



TOWN OF WARE

Planning & Community Development

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Minutes from April 9, 2018

Community Development Authority

Meeting held at Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA

Authority members present: T. Opalinski, D. Souza, B. Cooper, J. Carroll

Authority members absent: P. Opalinski (excused)

Staff present: Rubén Flores-Marzán, Director
Judi Mosso, Assistant to the Director

Public: Ted Harvey (PVPC), Gina Govoni, Sheila Cuddy (Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation), Stuart Beckley (Town Manager)

T. Opalinski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed new member John Carroll; some items were taken out of order.

1. Administrative

- a. Minutes of February 12, 2018 – Motion by D. Souza to accept the minutes as presented. Seconded by J. Carroll.
- b. May meeting date – The CDA's May meeting date is the same date as Annual Town Meeting. The CDA agreed to hold their May meeting on May 21 at 6:30.
- c. Invoice payment request for home heating oil from Town Manager – The Town Manager asked for this item to be removed but the agenda had already been posted. No discussion of invoice.

2. Updates

- a. CDBG
 - i. FY2016 Prospect Street/Bank & Spring – 2 signs at Prospect St. will be replaced soon; a small sinkhole has developed that will also be repaired.

After the retainer is released, there will be approximately \$20,000 left in the grant which must be expended by June 30; installing more sidewalk is ill-advised since the design would be cost-prohibitive. If we were to support the Quaboag Connector ride service, it would need to meet procurement requirements; HR is always an appropriate option. There will be a public hearing next month about how to spend the surplus.

Bank and Spring design have been completed. Spring Street construction, including sewer, was included in the FY2018 application submitted last month.

- ii. FY2017 WRV (w Warren & Hardwick) – This grant mainly supports Housing Rehabilitation and the social service programs; programs are progressing smoothly. Rubén Flores-Marzán discussed Opportunity Zones (OZ), which is a federal capital gains tax incentive program for economically depressed areas such as our mill yard; the OZ target areas are based at the US Census Bureau Census Tract level; greatest benefits are to those who inject private investment in the OZs for 10+ years.
 - iii. FY2018 applications (Ware and WRV) - See above re Spring Street; application was submitted last month; T. Harvey will provide a copy of the final Program Income Plan (PIP). Social Services will be supported through the WRV grant (Warren is lead). There was brief discussion about 73 West Main Street (burned down); Building Inspector Chris Rice sent memo to BOS on March 30 recommending that the town buy it for \$2,000.
- b. YMCA matching grant – program representatives will be invited back in May to submit final documentation for the match grant; May will be the final month to consider the match since the CDA has new DHCD obligations for Program Income. D. Souza will follow up with schools and PVPC to see if the program can be housed at the school.
3. Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation
- a. Support for Quirk Financial Fitness (IDA) program – the CDC's application to TD Bank for the IDA was not approved (TDB wants to support newer programs); S. Cuddy gave summary of IDA program; the program costs \$40,000 to run and they are looking for funding by the end of June.
 - b. QVCDC loan update – S. Cuddy reported that there is no change to their tenants: one for-profit, two non-profits. She spoke about the benefit of having WALC and the PATCH program in the same building. The building needs many repairs and snow plowing has been costly this winter; they are not in a position to pay off the loan and would like it forgiven (term ends November 2021).

- c. Sprinkler fund – Rubén Flores-Marzán, J. Mosso, and S. Cuddy met to discuss the possibility for a sprinkler fund to assist Main Street business owners. The program could be administered similar to our Economic Development Loan Fund. There was lengthy discussion about sprinkler systems, requirements, possibly incentives, how best to collaborate. CDA will discuss possibility of a pilot program after reviewing the financial report in May.
4. First Time Home Buyers (FTHB) Program – Gina Govoni from Way Finders (WF - formerly HAP Housing, Inc.) presented their FTHB program.

PROGRAM SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

- Some graduates of program were not ready to purchase so WF also helped with loans
- Landlord classes are \$129/pp and could be offered in Ware; class is required for participation in some programs
- Belchertown used Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to support FTHB
- Could be used for 2-family and multi-family homes; 95% are SFH
- If funded through CDBG, there is a cap (varies by community); requires small homeowner contribution
- Must have "earned monthly income"
- FTHB classes have improved over time, are more accessible and offered on line
- Course "Orientation to Home Ownership" is offered first and can be done online
- Valley CDC offers these classes but not many Ware attendees

There was lengthy discussion about what programs are offered where and by whom. WF does not have a strong Ware presence because local organizations offer local services. Palmer and Belchertown have similar services.

5. Other – none.
6. Adjourn – Motion by T. Opalinski to adjourn at 8:29 pm. Seconded by B. Cooper.

*Respectfully submitted by
Judi Mosso, Assistant to the Director*

Documents reviewed:

Minutes from February 12, 2018

Documents received:

FY2018 CDBG final budgets

FY2017 Hardwick Senior Outreach Program report

March PATCH report

- Opportunity Zones handout
- Draft Sprinkler Fund process flowchart
- PowerPoint slides print out from Way Finders