

City of Easton, Pa, Council Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2010

Easton, Pa.
Tuesday
September 7, 2010
6:00 P.M.

City Council met in stated session, at the above hour at St. John's Lutheran Church, 330 Ferry Street, Easton, Pa., to conduct a Public Hearing, regarding the 2010 CDBG Program.

ROLL CALL

Present: Kenneth Brown
Michael Fleck
Dr. Ruggles
Sandra Vulcano
Elinor Warner
Jeff Warner
Salvatore J. Panto Jr. (7)

Absent: (0)

Also in attendance were Rita M. Messa, Assistant City Clerk, William K. Murphy, City Solicitor, and Glenn Steckman, City Administrator. There were fifty-two other persons present in the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING **Proposed 2011 CDBG Program**

At 6:03 p.m., the first Public Hearing was held regarding the 2011 CDBG Program. Mayor Panto turned the meeting over to Mrs. Vulcano, Chairperson of the City Council's Economic Development Committee, who presided over the hearing. Mrs. Vulcano called the hearing to order, and read the following statement:

"The purpose of this evening's hearing is to evaluate the performance of the 2010 CDBG Program, assess the community needs for 2011, and to review the HUD criteria used to determine project fundability and eligibility under the national standards."

"Citizen input on the CDBG program is encouraged and any questions which may be raised by the Public or City Council will be addressed."

"Geoffrey Knight of Mullin & Lonergan will give a brief overview of the HUD criteria for use of the funds and will report on the 2010 expenditures to date."

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“Next community groups, which have submitted applications, for funding will be invited to make a presentation to Council, and the City’s administration will present its needs assessment.”

Mr. Fleck asked Mr. Murphy, City Solicitor if any council member serving on any of the boards that are making requests for funding would be a conflict of interest. Mr. Murphy stated that as long as there is no personal benefit to the council member there is no conflict.

Mr. Michael Brett, Community Development Specialist went over the 2010 expenditures to date.

Mr. Geoffrey Knight from Mullin & Lonergan Associates, Community Development Consultants, who went over the objectives of the requirements for the funding in the program, and gave an overview of the activities that were eligible and that were allowable for funding under the Community Development Block Grant program.

Mrs. Vulcano invited the local agencies to review, with Council, their needs and funding requests. She said that Council members had the individual requests, and had reviewed them. She suggested that when the individual organizations addressed Council, they highlight their priorities in their requests.

1. Greater Easton Development Partnership (GEDP) (Easton Ambassador’s Program)

Ms. Sandy Levisay, coordinator of the Ambassador’s Program came forward and went over their organization’s request for \$50,000 of CDBG funds which would help to keep this program active.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding this program and requests which were answered by Ms. Levisay.

2. Communities in School

Ms. Wendy Seifert, came forward and went over her organization’s request for \$10,000 of CDBG funds which would help to increase the level of mentoring services that this organization provides.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding this program and requests which were answered by Ms. Seifert.

3. NIAPA

No representative was present at the hearing.

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4. Minsi Trials Council, BSA

Mr. Jim Gillick came forward and went over his organization's request for \$15,000 of CDBG funds for the Urban Scouting Program.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding the request which were answered by Mr. Gillick.

5. Easton Area Community Center

Ms. Anita Mitchell, Executive Director came forward and went over her organization's request for \$6,000 of CDBG funds which would be used for restroom improvements and drinking fountains at the center.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding the request which were answered by Ms. Mitchell.

6. Salvation Army

No representative was present at the hearing.

7. Easton Emergency Squad

Mr. John Nicholas, Director, came forward and went over his organization's request for \$115,408 of CDBG funds which would allow for staffing enhancements.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding the request which were answered by Mr. Nicholas.

8. Center for Independent Living

Mr. Greg Bott came forward and went over his organization's request for \$10,000 of CDBG funds which would be used toward salaries and operation expenses.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding the request which were answered by Mr. Bott

9. Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) Lehigh Valley

Ms. Susan Gotwald came forward and went over her organization's request for \$5,450 of CDBG funds which would be used for salaries for the HOOP Program Staff.

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Council members made comments and asked questions regarding this request which were answered by Ms. Gotwall.

10. Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley Inc.

Mr. Jennings, Executive Director came forward and went over his organization's request for \$5,000, of CDBG funds, for their Homeownership Counseling program.

Council members made comments regarding this program.

11. Our Lady of Mercy

Ms. Nancy Bonfonti came forward and went over the request for \$28,032 of CDBG funds for sidewalk curb cuts.

There was some discussion on this request.

12. Easton Area Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Dr. Debbie Byrd, Board Member, came forward and went over her organization's request for \$53,238 of CDBG funds which would be used for staff salaries and benefits

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding this program which were answered by Dr. Byrd.

13. Boys and Girls Club

Ms. Elizabeth Butler came forward and went over her organization's request for \$15,000 which would be used for transportation for their after school programs.

Council members made comments and asked questions regarding this program which were answered by Ms. Butler.

14. Adult Skills Quest

Judith Brunswick, Director, came forward and went over her organization's request for \$1,600 of CDBG funds, for transportation for the people taking part in their program.

Mrs. Vulcano stated that Director Lippincott will e-mail council members work sheets for them to complete.

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Mayor Panto stated that these organizations, as well as the city, are having very hard times but his responsibility as Mayor is to provide basic services to the City and that any decisions made are in no way a reflection on the organizations that have made requests for CDBG funds.

Mrs. Vulcano read the following statement:

“On October 13, 2010, a second required Public Hearing will be conducted to review the Consolidated Plan including the proposed CDBG allocations.

“On October 27, 2010, at the regular Council meeting, the Resolution to adopt the Consolidated Plan for FY 2011 will be introduced.”

“On or before November 13, 2010, the CDBG application will be made to HUD.”

There were no further comments or questions made or asked by Council or the audience.

Mrs. Vulcano closed the Public Hearing at 7:31 P.M.

Rita M. Messa
Assistant City Clerk