

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
February 24, 2021  
**City of Bristol**  
**2021-2022 Community Development Block Grant Program**  
5:00 P.M. BRISTOL CITY HALL  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

**ATTENDEES:** Howard Schmelder, Tom Hick, Michael Zammett – ECD Commissioners

**STAFF:** Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu  
Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator  
Justin Malley, Executive Director-ECD  
David Sgro, Housing & Project Specialist  
Christine Cooper, Administrative Assistant

The Hearing was called to order by ECD Policy Committee Chairperson Howard Schmelder at 5:00 p.m.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Remarks were read by Commissioner Schmelder:

Welcome to the first Public Hearing for the use of Community Development Block Grant funds for Program Year 47, which runs from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

ECD board members and staff were introduced.

Each year, as part of the required public process in the annual CDBG application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Bristol, through the Department of Economic and Community Development, holds a public hearing for the purpose of receiving recommendations on community needs in Bristol. No votes are taken at the Public Hearing. There is also an ECD Policy Committee meeting, a 30-day public comment period, and a second Public Hearing in March. Other opportunities for comment are at the ECD Board and City Council meetings.

In response to our request for proposals, this year the ECD received requests for 15 grants: There are 8 applications totaling \$239,258 for Public Services and 7 applications for Public Facilities (capital projects) that add up to \$274,824. This includes a request from the City's Department of Public Works for \$90,000 to improve sidewalks in the Opportunity Zone and \$20,000 to construct a bus shelter on North Main Street. Unfortunately, these requests add up to more than double what is available if the City receives approximately the same allocation as we did last year.

This number will need to be reduced to around \$97,500 in Public Service grants and \$172,500 in Public Facilities grants if our anticipated allocation is \$650,000. HUD has not announced the CDBG allocations for Year 47 at this time.

Tonight's agenda is as follows. We will hear:

1. General comments from the public,
2. Presentations by applicant organizations according to the order in which they were received. By your presence here tonight, you are expressing appreciation for past support and future consideration. The Board has read the proposals submitted, therefore, we are requesting the applicants give a brief presentation only if there is information you wish to present in addition to what was contained in your application.

3. When it is your turn to speak, please state your name for the record, the agency you represent, and the address.

Presentations by applicant organizations

1. City of Bristol, Public Works Department – Ray Rogozinski, Director

The City’s Public Works department is working on sidewalks as part of a continual program, concentrating in the downtown area.

2. City of Bristol, Public Works Department – Ray Rogozinski, Director

This request is for bus shelters. Mr. Rogozinski spoke about the specific bus shelters which need work or installation and answered questions.

3. Bristol Recovery Club, Inc., 67 West St. – Tom Palmer, President

Mr. Palmer described their services. This funding is requested for the pantry/kitchen which needs an upgrade as it is very old. The homeless population use the kitchen to cook their meals and holiday meals are prepared here as well. They could not do fund-raising last year and had to close for 3 months. They specifically need new cabinets. They are covering the plumbing and other costs.

4. Bristol Boys & Girls Club – Outreach Program Services - Jay Maia, V.P., Professional Development, Michael Suchopar, President.

They thanked the committee for everything the City has done. There was nothing new to add. They have 2 new programs: Yoga & Robotics and “Career for Cambridge Park – The Limit”. Students return to share their experiences.

5. Shepard Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center, 733 Hill St. – Scholarships: Shelly Pope, Executive Director; Larry Gonzalez, Board of Directors.

They thanked the committee for the opportunity and for funds in the past and through the Cares Act. They have had 100 sessions since January. St. Vincent DePaul came last week. They gave an example of a case and described who has been receiving services. Larry read a letter of support from West Bristol Extended Learning program.

6. Prudence Crandall Center – Emergency Shelter – Beth Ann Morhardt, Associate Director.

She described their services and programs. She answered questions on how to access their services. They will provide a count of how many Bristol clients they have had. They are currently running over capacity.

7. Bristol Adult Education – Intro to Manufacturing, Redstone Hill Road – Larwrence Covino, Director

Mr. Covino described the program. He spoke about their interest in partnering with other programs. He spoke about the funding received for child care and transportation. Mr. Covino answered questions. Programs are provided for free.

8. Family Resource Centers – Linda Rich, Director.

Their programs are entirely grant funded. They are located in West Bristol School, South Side School, and Greene-Hills School. She thanked the committee for FAST (Family Assessment Support Team) funding. They continue to meet on porches, in parks, via Zoom, and through email and telephone. She described their services and answered questions.

9. United Way – Summer Youth Employment – Donna Osuch, President & CPO, 440 North Main St., Bristol.

She thanked the committee for this opportunity. They are applying for funds to support the Walsh Summer Youth Employment program which runs for seven weeks. She described the program and its benefits. They will run the program in 2021 with some modifications. She then answered questions.

10. HRA – Case Management, 440 North Main St., Bristol – Juan Barrios, Assistant Director-Operations, Barbara Parsons, Director of Operations.

They provided the reason for the funding request (to establish a housing fund). They thanked the committee for past support and answered questions.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu excused herself from the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

11. Komanetsky Estates (Bristol Housing Authority) – Jerome Ave., Bristol – Carl Johnson

This application is for isolation and monitor for door entry and also provides for ADA interaction. Part 2 is for the elevator control system. Mr. Johnson answered questions.

12. YWCA New Britain – SACS – Jessica Stepensky, Program Director, Client Services.

She described their services. They have been fully operational during the pandemic – she provided a description. They hope to resume in-person services by summer. She described the partner programs and answered questions.

13. Imagine Nation – Air filtration, One Pleasant St., Bristol - Coral Richardson, Director.

She thanked the committee for their support. They have done a lot of research on how to keep their clients safe. She then answered questions.

14. Bristol Adult Resource Center, Mary Etter, Executive Director.

She thanked the committee for their past support. They receive funding mainly from DDS and there is no funding available for this type of project. She answered questions.

15. Neighborhood Housing Services of NB – Chris Sanders, Executive Director.

He is working with the greater Bristol Realty Corp. He described their services and the issues they have in funding the project. They are ready to begin Phase 1. He answered questions.

No other comments were forthcoming from the Public.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:27p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Cooper, Recording Secretary