

Grants Committee Meeting

September 8, 2021

MINUTES

Members Present:

Stephen Reeb, Chairman
Susan Gruberman, Asst. Chairman
Willie Dancy
Scott Greenwald

Members Excused:

Roy Mosley, Jr.
Richie Meile
Ken Sharkey

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Executive Director
Jennifer Little, Executive Assistant/Special Projects Specialist
Jennifer Johnson, Fiscal Manager

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Chairman Stephen Reeb took called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the IGD Administrative Conference Room and took roll call.

Attendees rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Reeb asked if there were comments from the public on the agenda. There were no comments.

Upon a motion by Mr. Sharkey and a second by Mr. Greenwald the minutes from the July 14, 2021 Grants Committee meeting were approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dancy, and a second by Ms. Gruberman the letter from the Grants Committee Chairman to the County Board Chairman transmitting the payroll and expense claims for the month of July, 2021 was approved unanimously.

Upon a motion by Ms. Gruberman, and a second by Mr. Greenwald, the Check Register Summaries for the pay periods in the month of July, 2021 were approved unanimously and placed on file.

There were no questions concerning the Community Services Group and the reports were placed on file.

There were no questions concerning the Community Development Group and the report was placed on file.

There were no questions concerning the Workforce Development Group and the report was placed on file.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dancy, and a second by Mr. Sharkey, the Community Services, Community Development, and Workforce Development Group reports were approved unanimously and placed on file.

Resolutions

None

Old Business

None

New Business

A. Director's Report

Rick Stubblefield stated Workforce Development received the results of their monitoring; there were no fiscal or programmatic findings. He expressed it was a difficult year navigating through the pandemic; it was a challenge to get people into training with schools closed; the program utilized work-based learning and apprenticeships. He expressed no findings is fantastic.

Mr. Stubblefield informed members IGD has been awarded a new water payment program; income eligible participants will be able to get assistance on water and sewer bills. The grant will be just under \$1 million per year. Chairman Reeb asked if the program goes along with LIHEAP. Mr. Stubblefield responded yes, they will be very similar. Mr. Dancy asked if the funding was part of the infrastructure bill. Mr. Stubblefield responded no; it is a completely new program and is not funded by COVID or CARES Act funding. Ms. Gruberman asked if applications will be similar to LIHEAP and come through the Grants Department. Mr. Stubblefield responded yes. Ms. Gruberman asked about the funding source. Mr. Stubblefield responded it is state funding.

Mr. Stubblefield stated Community Development took rehabilitation program pre-application requests last week. The lottery drawing is scheduled for next month. Mr. Stubblefield noted an issue for both the Community Development and Weatherization programs is the lack of contractors; both programs have been unable to get contractors to bid on jobs. He stated it is becoming a significant struggle.

Mr. Stubblefield stated LIHEAP will reopen the beginning of September. He reminded members the program will run one month longer this year.

Mr. Stubblefield stated CSBG has funds available for assistance with rent, mortgage, water, sewer, and trash. He reminded members St. Clair County partnered with IHDA for the first round of Treasury funding and will likely do the same for the upcoming second round. Mr. Stubblefield stated St. Clair County is the fourth highest in the state behind Cook, Will, and Dupage counties in landlord applications submitted and funds expended. He noted St. Clair County landlords have received nearly \$5 million in assistance; another \$12 million in assistance is in the queue for applications currently in the review process. Those are applications that require additional documentation. Mr. Stubblefield stated St. Clair County also had the fourth highest applications submitted in tenant applications totaling an approximate \$6 million in additional assistance. He noted all applications total near \$20 million in assistance, far exceeding the original \$7.7 million allocation. Mr. Stubblefield stated IHDA anticipates a mortgage assistance program in the fall as well as a second round for rental assistance. Ms. Gruberman asked if mortgage assistance will be paid directly to the lender. Mr. Stubblefield responded yes.

Mr. Stubblefield stated there are thousands of job openings in the region ranging from service industry to advanced degree positions. Mr. Sharkey asked about the most unfilled category. Mr. Stubblefield responded trades and medical. He stated Workforce Development is partnering with BJC and St. Elizabeth's for a third cohort for CNAs, lab technicians, and medical assistants. Workforce Development expects to have 275 participants trained through those medical cohorts over the course of the next year. The program takes current employees in entry level positions such as food handling and housekeeping, pays for their courses and training, and moves them into those medical positions. Mr. Stubblefield noted dental hygienists, truck drivers, and technology/computer skills are in demand.

Other Comments

Mr. Dancy asked if applications are available for the rental assistance program. Mr. Stubblefield responded the IHDA Rental Payment Program that assisted with 12 months arrearage and 3 months forward is closed. He stated the IGD rental assistance program can assist with two months of arrearage; applicants call, are screened for initial eligibility, and are mailed an application. Mr. Stubblefield stated more than 60% of applications returned are submitted without the required documentation despite there being a checklist included with the application. Clients are contacted several times in an attempt to collect the missing documentation; applications are denied if the documents are not subsequently submitted. Mr. Dancy asked for a flyer with program phone numbers. Jennifer Little distributed IGD program description flyers to each member to distribute. Mr. Dancy asked if those in public housing are eligible for rental assistance. Mr. Stubblefield responded no; he explained public housing re-evaluates tenant income to determine their rent responsibility. If tenants lost income, reported it to HUD and had their income re-evaluated, HUD adjusted their rent accordingly.

Mr. Stubblefield informed members when LIHEAP reopens, applications will be provided to townships, cities, general assistance offices so applicants will not have to come to IGD. He is looking into placing application kiosks at various locations throughout the county that will provide applicants the opportunity to apply and scan their documents in one location. Ms. Gruberman asked about the location of the closest bus stop to IGD. Mr. Sharkey responded it stops across the street from the IGD building on A Street.

Adjournment

Chairman Reeb entertained a motion to adjourn. On a motion by Mr. Sharkey, and a second by Mr. Greenwald, motion passed and Chairman Reeb adjourned the meeting at 5:52 p.m.