

Buffalo County Minutes

Public Hearing: Community Development Block Grant – Emergency Assistance Program Application

Date of Meeting: Thursday, September 22, 2016

Electronic and Hard Copy Filing Date: Friday, September 23, 2016

Location: Buffalo County Courthouse
County Board Room
407 S 2nd Street, Alma, Wisconsin

The public hearing was called to order by Mr. Steve Schiffli at 6:05 p.m.

INFORMATION ON THE CDBG-EAP: Mr. Schiffli welcomed members of the public to the hearing. Mr. Rynders was also present. Regarding the Community Developmental Block Grant- Disaster Assistance application Buffalo County will be submitting. The purpose of the meeting was described to meet a key component in the eligibility requirements, for Buffalo County to request through the state of Wisconsin CDBG-DA Funding. Mr. Schiffli stated other requirements included:

The County Board of Supervisors passing a resolution to apply for the CDBG-DA grant. That the resolution has been approved by the Buffalo County Finance Committee and the full board will action that resolution during their regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Supervisors set for Monday, September 26, 2016 at 7:00 pm in this room. Following passage of the resolution, the plan was for sending an application packet to the State for Consideration. Tonight's public hearing and the public's participation is one of the critical pieces of that process.

Buffalo County will issue a request for proposal, to retain a grant administrator with the plan to hire someone familiar with the CDBG program intricacies, and knowledgeable with the local area. When a grant administrator is selected and approved by the Board of Supervisors, a public information and outreach program will be initiated.

The CDBG Fund, can help with public need in three aspects, Economic Development, Public Facilities, and Housing Areas. Based on our 211 call in program, Schiffli indicated the identified need area in Buffalo County is HOUSING Assistance which is the program of record being discussed this evening. The availability of referral information on other CDBG programs was also offered.

The CDBG-DA was described as a grant program, not a loan, only available to those who apply and qualify by meeting the low to moderate income requirements on the fact sheet provided to all participants tonight. Due to the individual complexities with income, it was recommended that if the grant is received, to set an appointment with the grant administration case worker to assist in determining eligibility and completing the application.

It was stated the CDBG-DA Funding will only pay for those eligible activities listed on the fact sheet. It was noted driveways are a significant damage concern amongst residents. There is a probability of grant funding support, if a person has one driveway, designed for access to your home, which can accept Emergency responders which was affected, that activity may be eligible.

Of the approximate 200 households that called 211, 31 households and business that have experienced damage meeting significant thresholds. Of those who were all contacted by DHHS staff, 10 likely meet the income eligibility threshold requirements with damage estimates totaling approximately \$420,000 including some situations where there is potential for displacement and relocation.

Buffalo County will be reaching out directly to the Town, Village and City clerks and senior leadership with information. Also, residents who contacted 211 will be contacted by either phone or letter advising them on what steps they need to take after the grant program has been initiated. It is expected the county will have some notification of approval or disapproval in the next 30 days, and a grant manager within 45 days.

Public participants were reminded to make sure they signed in and encouraged to make a public comment regarding the CDBG-DA Program. One participant asked if there would be a charge for the assistance with the application process and was assured there would not be a charge. Another participant reported having trouble finding a provider to clean diesel fuel spillage on her property. Mr Schiffli agreed to assist as a follow up activity. Another participant expressed concern the grant won't help him because he has two driveways and only one damaged. A question was raised about small business assistance and Schiffli provided information on low interest loan availability. Another asked if one could get reimbursed for work already done and Rynders said a State CBDG representative said you can get reimbursed for work done if the household and type of work done is eligible. Schiffli responded to a question stating Buffalo County is not currently working on other grants.

Adjournment: With no further questions, Schiffli announced the public hearing was closed at 6:30 p.m.