



# Rochester City Council

## Community Development Committee

### MEETING MINUTES

**Laura Hainey, Chair**  
**Harlan "Skip" Gilman**  
**Tim Fontneau**  
**Amy Malone**  
**John Larochele**

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Monday, February 28, 2022	
<b>Members Present:</b>	Laura Hainey Skip Gilman Tim Fontneau John Larochele Amy Malone	<b>Members Absent:</b> None
<b>Guests/Staff:</b>	Julian Long, Rochester Community Development Coordinator Rad Nichols, COAST Deanna Strand, Dover Adult Learning Center Bob Arnold, Community Action Partnership of Strafford County Susan Ford, My Friend's Place Tracy Hardekopf, Homeless Center for Strafford County Laurie Duff, Easter Seals Mandy Lancaster, Waypoint NH	

Councilor Hainey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Motion was made by Councilor Larochele to approve the January 24, 2022 meeting minutes and was seconded by Councilor Malone. The motion passed unanimously.

<b>PUBLIC INPUT</b>	There was no public input.
<b>FY 2023 GRANT APPLICATION PRESENTATIONS</b>	<p>Mr. Long provided a brief overview of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which are federal funds through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for activities and projects benefitting low to moderate income residents. The grant caps awards for operating expenses (as opposed to bricks-and-mortar projects) at 15% of the overall annual grant award.</p> <p>Some organizations presented in-person before the committee in the Cocheco Conference Room, and some organizations presented via Zoom video conferencing. All committee members were present in-person in the Cocheco Conference Room, as was Mr. Long.</p> <p><u>Rad Nichols, COAST (Zoom)</u></p> <p>Mr. Nichols stated that COAST's municipal funding grant request was updated to reflect the COAST Board of Directors' final formula budget</p>

allocations. This amount is slightly less than the November 2021 estimate. COAST provides public transportation throughout the Seacoast region.

Councilor Fontneau asked if the funding request is for general operational support. Mr. Nichols replied that the funding will support COAST's operational costs for Rochester route services and ADA services, as well as proportional costs for capital needs.

Councilor Hainey asked about COAST's other funding sources. Mr. Nichols replied that COAST receives federal funding through the Department of Transportation that covers about 60% of the organization's operational budget. He added that COAST also receives about \$35,000 per year through the state.

Councilor Hainey asked about the current cost for bus fare. Mr. Nichols replied that the cost is \$1.50 per trip or 75 cents for elderly residents or residents with disabilities. Mr. Nichols also added that COAST is piloting a free bus transfer program.

#### Deanna Strand, Dover Adult Learning Center (Zoom)

Ms. Strand stated that Dover Adult Learning Center (DALC) is requesting CDBG funds for its HiSET (high school-equivalency) testing preparation program. Ms. Strand mentioned that DALC also provides educational services for non-native English learners, dual-enrolled youth, post-secondary transition services, and other educational services for adult learners. Rochester students are served at DALC's Rochester location within First Church Congregational on South Main Street.

Councilor Malone asked how DALC receives its referrals and promotes its programs. Ms. Strand replied that DALC works with high schools and local non-profit agencies, along with its website and catalog, to advertise programs and services. Councilor Malone asked how many ESL students are from Rochester, and Ms. Strand replied that there have been about 65 students from Rochester from 2017 to 2022.

#### Bob Arnold, Community Action Partnership (Zoom)

Mr. Arnold stated that Community Action Partnership of Strafford County (CAP) has served over 10,000 households since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assistance has included services for homeless residents, emergency rental assistance, fuel assistance, and food assistance. The number of Rochester residents served has been over 450 residents.

Councilor Malone asked how many Rochester residents have received weatherization program assistance. Mr. Arnold replied that over 100 Rochester residents have received weatherization assistance this year. Councilor Fontneau asked how much funding has been spent on

Rochester weatherization in total, and Mr. Arnold replied that it is about \$1.3 million.

Susan Ford, My Friend's Place (Zoom)

Ms. Ford stated that My Friend's Place has been open since 1989 as a homeless shelter that serves men, women, and children and provides case management services. This year, about 36% of all clients are Rochester residents. In addition to emergency shelter, My Friend's Place has several transitional housing units. Ms. Ford mentioned that the shelter helps save the city money by providing sheltering services that the city would otherwise have to pay for through motel room stays.

Councilor Malone asked what My Friend's Place's case management looks like. Ms. Ford replied that there is a full-time case manager who does an initial assessment of each client in terms of identification document needs, health and mental health needs, disabilities, job readiness, etc. Councilor Malone then asked how many clients successfully exit the shelter into permanent housing. Ms. Ford replied that recently it was about a third of clients.

Councilor Fontneau asked if the shelter only has one bed. Ms. Ford says there is one main shelter that has expanded its capacity in recent years, as well as four apartments for transitional housing. Councilor Fontneau asked about the impact of lack of affordable housing on the shelter. Ms. Ford replied that recently the shelter has seen a change from homeless single clients to homeless families.

Tracy Hardekopf, Homeless Center for Strafford County (in person)

Ms. Hardekopf stated that the shelter is seeking to install solar panels to reduce its energy costs, currently about \$500 to \$700 per month, especially as the shelter's agreement with Waste Management that previously covered such costs has ended. Councilor Larochelle asked where the shelter is located, and Ms. Hardekopf stated that the new shelter is located at 202 Washington Street.

Councilor Malone asked how many people the shelter serves and how the shelter building is used during the off-season. Ms. Hardekopf replied that the Homeless Center for Strafford County is in discussions with Friends Forever International to allow its usage of the shelter building during the off-season. Ms. Hardekopf added that current budgetary constraints prevent the shelter from being open year-round.

Councilor Hainey asked whether the shelter serves only Rochester residents. Ms. Hardekopf replied that the shelter serves everyone but focuses on Strafford County residents. Ms. Hardekopf also mentioned that the shelter offers an aftercare program that helps resident maintain permanent housing once they exit the shelter.

	<p>Councilor Malone asked whether the solar panels projects would provide tax credits for the city, and Ms. Hardekopf stated she was uncertain and would check. Mr. Long also said he would research the question.</p> <p><u>Laurie Duff, Easter Seals (Zoom)</u></p> <p>Ms. Duff stated that Easter Seals provides home health care services and an adult day program. This year Easter Seals served 136 individuals in home care 24 individuals in adult day program, and 45 individuals living with dementia. Ms. Duff also mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased demand for services.</p> <p>Councilor Fontneau asked whether the municipal funding request is for general operational expenses. Ms. Duff replied that the funds will go toward uncompensated care for both in-home services and the adult day program.</p> <p><u>Mandy Lancaster, Waypoint NH (in person)</u></p> <p>Ms. Lancaster stated that Waypoint NH serves youth who are either unstable housed or homeless. The Waypoint NH CDBG funding request is to support its outreach team. Provided services include food, clothes, rapid rehousing, other housing assistance, and general case management services.</p> <p>Councilor Hainey asked about the number of Rochester youth served, and Ms. Lancaster replied that Rochester youth are about 25% of Waypoint NH's total clients. Last year there were between 40 and 125 Rochester individuals, based on current data, and Ms. Lancaster mentioned that Waypoint NH hopes to have more accurate and specific numbers next year.</p> <p>Councilor Fontneau asked whether Waypoint NH is a new program. Ms. Lancaster stated that Waypoint is expanding within Rochester at the moment due to identified need. There are now four full-time Waypoint staff dedicated to outreach. Councilor Fontneau asked about Waypoint NH's other funding sources, and Ms. Lancaster replied that it comes from federal grants, Frisbie Memorial Hospital grants, and fundraising and donations.</p>
<b>FY 23 CDBG GRANT APPLICATIONS</b>	The committee discussed the grant presentations and funding considerations. The committee agreed to postpone making its funding recommendations until after hearing from the Welfare Director at the March meeting.
<b>FY 23 MUNICIPAL GRANT APPLICATIONS</b>	The committee discussed the grant presentations and funding considerations. The committee agreed to postpone making its funding recommendations until after hearing from the Welfare Director at the March meeting.
<b>FY 23 DRAFT CDBG ANNUAL</b>	Mr. Long gave a brief overview of the draft Annual Action Plan and encouraged committee members to contact him with any questions.

<b>ACTION PLAN – First Review</b>	
<b>PUBLIC FACILITIES NAMING POLICY – Draft</b>	Councilor Hainey gave a brief overview of the history of the desire for a formalized public facilities naming policy. The committee members discussed the draft policy and the suggested revisions offered by an interested resident. Councilor Larochelle suggested that it should be clarified whether all objectives must all be met or whether just any objective must be met. Mr. Long stated he would incorporate the suggested revisions and present a revised draft of the policy at the March committee meeting.
<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM REPORT</b>	Mr. Long gave a brief overview of recent CDBG program activities. He mentioned that both the Gafney Home and Easter Seals affordable housing projects have received preliminary awards of state CDBG CARES Act funds, in the respective amounts of \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.
<b>OTHER BUSINESS</b>	Mr. Long stated that he met with Government Channel Coordinator Celeste Plaia to discuss the ability to record committee meetings but that the City Hall Annex will not have the technological capability to do so in the near future.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

**Next Meeting** – Monday, March 21, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., Cocheco Conference Room, City Hall Annex, 33 Wakefield St.

**Topics** – FY 23 CDBG Grant Applications, FY 23 Municipal Grant Applications, FY 23 Draft CDBG Annual Action Plan, Public Facilities Naming Policy, Community Development Program Report