

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

Carnegie Training Room

08:30 AM

Present:

Commissioner Randy Quick

Commissioner Craig McDaniel

Doug Walker- City- Public Information and Marketing- Public Information Officer

Mary Hardin Thornton- City- Finance- Project Manager

Cindy Reed- City- Finance- Grants Accountant/Internal Auditor

Dylan Nelson- City- Finance- Staff Accountant

Aundi Lesley- Downtown Development Authority- Director

Bekki Fox- City- Community Development- Director

Molly Majestic- City- Community Development- CDBG Coordinator

Logan Drake- City- Community Development- Administrative Program Assistant

David Crowder- Rome News Tribune- Staff Writer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM. Commissioner Craig McDaniel asked for any corrections to the minutes from the August 2022 meeting. Not hearing any, the minutes were approved by common consent.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)

Aundi Leslie:

- Leslie provided updates on DDA:
 - Fiddlin' Fest was a huge success by having the largest amount of both vendors and attendees for a DDA event. Commissioner Randy Quick thanked everyone involved for making the event happen. Commissioner McDaniel stated that he heard many positive reviews.
 - Work will soon begin on the roof for the Small Business Incubator. The bid for the architectural design RFP that is out will open on October 13, 2022. Leslie stated that Georgia Northwestern Technical College (GNTC) is excited to work with DDA on this project and its programming. Several vendors expressed interest as well.
 - Christmas decorations have been ordered and are already arriving. 2022 will be year one of making Downtown a holiday destination. A program has been created in the hopes that merchants will be involved with storefront decoration. Leslie added that there will be a couple of volunteer days in order to help decorate. DDA's goal is to everything put up by the Christmas Parade.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ROME-FLOYD LAND BANK AUTHORITY

Bekki Fox:

- Fox provided copies of the Monthly CDBG Program Report where the following was reviewed and discussed:
 - **Banty Jones Park:** An RFP was put out for Landscape Architectural Services in September 2022. Two bid proposals have been received. A bid proposal meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2022, where the proposals will be presented, reviewed, and scored. A decision will be made soon after. Various funding sources will need to be used. \$2 million should be on hand if the necessary changes are made to CDBG funds, local ARPA funds and Choice Neighborhood Initiative. In addition, staff is working on a \$2 million grant application for additional state ARPA funds. A waiver for reallocation of RLF Program funds to the park is being requested. An additional \$400,000 from the Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant has been committed to the project. The total budget for the park improvement project will be right over \$4.1 million. The original plan was to complete the project in phases but could be done all at once if said funds are approved.

- Action Items: In order to fully fund the Banty Jones Park project, previous years' CDBG funds that have not been spent would need to be reallocated, which the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) would encourage.
 - The Small Business Grant Program utilizes CDBG-CV (COVID) funds. Staff has not received an application in months due to the difficulty applicants face in connecting their financial loss back to the COVID-19 Pandemic. If the program were officially closed, the \$63,026 left could be reallocated.
 - The Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Grant Program also utilizes CDBG-CV (COVID) funds. While the program has been quite successful overall, applicants have recently had difficulties connecting their financial loss back to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The state of Georgia has a similar rental assistance program that applicants will be directed to. If the program were officially closed, the \$8,512.15 left could be reallocated.
 - There is \$204,553 from 2020 CDBG and \$172,474 from 2021 CDBG, which were originally going to be used for sidewalk improvements. Staff believes these funds could be spent quicker if allocated to Banty Jones Park. Discussion was had.

Work can begin on Banty Jones Park once the funds have been approved and allocated. After discussion, the Board acted as follows:

- Commissioner Quick motioned to approve allocating funds discussed above to the Banty Jones Park Improvements Project, which was seconded by Commissioner McDaniel. Motion Carried.
- Fox continued review and discussion of the CDBG Program Monthly Report:
 - **Home Rehabilitation Programs:** The Roof Repair Program and Exterior Paint Program are continuing to go well. In August, September, and October of 2022, six projects have been put out to bid. Unfortunately, two projects were over budget and could not be done. Another one is under contract and three are currently out to bid. The goal is to have those projects completed by the end of December.
 - **Rebecca Blaylock Child Development Center (RBCDC):** The rehabilitation project was completed in September 2022. RBCDC will host an open house on October 18, 2022, from 3:00-5:00 PM.
 - **Maple Street Sidewalks:** The last phase of the Maple Street Sidewalks project was completed in September 2022. No further funding has been allocated at this time. Continuing of improvements can be revisited after the completion of the Banty Jones Park project.
 - **Miscellaneous:** Staff recently attended the National Community Development Association Region IV Conference held in Augusta, GA. Fox and Land Bank Authority Manager Amanda Carter recently attended the Center for Community Progress conference held in Chicago, IL. Staff is currently working on project development and budgets for the 2023 CDBG funds.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 09:14 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Logan Drake
Recording Secretary