



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Councillor-at-Large McDonald, Chair
Councillor Condon, Vice-Chair
Councillor O'Malley
Councillor-at-Large Colon-Hayes
Councillor Simonelli
Councillor Linehan

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

6:00 PM

215 Pleasant Street
Room 105
Malden, MA 02148

Roll Call

Present: 4 - Councillor Paul Condon, Karen Colon Hayes, Chris Simonelli and Amanda Linehan

Absent: 2 - Councillor at Large Carey McDonald and Ryan O'Malley

Also Present: Council President Murphy, Councillor Crowe
Maria Luise-Mayor's Office
Zaheer Samee-Assistant City Solicitor
Alex Pratt-OSPCD

Councillor Condon, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM

Minutes to be Approved

Business

[160-23](#)

Order: That the Mayor be authorized to file an application for grants under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and the Cranston-Gonzalez Housing Act of 1990 (CDBG Budget).

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Mayor's CDBG Budget Letter](#)
[Mayor's Proposed FY24 CDBG Budget](#)
[Final Paper: 160-23](#)

Councillor Condon read Paper #160-23 into the record. Alex Pratt gave a brief update of the CDBG Budget. He explained we get an entitlement grant from HUD every year because we are a city of 50,000 people or more and the amount of money depends on the demographic of the community. Last year we had to make cuts but they have been reversed and we have made some good investments for the oncoming year. We have a prior unprinted balance in loan payoffs which out of consent of the prior year and they have been built into this budget which is \$1.9mill. We have increased our rehab program funding for the coming year in response to changes that we made in 2021. We saw a big increase in participants in the program because we have revised our financial policies and procedures which make it easier for low income people to afford to

participate in the program so we are increasing that line item accordingly. The affordable housing and rehab are worked on jointly by Wayne Martineau and Kevin Nestor and lead and healthy homes and other funds that can be used on rehab jobs. On the public services side we had thirteen public services apply this year. Physical Improvements has three projects include ADA improvements, new playground, walkway and safety improvements at Kierstead Park and also Fitzgerald Park which will help us clean up the park and expand into a playground, benches, tables and things like that. Planning, Admin & Management is our standard 20% entitlement amount which covers costs such as his Personnel costs all totaled the amount is \$235,000 is salary and benefits and the remainder of \$15,000 covers expenses for the CDBG Budget such as software, legal, closings and things of that nature. Section 108 Loan Repayments is principal and interest payments on Section 108 projects which include roads and the senior center rehab project. Last year we budgeted our first principal and interest payment which will not be due till August of 2024.

Councillor Simonelli asked about the \$16,500 allocated for the warming center Alex said that covers stipends for the costs of volunteers on hard to fill shifts and utilities only for the warming center not including the church.

Councillor Simonelli said he has a hard time funding the warming center at \$16,500. He said you are servicing people who are not living in Malden or have Malden ties. We are using CDBG money that should be calculated into a neighborhood who are from the city. Alex said homelessness is measured by where people live, from a HUD perspective, is if someone is homeless tonight in Malden they are considered a Malden resident.

Maria said we have a relationship with Revere and Lynn that if we are over capacitated we can bring people there.

Councillor Simonelli has had conversations with some of the people who stay in the warming center and ask what has brought them to this situation some of them say it is substance abuse and he offers help but if they are not ready they don't want help. His concern is the impact on his neighborhood whether it is overflow or when the warming center is closing the amount of people hanging around the neighborhood has been bad. He has called the Chief to ask to get people to move along. Since this has been identified as a problem he feels it is getting better. If we moved this to other parts of the City people would be complaining. As a City we are paying this money for people who are not Malden residents they are being brought in from outside of Malden to the warming center.

Alex said we have done a lot of work with other communities to work together and we have made a lot of progress. It is a work in progress.

Councillor Simonelli said he is not here to fight the CDBG Budget but he wants to voice the outcry for the constituents in his neighborhood. It's hard to tell my taxpayers, voters in the City that we are using their money to fund the warming center

Alex said there are important challenges that we need to overcome with the Warming Center and they have been acting in good faith and you have been acting in good faith. What we are talking about the CDBG budget for utilities and volunteer stipends that help keep the center running. That is not going to solve the problem but taking the funds away also will not solve the problem either but what till help is trying to attack these problems from all angles.

Councillor Simonelli said these are funds that could help the community and my constituents ask why they are being used for the warming center

Alex asked if he is proposing to shut down the warming center

Councillor Simonelli said he is not but he thinks it should be moved around the City. He said he is voting for this tonight but wants his neighborhood heard.

Councillor Colon-Hayes asked if there is some data to see if it is working and she wouldn't mind talking about other areas in the City for the warming center and making sure the money is being utilized for these programs.

Alex said we do have data for the warming center and will get it for them

Councillor Colon-Hayes asked if there is a limit of how many times they can apply for the grants

Alex said no but if a program is not doing well he will have a conversation with them to see how they can help to make it work

Councillor Murphy said in line with what Councillor Simonelli was saying she sees some of the issues happening in the morning with the morning center. She feels that Ward Five and Seven are seeing the problems. She has constituents that are apprehensive to use the bike path. She has listened to constituents saying that living in a neighborhood with a young girl going out to school and being afraid. She knows there is good work being done there but there are issues happening that we need to get a look at and it is unfair it is all happening in one area. She agrees with Councillor Simonelli and feels that somewhere in a central area outside of a neighborhood in downtown not near residencies. It conversation that should continue he has an issue but I have some of the issues also. Some things have improved but the fact that Pastor Wetstone doesn't want these people on his property but yet it's ok to be on other peoples property there is something wrong with that dynamic. This is a statement from the police trying to move people that are moving into the warming center area that they can't go there until such and such a time. Those are some of the things we need to talk through.

Motion was made by Councillor Simonelli to recommend Paper #160-23 and seconded by Councillor Colon-Hayes. Roll Call vote unanimous.

Motion was made by Councillor Simonelli to recommend Paper #161-23 and seconded by Councillor Colon-Hayes. Roll Call: vote unanimous.

A motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, that the Order be reported out favorably to the Full Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 4 - Councillor Condon, Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, Councillor Simonelli and Councillor Linehan

[161-23](#)

Order: The City of Malden file with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development a Consolidated Plan including applications for grants under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended and the Cranston-Gonzalez Housing Act of 1990 as amended to be administered by the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development for fiscal year 2024, including all understanding and assurances contained therein on or substantially in the form presented to this meeting; and that Gary Christenson, Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the City of Malden, be and hereby is directed and designated as the authorized representative for and in the name and behalf of the City of Malden to sign and file said plan, to act in connection with said plan, and to provide such additional information as may be required.

Sponsors: Carey McDonald

Attachments: [Mayor's CDBG Budget Letter](#)

[Mayor's Proposed FY24 CDBG Budget](#)

[Final Paper: 161-23](#)

A motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, that the Order be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Yea: 4 - Councillor Condon, Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, Councillor Simonelli and Councillor Linehan

Other Business

Adjournment

Motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, that this meeting be adjourned at 7:02 PM. The motion carried unanimously.