

City of Dunkirk

Meeting Minutes

Economic Development Committee

August 30, 2012

Attendees: Andy Gonzalez, Councilman
Stephanie Kiyak, Council Member-At-Large
Steve Neratko, Director of Planning and Development
Tim Gornikiewicz, CDBG Administrator, Planning and Development Department
Mayor A.J. Dolce
Councilwoman Stacy Szukala, Guest
City Attorney Ron Szot, Guest
City Clerk Lacy Lawrence
Gib Snyder, Observer

Absent: Bill Rivera, Councilman

Call to Order: 1:10 pm

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: Since Bill Rivera was absent meeting minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

Issues Discussed:

First item discussed was the CDBG program. Steve Neratko, Director of Planning and Development, stated that there were concerns with how funds were allocated in the previous year. HUD has indicated that the program needs a larger percentage of funds to be used for public services and less funding allocated for demolitions. Funds have been increased in the administration line, and it is this extra funding that will be used to hire Harry Sichermann and Travis Gordon. An RFP was presented and Sichermann and Co. was the only firm to respond. Steve assured us that he is well known for his expertise in CDBG requirements and his key roll will be to assist with past problems and help put together program/protocol for future. Steve went on to say that his background includes having worked for HUD for many years and that he considers this assignment a “small project” in his opinion. Some of the reporting is due by September 31, 2012. His allocated allowance is \$15,000, and Steve feels that he will be able to complete his tasks before the money runs out. In addition, he’s already worked with the city and DLDC about 20 years ago. Details of his contract will be outlined separate from the resolution put forth to Council at the September 4, 2012 meeting. His pay will come out of 2012 CDBG plan.

Steve went on to talk about hiring Travis Gordon, who will be handling the 5-year plan. Steve explained that due to the size of the city and the amount of CDBG funds that HUD recommends either a professional group or a college graduate student. The 1-year plan will be handled by the department with assistance from Travis – both plans are due on the same day to HUD (2013 plan rolls into 5-year plan). Travis will be paid \$5,000 for his services, which will be paid from CDBG funds.

Discussion ensued about the details of the Council Action Plan for CDBG funds (resolution will be submitted at Council meeting held 9/4) – Steve mentioned that funds can only be used on residential streets and not on commercial streets, and that a large portion will be saved for next year to fix roads throughout the city. State roads are not eligible. Some of the areas money can go towards include curbs, sidewalks, garbage and recycling receptacles. These funds will be utilized for City property only, as well as for a tree program (discussed later on in detail) First time home buyers and senior citizens are also eligible. Religious organizations are eligible and would be required to submit a letter of interest outlining how they plan on allocating the funds. Some funds will also go to youth programs. Dispersal of funds will need preapproval by the Council. A press release will be issued to further inform the public of details about the program, as well as information posted on the City website.

Boardwalk:

Steve said that we are currently having issues with one tenant and hoped that the situation would be resolved today, one way or another.

Stacy said there was a complaint from a youth group that went to the boardwalk with packed lunches. They sat at the picnic tables and Papaya Arts owner came out to tell them they had to leave – it was discussed that this is not appropriate behavior and that this is public access, whether you make a purchase or not. It was questioned whether the tenants have anything in writing about the rights of the city and the boardwalk tenants, and it was stated by the City Attorney that currently there is no policy in writing in place. AJ assured us that he would address this issue directly with Papaya Arts. At this time a Boardwalk Association does not exist.

All Boardwalk tenants are paid up to date except for one. If/when this tenant leaves AJ said that we will be soliciting RFPs from the public for this spot.

Tree program

Steve has procured money from 2 grants as well as CDBG money and wants to put together a “Tree Program”, combining the funds for various projects, both residential and commercial. He assured us that proper oversight with regards to reporting will be done so that although monies are combined they will be spent according to the programs that funded.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councilman Gonzalez, seconded by Council Member-At-Large Kiyak, at 1:47pm.