



TOWN OF WARE

Planning & Community Development
126 Main Street, Ware, Massachusetts 01082
t. 413.967.9648 ext. 120

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Meeting Minutes from
Monday, August 9, 2021
Select Board Room, Town Hall

CDA Members:

Chairman Danielle Souza, Brandy Brusco and John Carroll

Guests:

Ted Harvey (remote), Anthia Elliott, Paula Kularski, Selectman Tom Barnes (remote), Monica Moran (remote), Selectman John Morrin (remote), Melissa Fales (remote),

Staff Present:

Rob Watchilla, Director

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

Chairman D. Souza called the hearing to order at 6:30 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

FY21 CDBG APPLICATION PUBLIC HEARING

- Introduction

Ted Harvey from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) led the discussion for the public hearing. He stated that this would be one of two public hearings regarding the FY21 CDBG application, with the other occurring at a Board of Selectman meeting. The funding from this application would contribute towards the Façade Improvement Program (FIP), Design Project for Cottage Street, Social Service Programs, and administrative costs. This application will be a regional effort in collaboration (and jointly applied) with the Town of Hardwick. This year with the help of PVPC, the Towns of Ware and Hardwick are seeking \$1,000,000 through the CDBG. The application deadline is September 10th, 2021. There will also be a performance hearing to take place after (and if) the award is given to the two Towns.

- Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force

Monica Moran of PVPC spoke about the Domestic Violence Prevention and Response Services offered by the Ware River Valley Domestic Violence Task Force. The program itself is 20 years old and has been key in preventing domestic violence in the region. The organization is led by local community members with 12-15 present at their monthly meetings. The Domestic Violence

Task Force specializes in outreach and collaborating with other local organizations such as the Greenville Food Bank. The Domestic Violence Task Force conducts most of their outreach via social media, the local newspaper, and television network. Monica Moran stated that the group focuses on providing domestic violence help as opposed to solely domestic violence education. The task force meets in various meeting locations and has a help line that operates 12 hours a day, 365 days a year. The helpline provides advice and comfort to those who are in abusive relationships. The Task Force has sought to expand its reach to teens working with the Ware Regional High School. Community partners tend to shift from year to year. The Domestic Violence Task Force is asking for \$65,000 which is the amount they would normally ask for.

- Behavioral Health Network, Inc.

The BHN is seeking funding for its Planned Approach to Community Health (P.A.T.C.H.) program. Anthia Elliot (New Director) and Paul Kularski (New Domestic Violence Supervisor) were speaking on behalf of this organization. BHN case workers go out to meet clients in the area, they don't necessarily have to come to their offices. The PATCH program provides services and outreach that includes:

- In-home parenting/daily living skills
- Healthy relationship support group and referrals to collaborating domestic violence advocate
- Access to addiction services as part of the PATCH team
- Individual and family therapy as part of the PATCH team
- Link to job training and adult education program through the Adult Learning Center
- Daily phone contact when needed

The PATCH program's overall goal is to provide easy access to specific services for low-income residents. The program itself needs funding in order to operate and is seeking \$47,000 from the FY21 CDBG funds.

- Literacy Project

Ted Harvey spoke on behalf of the Ware Adult Learning Center, as members from the Literacy project did not attend this public hearing. This program provides help and preparation for the high school equivalency test (formerly known as the GED). There would be no cost to low-income adult learners. It is estimated that 25 residents will attend classes next year, which is lower than normal for the Ware Adult Learning Center. The program is seeking \$75,000 in funding from the FY21 CDBG.

- Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QV CDC)

QV CDC runs a program in Hardwick and Ware called the Hardwick Senior Outreach Program (formerly know as Hardwick Seniors). Melissa Fales was present to speak on behalf of QV CDC. The program was made available to Ware during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Senior Outreach Program picks up and delivers groceries and other goods, acting as an errand running service for seniors and performing what the program calls "chores". 32 seniors have been served by the Hardwick Senior Outreach Program in both Hardwick and Ware. Around 63 percent of those served are low income with no access to transportation. Between October 2020 and June 2021, 265 separate chores were carried out by the Hardwick Senior Outreach Program. There are six paid chore providers on staff and all work an on-call basis. The program is seeking \$18,900 in funds from the FY21 CDBG.

- Discussion of the Proposed Budget

Ted Harvey and the CDA discussed the proposed budget for the FY21 CDBG application. The current total is set at \$1,125,350 but needs to be brought down to \$1,000,000. A cap of \$205,000 is set for social services and this would imply no major cuts in funding from the previous year. The costs for the FIP are \$200,000 plus a \$50,000 project delivery cost. The Cottage Street design work would be \$77,000 with a \$5,000 delivery cost. In terms of housing rehabilitation (HR), the funding is set for 2 HR projects in Ware and 3 in Hardwick. Each HR project would cost \$35,000. In terms of administrative costs, \$134,000 is seen as the maximum. Overall, the budget would need to be cut by \$125,350 to meet the \$1,000,000 maximum for the whole application.

It was suggested to take out 1 of the HR projects and to take out the Cottage Street project in order to meet the \$1,000,000 maximum. Cutting Cottage Street will push back this project for another few years.

Motion by J. Carroll to end the Public Hearing at 7:28pm. Seconded by B. Brusio. All in favor. Approved 3-0.

[Signatures on Next Page]

Minutes from the August 9th, 2021 Public Hearing
Respectfully submitted by,

Robert Watchilla
Director of Planning & Community Development

<i>Minutes Approved on:</i> <u>9/13/21</u>	
Souza	<u>D. Souza</u>
Carroll	_____
Bruso	_____
Robinson	_____
Gresty	<u>A. Gresty</u>