

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 15, 2018

6:00 P.M.

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM A**

Present: Dani Rooney Jonathan Sandberg, Hannah Dahlgren, Judy Bunnell

Absent: Lynne Langley, Alison Hamilton, Marie Cowgill

Staff: Elise Annunziata, Community Development Coordinator

Vice Chair Dani Rooney called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of January 18th CAC meeting were approved.

The public hearing was opened. Martha Stone (Crossroads House), Janet Laatsch (Families First), Mike Gingas (Portsmouth Housing Authority) and Elisa Bolten (Gather, formerly Seacoast Family Food Pantry)

Ms. Annunziata presented an overview of the CDBG Program and Community Development work currently being undertaken in FY 18. Major projects and activities include: public service agency social services programs, Senior Center design, ADA accessibility improvements at 280 Marcy Street and Margeson Apartments, and public facility improvements and fire system upgrades at Greenleaf Recreation Center

Public Comment:

Ms. Stone from Crossroads House provided information about the needs and demands on the emergency shelter, noting that there has been an uptick in the number of persons seeking shelter. The shelter has a few nights when it operates at full capacity, however, there have been examples of shelter clients who have found permanent housing. Ms. Stone noted that the lack of affordable housing options in the City of Portsmouth have contributed to the longer stays at the shelter. She hopes that Crossroads' efforts to acquire property to be used for affordable housing will alleviate the housing needs. Cross Roads House, along with other homelessness services providers have continued to provide additional "wrap around services" to support newly exited (from shelter) individuals and families as a means to reduce recidivism. The effort continues have positive affects in resulting in a reduction in the number of persons returning to shelter after exit to housing.

Next, Janet Laatsch discussed the Families First's merger with Goodwin Health Services. She stated that the merger will now allow the agency to have a broader reach to serve individuals and families in need with medical and dental services. They have a 340-B program to assist persons with low income to affordably access prescription medications

Next, Mike Gingas from the Portsmouth Housing Authority discussed PHA's short and medium term facility improvement projects. The projects include improvements at the Gosling Meadows --community center, roof and entry access and adding expanded and new playground space here and at Wamesit Place; kitchen and bath upgrades at Woodbury and State public housing; and energy efficiency upgrades at Feaster and Margeson apartments

The final speaker, Elisa Bolton, from Gather NH (formerly called Seacoast Family Food Pantry) discussed the progress of new mobile food programs and meals 4 kids program. The mobile food programs have been very successful and she expects an increase in services provided. There has been an increase in the number of persons coming to Gather NH's new space on West Road, where the agency has a 3-year lease.

After receiving no further requests for public comment, Ms. Rooney closed the public hearing.

Ms. Annunziata notified the committee that HUD does not yet have a budget for the upcoming FY 19 program year, and that budget and annual action plan would continue on schedule unless otherwise notified by HUD.

Committee members discussed grantor recognition efforts, including CDBG subrecipients' websites, facilities and donor materials acknowledgement of the City of Portsmouth CDBG Program and U.S. HUD.

The next two meetings will consist of presentations to the CAC by public service agencies on March 13th and March 14th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.