m., at the Bristol, Tennessee Annex Conference Room by Chair Marjorie Tester.

Christina Blevins noted the members present/absent above. A quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes, January 14, 2020 Meeting

Chairwoman Tester asked for any amendments or changes to the January 14th meeting minutes. Dan Witcher made a motion to approve the January 14, 2020 meeting minutes as presented, Ron Crockett seconded the motion, and all present were in favor.

III. Guest Speaker – Steve Scyphers, Bristol Housing

Chairwoman Tester formally welcomed Steve Scyphers to the podium. Steve introduced himself to the group and discussed the name change from Bristol Tennessee Housing and Redevelopment Authority to Bristol Housing several years ago. Steve added that Bristol Housing is a political subdivision of the City; however Bristol Housing is self-sufficient and does not receive funding from the City or State. The Agency was chartered by the City in 1964, when Urban Renewal was taking shape in the US. Steve ran over a quick timeline of the housing authority's history and information on the units/apartments. Steve discussed the Commissioners for Bristol Housing, how Commissioners are appointed through the City Council, and how they are not paid. Steve then discussed that Bristol Housing has 15 staff members, a full-time City

Police officer contracted with the City, and the roles and responsibilities of the staff.

Steve showed pictures of Edgemont Towers, Fort Shelby Towers and several family units (1-5 bedrooms). Steve discussed the types of residents in the units and the misconception that people don't pay rent in public housing. He said that currently Bristol Housing only has one person not paying any rent and one person paying just \$3 a month. The normal minimum rent unless you can prove a hardship is \$50 a month. Currently they have 19 units paying \$50 a month, and the average rent is approximately \$300 a month. Bristol Housing does have a family paying \$946 a month for a five-bedroom. They are paying the maximum ceiling rent. The unit is approx. 1350 square feet, Steve added that the maximum ceiling rent is still less expensive than private rentals in the area.

Group discussion ensued on income requirements, occupant eligibility, what is considered fraud, wait-lists, and costs of high-rise operations (sprinkler systems, fire alarms, elevators).

Dan Witcher asked about what percent of the total cost is born by the residences. Steve stated that the operating income for Bristol Housing is about 55%, noting that the operating budget for public housing is \$2.1M and rent revenue is expected to be \$1.1M and they will receive \$880,000 from U.S. Dept. of HUD. Bristol Housing could not survive without the help of HUD he added, even with the reserve funds they would be out in approx. 18 months without HUD funding.

Steve briefly reviewed the Homeownership program and the incentive called Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Steve added that the Housing Authority is given the TIF incentive from the State to help improve housing. Unfortunately, few developers actually want to use TIF for low-income housing as originally hoped; it is a bit controversial, he added. TIF is being used for multiple large projects in Bristol. Steve reviewed several TIF projects and showed the impact that those projects have had in our community.

Marjorie thanked Steve for his presentation, very informative!

IV. Old Business:

YWCA Quarterly Report – Christina asked the group to review the YWCA of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia's Quarterly Report for October through December 2019.

CDBG & HOME Staff Monthly Report – Christina presented the January 2020 report and pointed out notable items from the list including the PIT Count, additional work on the Consolidated Plan, applications for several substantial rehabilitations at 300 Summerwood Drive, 1007 Barker St Ext, and 701 Pennsylvania Avenue and their respective environmental reviews. Christina mentioned that she had completed drawdowns for both the CDBG and HOME programs. Unfortunately, Christina shared that the Tennessee Preservation Office did conclude that the potential demolition of 404 Pennsylvania Avenue would cause an adverse effect on the district and it has been determined that Federal Funds will not be able to be used for the demolition of the property. Christina stated that through a partnership with the United Way of Bristol, we now have an ARCH AmeriCorps at the Bristol Public Library two days a week and Bristol Faith I Action one day a week to help those in need with housing and other resources.

ARCH Point-in-Time (PIT) Count – Christina thanked the group for participation in the annual PIT Count on January 22-23, 2020. Steve Willinger and Ron Crockett discussed their

participation with the count and both agreed the experience was better than they had expected. Christina mentioned that the City Codes Department, in particular Cheyenne Powers, helped with outreach and ARCH's team leader Doug Murray both did exceptional jobs. She also thanked Mark Hutton for volunteering. Christina will distribute the final counts for the area when they are received from ARCH.

V. New Business:

CDBG Future Project Discussion – Christina asked the group to be thinking about projects for the upcoming year and beyond. She stated that HUD has not notified of funding for the upcoming year. Christina added that our program does a lot with little funding and she needs to know if the CDAC has different feelings about our programs and public service funding. Group discussion ensued regarding the YWCA Children's Center, the group feels that funding the YWCA Children's Center is very important. Group discussion ensued on possible funding options such as ARCH and ASP. Christina discussed that the Consolidated Plan will be due to HUD in May.

Dan Witcher made a motion to leave the structure of future projects the same, focusing on homeowner rehabilitation and giving the YWCA Children's Center the public service funding as done in years past; however if we receive a significant amount of additional funds inn CDBG those funds may be allocated to a different organization to be approved by CDAC, Ron Crockett seconded the motion, and all present were in favor.

CDAC Terms & Recruitment – Christina mentioned that Todd Dolehanty and Chase Mitchell have expiring terms April 30, 2020. She mentioned that this is the time to reach out to others in the committee about joining CDAC. Raymond Hill was mentioned as a possible member to join CDAC from the group.

Ella Kane asked about City sidewalk projects and mentioned adding a sidewalk from King University to Downtown as a much needed project.

Dan Witcher asked Chairwoman Tester to add discussion of the Mission & Vision Statements to the Agenda.

Mission & Vision Statements – Dan Witcher expressed that he had modified the Mission & Vision Statements that were presented in the last meeting. Dan noted that we did not have a quorum during the January meeting during this discussion. Dan added that Ron had concerns about supporting the statements as they were presented at that time, he was concerned about promoting ownership and depriving someone from due process. Dan stated that he has added /updated the statements to reflect Ron's concerns. Ron voiced that we need to have more discussion on this, he does not agree that this is what our committee should be doing as he believes we need to be more focused. Ron addressed Dan and stated that he understands where Dan is coming from but the purpose for this committee is to promote housing and community development for our City and being apolitical and focus on our community needs. Dan discussed a recent speech from the Economic Department Head at George Mason University, adding that the constitution today is very much in contempt by our country and operates in ignorance even in the local localities, we as the CDAC are the conscience. Ron still objects to wording in the proposed statements. Group discussion ensued on input of the statements, no City Boards or Commissions have a Mission & Vision Statements other than City Council. Dan feels strongly that we need to address this. Ron feels strongly that we can't promote a Mission &

Vision Statement that doesn't reflect what the CDAC actually does.

Steve Willinger moved to table further discussion of the Mission & Vision Statements to the March meeting, Chase Mitchell second the motion, all present were in favor.

VI. Other Matters & Community Updates:


None

VII. Announcements & Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

APPROVED: 
Marjorie Tester, Chair


Christina Blevins, Recorder