

**PLANNING COMMISSION
A MEETING OF THE ST. CLAIR SHORES PLANNING COMMISSION
HELD ON MARCH 8, 2022, AT 7:00 P.M.,
CITY HALL-CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

PRESENT

Robert Hison
James Kalich
Lou Schelosky
Patrick McKay

ALSO, PRESENT

Liz Koto, Planning

ABSENT

Kathy Hanson, Excused
Anthony Stonik, Excused
Paul Doppke, Chairman, Excused
Jeff Mazzenga, Excused
Brandon Johnson, Excused
Ed Jones, Excused

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Schelosky called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Ms. Koto called the roll. Four members were present.

Mr. Koto explained that there is not a quorum of commissioners tonight; however, since no action is being taken, and no deliberation is occurring, then the hearing can still be held. Ms. Koto explained that the board may ask questions of the representatives for clarification purposes. She also explained that at the next meeting where there is a quorum, the board members who were absent tonight can vote on the budget because the synopsis of this meeting can serve as acceptable information for decision making purposes.

Vice Chairman Schelosky opened the public hearing.

CASE NO. PPC220010: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT - CDBG

Amelia Agnes Transitional Home-Perfecting CDC-\$22,500

VeronCia Daffin and Kara Black introduced the program. They are requested \$22,500 for the Amelia Agnes transitional home. The transitional home helps families escape the cycle of homelessness. Because of the city's assistance in the past, the shelter has been able to house women and children and assist them in being self-sufficient, improving credit, becoming employed, and reintegrating them back into society. All of this occurred in the midst of a pandemic. This request will support 10 clients over the period of 6 months. Hison asked how many people have been housed from SCS in the past two year. She answered that one resident has been served. Hison asked why they are increasing their request. Daffin explained that prior Planning Commission Meeting of March 8, 2022,

to this year they had a couple of other pots of money they could you use before, but they can't really use them anymore. They use a 12.50 per diem which would take a family for 6 months and then another pot of money could get them for another 6 months.

Macomb County Care House-\$13,200

Dorie Vasquez Nolan and Erica Hammill introduced themselves. Care House is the Macomb County Child Advocacy Center. They are located in Mt Clemens and a satellite in Warren. They are the only place in Macomb County for child investigation and advocacy. They are accredited with the National Children's Alliance. They pair up with law enforcement, local, state, and federal. Families are never charged for their services. 92 cents of every dollar are spent on serving the children. Several hundred of these children are from St. Clair Shores. In 2022, there have already been 9 children who have received services from St. Clair Shores. They are very grateful for past funding, and they are requesting \$13,200 to support up to 22 victims and families that live in St. Clair Shores. Please check them out on social media. Erica Hammill explained that she not only is an SCS resident and parent, but her son Wyatt was a victim who benefitted from the services of a Child Advocacy Center as he was shaken when he was an infant. Because so many families were home during the pandemic, they are finding that with children returning to school, many children are reporting abuse to their teachers that occurred during the pandemic. They believe there will be a sharp increase in victims because of the time at home. Hison explained that more people know about child abuse now than ever have before. He also questioned that if 92 cents of every dollar are used for the kids, then why is the staff employment level so high. Nolan explained that most are direct service employees who are allowed only to work with the children. Hison also noted that there are a lot of volunteers. Nolan explained that volunteers' hours can be considered as match.

MCREST-\$5,000

Judy Dudek, lead case manager for MCREST. They collaborate with more than 70 churches who provide 10s of thousands of shelter nights each year. Because of the pandemic, many warming centers shut down so MCREST took on the task of using hotels and now they can house up to 200 people at a time within 3 hotels. Rooms cost \$55 a night. They provide 3 meals a day, special programs, case management, and other programs to get people re housed. They supply linens and bus tickets to each person. Though the churches aren't hosting over night, they are still providing volunteers and meals. The church volunteers provide transportation to MCREST. They can also help with getting ID's, furnishings when they get housing, and other everyday burdens. Children also receive what they need to make a home such as beds and bedding. There is also a rental assistance program for those that qualify. MCREST provides down payment and up to 6 months of rental assistance for certain cases. They teach them how to become and stay independent by teaching them how to budget and spend money wisely. They also try to get them into jobs, teach them how to interview, provide professional clothing for interviews, and assist in resume and job application completion. MCREST will be opening a new women and children shelter next month. They will be able to house 46 women and children to the facility. They are requesting \$5,000 to house up to 550 people to continue to stay in hotels. Hison explained that St. Lucy's is assisting MCREST this week, and the parish was asked to provide toiletries and a few other items. Dudek explained that she was there when the homeless clients received the toiletries, and they were so excited to receive these items. They felt like somebody cared.

TURNING POINT-\$4,000

Karen Bates Gasior explained that Turning Point works for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. They have a 24-hour hotline which answers about 1000 calls a month. The emergency shelter has 52 beds, and that is what CDBG dollars support. She thinks they are

asking for \$4,0000. They also do community advocacy and housing. Now when women are leaving the shelter, Turning Point is available to help place them into transitional housing and permanent housing so the family will be intact and safe from their abuser. They are clustering their survivors. They own an apartment building and all the women and children they can house are in the complex where a community is formed of women and children who can share their experiences. They also do counseling at multiple locations. They also have a satellite office for counseling here in St. Clair Shores. They also do legal advocacy too. Turning Point operates the PPO office in Macomb County and assists at the court with them. They also do prevention and education in high schools. They also have a lot of volunteers and interns too. Finally, they have community engagement where survivors, who are willing to tell their story, explain it to the public. Hison said we are very pleased that you have a counseling location in St. Clair Shores, and he pointed out that they help St. Clair Shores families directly, and it is comprehensive in nature.

Maggie's Wigs 4 Kids of Michigan-\$3,000

Maggie Varney introduced herself and explained she is the founder and CEO. She provides wigs and support services to children throughout the entire state of Michigan. More than 50% of her children do have cancer, but they also help burn survivors, hydrocephalus, lupus, and trichotillomania. She has lived here her whole life and she couldn't think of another place to put her business but here in St. Clair Shores. Because of the improvement in technology in virtual meetings during the pandemic, there has been a significant decrease in the amount of time to create a wig. They've serviced 20% more children because of these new efficiencies. Over 5000 children have been serviced since they've started the program. This last year, The Lions built a raised therapy garden where chefs come and do a farm to table experience. They have a gym now too to help children gain their strength as well as counseling and other services. All of these are expansions over the services they used to provide. All of their professionals are volunteers. They also have interns that assist as well. There's no way they could afford the services of the professionals unless they did volunteer. Hison commended them for their hard work, and Kalich also told them that they are a beacon of light in a dark time for families. Varney explained that this is the only organization that provides such a holistic approach within the United States, and possibly the world.

Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers-\$1,500

Stacy Conti, outreach coordinator for Interfaith Caregivers. The need for support services for the elderly is growing dramatically and will continue to do so. For 29 years, they have been providing assistance to remain safely in their homes. Transportation, chores, respite breaks and other opportunities. The safe at home program provides assistance to adult low to moderate income seniors and physically challenged adults. They are requesting funds to increase the number of people they currently reach. They could serve 450 clients during the pandemic. This is their first year for applying for funds, but they are confident it will help more SCS residents. It will help them age in place safely as this is what they've seen in other communities where CDBG funds have been used. They have helped people replace a toilet, seal off rodent harborages, washing windows, changing locks, installing smoke alarms, and cleaning clutter. They are requesting \$1,500 this year and would like us to refer anyone to them who may need assistance. Hison explained this is another different way to help people. Conti confirmed that we have a high percentage of senior citizens. They help as many people as they can, even the weird requests.

MCWARM-\$15,000

Sean Nicholson explained that MCWARM operates out of St. Margaret's church. Fr. Ron and his team of volunteers and they serve meals every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to about 150

people. They get three meals while there, a hot meal and two cold meals to take with them. While there, they can shower, get their clothes laundered, and get new or additional clothing. The people who attend are homeless, some are not, some are down and out, senior citizens who need a friend are all participants. Most of the people who cook the meals are volunteers. They are very appreciative of the CDBG funds they've received. They recently lost a large donor, so they are trying to figure out how they're going to continue to fund raise. McKay explained that he needs to get there and volunteer. Hison explained that this is an ongoing thing that Fr Ron and the volunteers do three days every week making it successful.

Ms. Koto explained that the paper-only submittals should carry the same weight as the verbal only request as well as those that submitted paper requests and came to the meeting. Hison noted a few new requestors.

Vice Chairman Schelosky closed the public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by McKay, and supported by Kalich, to adjourn the Planning Commission Meeting at 8:05 p.m.

A ROLL CALL WAS TAKEN:

AYES: ALL

NAYS: NONE

ABSENT: HANSON, STONIK, DOPPKE, MAZZENGA, JOHNSON, JONES

MOTION: PASSED

[THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF A PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD.]