

THESE MINTUES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING
Wednesday, March 27, 2019
Community Meeting Room
Chester Town Hall
Chester, Connecticut

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectwoman Gister called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance included First Selectwoman Gister, Selectman Grzybowski, Selectwoman Janecek, Dale Kroop, Community Resource Management, and approximately 15 audience members.

First Selectwoman Gister read the Public Hearing notice that appeared in the 3/11/19 and 3/19/19 editions of The Day newspaper. A copy of the Public Hearing notice was available for review at the meeting.

The purpose of the Public Hearing was to obtain citizen's views on the Town's community development and housing needs and review and discuss specific project activities in the areas of housing, economic development or community facilities which could be part of the Town's application for funding for the year 2019.

Mr. Dale Kroop, Community Resource Management, was tasked with developing, on behalf of the Town of Chester, the Fiscal Year 2019 Community Development Block Grant (Small Cities) application for improvements to the Cherry Hill housing units. The grant application is due April 12, 2019 with an award announcement expected in September. If awarded, a late Winter/early Spring construction start date is anticipated. The grant request totals \$800,000.00. Mr. Kroop's fees will be funded via the grant, if awarded. Because the grant is funded by the Federal Government and administered by the State of Connecticut, strict guidelines and regulations must be adhered to if the Town is awarded the grant.

Mr. Kroop provided a brief overview of his credentials and past grant writing history and outlined the Small Cities grant application to be submitted for repairs to the Cherry Hill Housing complex. Proposed long term capital improvements submitted in the grant application include repairs to the parking lot and walkways, upgrades to heat pumps, new siding, windows and storm doors.

Mr. Kroop reported that the State sets the priorities for the grant awards. Typically, housing is one of the priorities and Mr. Kroop was confident that the Cherry Hill complex fits within the requirements of the grant.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Mary Ellen Taylor expressed concern the grant request of \$800,000 may not be sufficient to fund all of the needed repairs to the facility. Mr. Kroop responded that \$800,000 is the maximum request allowed per the grant requirements.

Shirley Talbot commented that window replacement may be difficult in the Winter months. Mr. Kroop responded that if awarded the grant, the Town will have 1.5 years to finish the project and window replacement will be scheduled accordingly.

Mr. Kroop stressed that the grant is competitive and other towns will also be submitting grant applications/requests. The more detailed the grant application and the more "shovel ready" a project is will determine what projects/Towns are awarded the grants.

Alice Hopper questioned the sequencing of the project. Mr. Bob Markowski, architect, reported that the scheduling of the projects will be determined by the contractor.

Ms. Skargen questioned the State's process for awarding grants. Mr. Kroop explained that the number and quality of the applications received is a determining factor when awarding grants. The fact that Chester is considered a "new" applicant is a plus. The State also takes into consideration the "completeness" of the application and whether or not a project is "shovel ready". Mr. Kroop estimates that all of the appropriate paperwork will be delivered to the State before the April 12th due date.

An audience member expressed support for the application and commented that this is a "boon" for Chester's only senior housing facility.

Rosemary Blair asked if there is the opportunity to negotiate the grant award. Mr. Kroop responded that although the request is for \$800,000, the State may award less than the amount requested. In that instance, projects are prioritized and Mr. Kroop recommends requesting alternates during the bid process. This may be discussed further if the grant is awarded.

First Selectwoman Gister reported that the BOS has voted to move forward with the grant application on behalf of Cherry Hill. Ms. Gister received the following petition relative to the grant application:

"We, the Cherry Hill residents, support the need to rehabilitate our units, parking area and improvements to the sidewalks through the Small Cities Program".

The petition, along with letters of support (one from Senator Needleman) received in the First Selectwoman's office will be submitted with the grant application. An additional letter of support from Representative Christine Palm is expected and will also be included in the grant application.

James Grzybowski made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m. Charlene Janecek seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk