



Rochester City Council

Community Development Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Elaine Lauterborn, Chairperson

Donna Bogan, Vice Chairperson

Tom Abbott

Jeremy Hutchinson

James Gray

Meeting Date:	Monday, January 14, 2019	
Members Present:	Tom Abbott Donna Bogan James Gray Jeremy Hutchinson Elaine Lauterborn	Members Absent: None
Guests/Staff:	Jennifer Marsh, Rochester Economic Development Specialist Chris Bowlen, Director of Recreation Department Susan Ford, My Friend's Place Pamela Becker, Community Partners Martha Hewitt, Tri-City Co-op Rachel Sanchez, Gafney Home John Bozak, Gafney Home Tracey Donaldson, Dover Adult Learning Center Vanessa, Dover Adult Learning Center Donna Marsh, New Generation Amy Michaels, New Generation Bob Arnold, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County Betsey Andrews Parker, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County Zach Puopolo, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County Sarah Varney, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County Sue Silsby, EasterSeals NH Jean Lanciano, EasterSeals NH Julie Reynolds, Cornerstone VNA John Burns, SOS Recovery Center Laurie Eastwood, Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels Anne Grassie, Rochester Child Care Center Richard Bickford, Rochester Child Care Center Julie Perron, Bridging the Gaps/Seacoast Youth Services Martha Stone, Cross Roads House Allie Joseph, MY TURN Laurie Basham, MY TURN John McLain, East Rochester Public Library Kathy Beebe, HAVEN Kathleen Levesque, Homeless Center for Strafford County Tracy Hardekopf, Homeless Center for Strafford County Mike Hagan, Homeless Center for Strafford County	

Councilor Lauterborn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Motion was made by Councilor Bogan and seconded by Councilor Hutchinson to approve the December 10, 2018 minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

PUBLIC INPUT	There was no public input.
ROCHESTER FARMERS MARKET	<p>Ms. Jennifer Marsh stated she has met with the Recreation Department to gauge its interest in taking over the Rochester Farmers Market. She added that she will be meeting with the Legal Department in the near future to discuss the necessary financial details.</p> <p>Mr. Bowlen stated that his department has seasonal employees but that they are currently occupied with their current job duties. Councilor Lauterborn asked if this means that the current seasonal employees would need additional hours or an additional employee would be needed. Mr. Bowlen confirmed that this is the case. He added that the Recreation Department is happy to play a role but cannot be the only department involved.</p> <p>Councilor Lauterborn asked if the current \$5,000 available would get the market through the first year. Ms. Marsh stated that it would. Councilor Gray asked if the account holding the \$5,000 is in a private account or city account. Ms. Marsh stated that the money is held in a private account owned by Rochester Main Street, the current fiscal agent for the market. Councilor Lauterborn asked where the \$5,000 came from, and Ms. Marsh replied that it is from the last three years' of sponsorships.</p> <p>Councilor Gray suggested increasing the City's annual financial contribution to Rochester Main Street in exchange for Main Street's continuing to run the market. Councilor Lauterborn asked if Rochester Main Street has any paid employees, and Ms. Marsh replied that the only paid employee is the executive director.</p>
FY 2019-2020 GRANT APPLICATION PRESENTATIONS	Ms. Ford from My Friend's Place stated that the My Friend's Place homeless shelter has served more Rochester residents this year than from all other municipalities combined. Ms. Ford added that My Friend's Place has already exceeded its goal for the fiscal year and that funding for My Friend's Place provides savings in the Rochester Welfare Office budget. Ms. Ford also added that for next year My Friend's Place is also requesting public facilities funding for

a back-up generator and that such funding is also being requested from the City of Dover.

Councilor Lauterborn asked why My Friend's Place is serving so many Rochester residents. Ms. Ford replied that it's largely because residents are priced out of Dover. Councilor Hutchinson asked if My Friend's Place is a low, medium, or high barrier shelter, and Ms. Ford replied that it is a low barrier shelter.

Ms. Becker from Community Partners provided an overview of its rental assistance program for clients with mental illness or developmental disabilities who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Ms. Becker mentioned that high rental rates and client reliance on SSI and SSDI mean that housing is beyond the financial means of many Community Partners clients.

Councilor Lauterborn asked how the requested funding amount was arrived at, and Ms. Becker replied that it is anticipated to serve 15 individuals/families. Councilor Bogan asked about other municipalities' contributions, and Ms. Becker replied that the City of Dover contributes about \$7,000. Councilor Bogan asked if Dover and Rochester funding supports the other municipalities, and Ms. Becker replied that Dover funding is spent only on Dover residents and Rochester funding is spent only on Rochester residents.

Ms. Hewitt from Tri-City Co-op stated that Tri-City Co-op provides peer to peer mental health supportive services. Most clients are from Rochester, but services are available to all Strafford County residents. Councilor Bogan asked if CDBG funding funds all Strafford County, and Ms. Hewitt replied that funding serves all clients.

Ms. Sanchez from the Gafney Home stated that the Gafney Home, an assisted living facility, is requesting funding for roof replacement. Ms. Sanchez mentioned that most of the Gafney Home's residents are low income and that Strafford County has an aging population. She added that the Gafney Home is the only non-profit assisted living facility in Rochester. Mr. Bozak stated that previous phases of renovations were supported by the Gafney Home's endowment but that the endowment cannot support further renovations.

Councilor Lauterborn asked how many residents the Gafney Home has, and Ms. Sanchez replied that the Gafney Home has twenty bed. Councilor Lauterborn asked if most Gafney Home residents were Rochester residents prior to entering the Gafney Home, and Ms. Sanchez replied that about forty percent were. Councilor Abbott asked about the roofing material, and Mr. Bozak replied that most of the roof is shingling.

Ms. Donaldson from Dover Adult Learning Center (DALC) stated that the Rochester location of the Dover Adult Learning Center has seen an increase in enrollment. Ms. Donaldson stated that DALC has increased focus on post-education employment targeting specific industries. This has included partnerships with Great Bay Community College. Vanessa, a DALC student, shared that she has been working on her HiSET with DALC since 2014, with pauses to work, and has appreciated how DALC has remembered her specific situation and needs.

Councilor Lauterborn asked Vanessa what her next step is, and Vanessa replied that she would like to continue her schooling to become an ultrasound technician.

Ms. Donna Marsh from New Generation stated that New Generation is located in Greenland and serves homeless women who are pregnant or have children. Services include shelter and case management. Ms. Marsh stated that New Generation has seen a recent increase in calls from Rochester. New Generation has also seen an increase in clients with substance use disorders.

Councilor Lauterborn asked how Rochester residents are referred to New Generation. Ms. Marsh replied that some calls come through 211 and some from Hope on Haven Hill after they have completed Hope on Haven Hill's program. Councilor Lauterborn asked how long clients can stay at New Generation. Ms. Marsh replied that clients can stay as long as they need but the average stay is 160 days.

Ms. Andrews Parker from Community Action Partnership of Strafford County (CAP) stated that CAP is requesting additional funding for its weatherization assistance program due to increasing need for these services and partnerships that make it possible for CAP to increase its program capacity. Mr. Arnold stated that 63

Rochester homes were weatherized last year. He added that CAP has seen increasing heating system failures due to extreme cold. Also, Eversource funding sources are being used on a Rochester Housing Authority project at Cold Springs Manor.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if they are able to find contractors in the current employment market. Mr. Arnold replied that there have been difficulties as lots of contractors are retiring, which results in a thirty to sixty day delay in starting projects. Ms. Andrews Parker added that CAP has a preference for local contractors and is working with local educational and vocational institutions to help build up the local energy efficiency industry workforce.

Councilor Lauterborn asked about the non-CDBG funding request. Ms. Andrews Parker replied that this funding is used for all other CAP programs, such as food assistance, employment assistance, and Head Start.

Ms. Silsby from EasterSeals/The Homemakers stated that the Homemakers and EasterSeals have merged due to the Homemakers' financial difficulties, reducing overhead costs. The EasterSeals merger has allowed the expansion of services into Strafford County to a greater extent. Services include home care and adult "day out" services. In the last year 195 Rochester residents were served. Ms. Silsby added that most funding is through Medicaid reimbursement, but this reimbursement doesn't cover the full costs of services.

Councilor Lauterborn asked what has changed since the EasterSeals merger. Ms. Lanciano replied that there has been a stabilization in organizational leadership and that EasterSeals/The Homemakers is now looking to grow.

Ms. Reynolds from Cornerstone VNA stated that Cornerstone VNA provides home health care services, including palliative care and telehealth services. Other programs include a perinatal program, pediatric services, and services for Alzheimer's patients.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if the funding request is determined by formula. Ms. Reynolds replied that it is determined by per capita.

Mr. Burns from SOS Recovery Center stated that for next year SOS Recovery Center is requesting both CDBG and general city funding to support its substance use disorder recovery programming. This year SOS Recovery Center has served over 200 Rochester residents, 181 of those residents served at the Rochester location specifically. Mr. Burns added that SOS Recovery Center is also receiving referrals from the police to help reduce recidivism. He also stated that recent years have seen reductions in overdose calls to the police, which Mr. Burns believes is attributable to SOS Recovery Center's services.

Councilor Gray asked about Hepatitis B and C rates among residents with substance use disorders. Mr. Burns replied that, as SOS Recovery Center is a non-medical model, he doesn't have that data. Councilor Gray asked about the implementation of a regional "hub and spoke" model, and Mr. Burns replied that SOS Recovery Center is working with local hospitals to coordinate and reduce duplicative efforts.

Ms. Eastwood from Strafford Nutrition Meals on Wheels stated that their meal assistance program serves all of Strafford County but the requested CDBG funds would be used only for Rochester residents. Current state and federal funding does not cover all of the costs of the program.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if Meals on Wheels receives county funding. Ms. Eastwood replied that Meals on Wheels receives \$2,500 per month from the Strafford County. She added that Meals on Wheels does not deliver on Wednesdays due to budget restrictions. Councilor Lauterborn asked if there is any private funding, and Ms. Eastwood replied that Meals on Wheels can request donations from clients but cannot require clients to pay.

Ms. Grassie from Rochester Child Care Center stated that fire codes have changed since the building was first built and that fire sprinkler upgrades are required. She added that the center provides year-round child care services, including before and after school care, and serves about over 100 children. A large percent of the center's clients are low-income and receive free or reduced lunch.

Mr. Bickford stated that the current fire marshal suggested that Rochester Child Care get an independent consultant to review the building's code upgrade needs. The fire sprinkler system was identified as the top priority. Other needed work include fire doors for egress and for the classrooms. The Rochester Child Care Center is hoping to not need a design consultant for the work.

Ms. Grassie mentioned that the CDBG request is only for about 35% of the project costs. Councilor Lauterborn asked where the remainder of the funding is coming from, and Ms. Grassie replied that it will be coming from the center's capital reserves.

Ms. Perron from Bridging the Gaps/Seacoast Youth Services stated that Bridging the Gaps is a youth prevention program that is seeing the end of its ten-year Drug Free Communities federal grant. Bridging the Gaps has entered into a relationship with Seacoast Youth Services to continue the program. The program is looking at the former Hair Excitement building (39 S. Main St.) to use as a teen center, in partnership with Frisbie Memorial Hospital.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if Ms. Perron would be the only Rochester-based employee, and Ms. Perron said she would be, at least initially. She added that there would be intern support. Councilor Lauterborn asked what the CDBG funding would be supporting, and Ms. Perron replied that it would support the center's utilities costs. Councilor Bogan asked if the center will be open just between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Ms. Perron replied that this will be true only for the afterschool programming but that day programming is also anticipated, such as for out-of-school suspended students.

Councilor Lauterborn asked Mr. Long to compile information on Seacoast Youth Services for the Community Development Committee members. Mr. Long stated he would do so.

Ms. Stone from Cross Roads House stated that Cross Roads House provides homeless shelter services for the Greater Seacoast area. She added that this past year was the first year the shelter served more clients from Strafford County than from Rockingham County. She stated that Cross Roads House is the largest and lowest barrier shelter in the region and that two-thirds of the agency's funding comes from private donations.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if the shelter receives funds from welfare departments. Ms. Stone replied that Cross Roads House does not receive funds from the Rochester Welfare Office. Councilor Hutchinson asked Ms. Stone to expand on the meaning of low barrier. Ms. Stone replied that the only persons ineligible for entry are sex offenders and arsonists. Persons with substance use disorders can be admitted.

Ms. Joseph of MY TURN stated that the agency is a youth workforce development agency. She added that MY TURN has partnered with Spaulding High School students in the ATEC program and has expanded its focus on the manufacturing industry. MY TURN also receives Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding through the U.S. Department of Education. Ms. Joseph added that they see a lot of parents, homeless persons, and persons with substance use disorders among their clients.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if the Rochester location is still on Hanson Street. Ms. Joseph replied that the office has moved to Winter Street, next to the Walgreen's. Ms. Basham added that MY TURN has placed seven interns with EasterSeals/The Homemakers, as well as clients placed with Rochester Child Care Center.

Mr. McLain from the East Rochester Public Library gave a brief overview of the library's history and stated that the library building needs considerable renovation work. He stated that the City of Rochester once gave the library \$15,000 per year but that recent funding has dropped to \$5,000 per year. The library is requesting general city funds to support a reinstituted children's literacy program and CDBG funding for building renovations. Mr. McLain added that many of the library's patrons do not or cannot use the main Rochester library due to transportation issues or due to discomfort with a larger library.

Councilor Bogan left the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Councilor Lauterborn asked if the building wouldn't also be eligible for historic preservation grants. Mr. McLain replied that the library has explored such funding as well as other grant opportunities but have not received any word back yet.

	<p>Ms. Beebe from HAVEN stated that HAVEN is the result of a merger between A Safe Place and Sexual Assault Support Services and now the largest provider of services for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors in the region. Since the merger, HAVEN has seen an increase in demand for services and has created a Housing First program for its clients. Ms. Beebe added that HAVEN has served 545 Rochester residents.</p> <p>Ms. Hardekopf from the Homeless Center for Strafford County (HCSC) stated that the shelter is seeking funds for a new location as its current lease with Waste Management ends in 2021. Ms. Levesque added that Waste Management is reconfiguring its property. Ms. Hardekopf stated that HCSC is seeking to increase its current capacity in finding its new location. She added that HCSC has a unique two-generation approach that provides specific services for homeless children.</p> <p>Councilor Lauterborn asked if HCSC is seeking a new location that is still in Rochester. Ms. Hardekopf stated that they are. Councilor Lauterborn asked if they are considering downtown. Ms. Hardekopf replied that they have focused on properties that are in areas zoned to allow homeless shelters to avoid neighbor resistance.</p> <p>Councilor Hutchinson asked what barrier level the HCSC is. Ms. Hardekopf replied that they serve a wide range of clients but must receive a substance test prior to entry and be substance free. She added that she would classify HCSC as low to medium barrier. Councilor Hutchinson asked if HCSC bills the municipalities for background checks or substance tests. Ms. Hardekopf stated that HCSC does not bill the municipalities for these costs.</p>
FY 2019-2020 CDBG ANNUAL ACTION PLAN – Review of Draft	<p>Mr. Long presented a brief overview of the draft action plan for FY 2019-2020. As the City of Rochester has not yet received its FY 2020 grant allocation, Councilor Lauterborn suggested that the Community Development Committee make contingency plans for funding in case the city ultimately receives less funding or more funding than the current estimated funding level.</p>
PROGRAMS REPORT – CDBG Projects, Other Grant Projects	<p>Mr. Long stated that the Rochester Housing Authority permanent supportive housing project on Charles St. is being placed on hold due to a continued funding gap but that he is working with the housing authority to see if other funding can be located. Mr. Long also mentioned that he has resigned as the Rochester</p>

	representative to the COAST board of directors. City Manager Blaine Cox remains as the Rochester alternate representative. Mr. Long added that he has made suggestions to Mr. Cox for potential replacements to the COAST board.
OTHER BUSINESS	There was no other business.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Next Meeting – Monday, February 11, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in Isinglass Conference Room in City Hall Annex (33 Wakefield Street)

Topics – FY 2019-2020 CDBG Annual Action Plan, Projects Program Report, JOB Loan Program Report