



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Chairperson Barbara Murphy
Vice Chair David Camell
Councillor Peg Crowe
Councillor Amanda Linehan
Councillor Deborah DeMaria
Councillor Jadeane Sica

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

5:30 PM

Remote Meeting

Roll Call

Present: 6 - Chairperson Barbara Murphy, Vice Chair David Camell, Peg Crowe, Amanda Linehan, Deborah DeMaria and Jadeane Sica

155-21

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Minutes to be Approved

Minutes of the March 23, 2021 meeting to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Jadeane Sica, seconded by Councillor Deborah DeMaria, that the minutes of March 23, 2021 be approved. The motion carried by the following vote: Camell-yes, Crowe-yes, DeMaria-yes, Linehan-yes, Sica-yes, Murphy-yes.

Present: 6 - Vice Chair David Camell, Peg Crowe, Amanda Linehan, Deborah DeMaria, Jadeane Sica and Barbara Murphy

Business

143-21

Order: That 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 Malden Redevelopment Authority for fiscal year 2022, 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: Barbara Murphy

Councillor Murphy called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Jon Miara and UMA will be recording the meeting. The following motion is made: Motion to take the CDBG in sections was made by Councillor Crowe and seconded by Councillor DeMaria. Roll Call: Camell-yes, Crowe-yes, DeMaria-yes, Linehan-yes, Sica-yes and Murphy-yes. Councillor Crowe explained she is employed by one of the organizations in the Public Services section and she will recuse herself when we get to that section. First order of business is Paper #143-21 CDBG Budget. The letter from the Mayor regarding this paper is read into the record. (see attached)

Deb Burke said basically stated in the Mayor's letter there was a lot of thought and internal deliberation with the budget before them this evening with meeting the challenges in the community now during Covid-19. Alex Pratt has done a lot of work on vetting and funding the various organizations and she hands it over to Alex.

Alex gives a brief overview of the budget it is similar to what we have seen in prior years the total entitlement from HUD went up slightly from \$1.405mill to \$1.412mill. He explained that the number of rehab projects has decreased this year due to Covid-19. There were 19 applications on the Public side and 18 were funded. Due to Covid-19 some groups did not apply this year. Physical Improvements include Devir Park funds for Master Plan, Fellsmere Pond Crosswalk which has been unsafe and the Linden Community Rink which will upgrade the existing community rink which improve the quality of play and expand the number of months to be in use. The Administrative budget is consistent and shows 20% of the CDBG budget. The final section is the Section 108 Loan which are existing loans. He also explained that last year the Council approved a section 108 loan and once the credit is approved by HUD and the funding is drawn the payments begin so you will see that in next year's budget.

Councillor Murphy begins by going over Sections 1,3,4&5 and then they will go over Section 2 and allow Councillor Crowe to recuse herself. Section 1 no questions. Section 3:

Councillor Winslow said he knows the Linden Community Rink came through as a Community Preservation project and there was \$50,000 funded for a feasibility study and he is aware Devir Park has had public meetings for their master planning, but he doesn't understand what will be funded with this and what kind of operation infrastructure is involved. In Somerville they did something similar and it became a much bigger project, he would like to understand the scope of this and he couldn't fairly vote for this funding unless the Council has been fully briefed of what this entails and what the Linden Rink is. He wants to see the feasibility study before approving any money.

Councillor DeMaria said she is happy to see additional \$50,000 for ADA sidewalk improvement and she knows the \$300,000 for Phase One for Devir is wonderful she has looked at that plan and of course the safety improvements on the Fells. She had a few questions about the Community Rink and asks if there is anyone at the meeting who could explain it and asks Alex if he could speak on it.

Alex explained that the planned use of the upgraded community rink would include anyone from the community to be using it and extended hours. He addressed the question from Councillor Winslow on where would they house a Zamboni and said that is all being considered however, right now this project is in the development phase where they are still securing funding from different parts of the budget which is not uncommon for the CDBG budget to fund a project at that phase. We are essentially making sure we have those funds to answer those questions and also make a construction budget. He mentioned Bread of Life last year who was still in development stage and they are now moving forward this year with their project. We do not have a final answer for all the questions at this stage but that is not uncommon for where we are at this stage.

Councillor DeMaria said she spoke to Charlie Conefrey and he is very much in support of this and gave her small numbers of hockey players, he said if we do move forward with this it could open up opportunities for children who might not of thought of playing hockey, she said the AD is definately on board with it. She also spoke with Bob Rotundi and said that rink dated back to Ward Eight, Councillor Bartlett and it has been used for street hockey and explained they used to freeze the parks so kids could skate on it. She said she has not seen many children skating this year. She envisions a Frog Pond open-air rink but would like to see the plans and she did go on the CPC public hearing but feels it was so long ago and maybe they could get those plans. She mentions she drove by Flynn Rink and it is a huge building and wonders if the grounds of Linden School could handle something like that. She feels the concept itself is awesome but

she cautions that utilizing the Federal HUD money if this is the right purpose that all our community will be able to use it.

Councillor Crowe said she loves each and every one of these projects and physical improvements and is really excited about the Community Rink and for a few years some adults have done Malden Comes Home which a street hockey group, she remembers when the parks were flooded but it was kind of choppy. She said this year when we see how open space is so important given kids who might not have thought of hockey that this a great addition safer than skating on Fellsmere Pond. She feels along with Devir Park this is a wonderful addition.

Councillor O'Malley he thinks they are all really great projects and congratulates Councillor Condon and Janell DeVitts holding meetings to see what the community wants. Speaking of Linden Community Rink he feels its a necessary thing for kids to have an outlet and this winter he has seen a lot of kids playing hockey on Fellsmere Pond and he knows of some instances where kids are falling in it definatley would be good to have a safer outlet for that instead of the danger of being over open water. He could be in support of this project but to Councillor Winslow's point it would be nice to see the long term cost to see what we have to do on the city side to maintain it.

Councillor Murphy said she understands what Councillor O'Malley and Winslow said but looking at last year's budget of \$100,000 for the Salemwood School she had an idea when she wrote the grant but didn't know what was truly involved until we got through the 25% design process but it is normal we do allocate these funds and get these ideas off the ground especially when we know they are good ideas. We knew fixing the Salemwood School tot lot was a good idea. We all seem to agree tonight as well as the number of folks Councillor DeMaria spoke to who are very active in our athletic community that this is a good idea and feels we should go ahead and support this this evening. This is not something we do that is out of the ordinary but what we do for most of the projects like Mr. Pratt had said and she is support of this.

Councillor Sica explained that this is the first year that this project is eligible for this funding and would be to get the project started and it will be an upgrade to the existing rink that is already there. It would be outdoors and open for the entire city's use it will be a huge asset to the community. They are working on the feasibility study and as soon as she has the plans she will send them out to everyone.

The following motion was made: Motion to approve the following sections of the CDBG budget: 1.Affordable Housing, 3.Physical Improvements, 4. Planning Administration and Management and 5. Section 108 Loan Repayments was made by Councillor Crowe and seconded by Councillor Sica. Roll Call Vote: 6-yes 0-no. All were in favor. Councillor Crowe made a motion to be recused from discussion of Section 2 of the CDBG budget 2. Public Services seconded by Councillor DeMaria. Roll Call Vote: 6-yes 0-no. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Councillor Crowe, seconded by Councillor Sica, that sections 1. Affordable Housing, 3. Physical Improvements, 4. Planning, Admin & Management and 5. Secion 108 Loan Repayments of the Order be recommended favorably to the Full Council. The motion carried by the following vote:

A second motion was made by Councillor DeMaria and seconded by Councillor Linehan that section 2. Public Services be recommended out favorably to the Full Council.

Roll Call Vote:

Camell-Yea, Crowe-non voting, Linehan-Yea, DeMaria-Yea, Sica-Yea,

Murphy-Yea

Yea: 6 - Vice Chair Camell, Councillor Crowe, Councillor Linehan, Councillor DeMaria, Councillor Sica and Murphy

Ron Hogan, Parking Director, will appear before the Committee to give a demonstration of the new budget software.

The next order of business is Ron Hogan, Parking Director gave the Committee a presentation which was an overview of the new budget software. He looked at other cities and some of the best practices out there. The budget has to fit certain criteria's and he looked at software that would support that. He mentioned a company Cleargov which allows more transparency with a product called a digital budget book. He gave them a preview of the product it is a cloud based online budget so that residents can view the whole budget or particular pieces. He explained there are a lot more pieces to the budget than just numbers there are 25 different criteria's to create a budget it's got to be a planning document, policy document and operation guide. The idea is to provide a much more complete picture of the City. Some of the sections he mentioned are the cities history, elected officials, a demographic section and stats with per capita income, housing and rental rates. There is a section with the budget timeline. The software allows you to attach full documents to the budget which provides supplemental information. They also include a personnel detail review of every employee and their salary. If someone is just interested in the revenue portion they can just click on that section. There is also a section that explains all the different funding sources and what they are. There is an annual cost of \$11,000 and \$3,000 implementation fee and it is also optimized for ADA and google translation. Ron feels this will give us a first class budget book. Councillor Murphy thanks Mr. Hogan and said if it is the will of the committee they can invite Mr. Hogan back for more in depth information. She felt it was important for everyone to see and it will be a very exciting budget.

Other Business**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Councillor Deborah DeMaria, seconded by Councillor Peg Crowe, that the meeting be adjourned at 6:54 P.M. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yea: 6 - Vice Chair Camell, Councillor Crowe, Councillor Linehan, Councillor DeMaria, Councillor Sica and Murphy