

APPROVED

**HOUSING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT ACT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**Tuesday, October 14, 2008
Evanston Civic Center
7:00 p.m. – City Council Chambers**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ald. Bernstein, Coleen Burrus, Ald. Hansen, Ald. Jean-Baptiste, Ald. Rainey, Crawford Richmond

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Breen

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Flax, Jackie Brownlee

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Rainey, Chair

I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Rainey called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m., a quorum being present. The Committee members and staff introduced themselves. Chair Rainey explained the order of procedure for the applicants to fully introduce themselves by giving their name/s, agency or program and a brief summary of the program.

II. 2009/10 CDBG PROGRAM – REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Youth Action Ministry, NFP/Annual College Retreat
Contact Info: Mr. Kenneth Rodgers, Executive Director

Address: Fleetwood Jourdain Center, 1655 Foster Street, Evanston, 847-328-1912

Amount Requested: \$20,000

Summary: Ms. Ashley Ingram, Co-President & Jr. at ETHS, stated that Youth Action Ministry (YAM) usually holds its meetings on the second Saturday of each month at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Shanice Moore, Co-President, stated that she is 16 years of age and a Jr. at ETHS. She acknowledged YAM's Board of Directors in attendance. She said that comments will be made this evening by two board members speaking about their experiences with the recent retreat followed by closing comments by the Sr. Advisor.

Ms. Chelsea Ransom, Vice President, stated she is a freshman and attended her first College Retreat this past summer. She said that the retreat was very educational and opened her eyes to the college experience and new places. They visited several colleges

in the Washington, D.C. area including Howard, Georgetown, and George Washington Universities. Ms. Ransom also enjoyed the site-seeing tour of the Washington D.C. area, which made the overall retreat a very well-rounded educational experience. She strongly recommends that all students attend the college retreat through YAM.

Ms. Patrice Newsom said she is 15 years old and the YAM Excel Treasurer. She attended the college retreat for the first time this past summer as a freshman. She also shared her memorable experiences of the trip and highly recommended that her peers attend. Not only was it educational but she developed many friendships through the program and experiences that made a lasting impression on her. Ms. Newsom was especially impressed by their host in D.C., Ms. Jennifer Benton, who is a graduate of ETHS, an alumna of Howard University and former President of YAM.

Ms. Derrielle Mitchell stated that she is a Sr. at ETHS and the Sr. Advisor for YAM. She has been a member of YAM since her freshman year and began by doing various community service activities. By her sophomore year she upgraded her responsibilities to treasurer and by Jr. year was president of the program and is now Sr. Advisor; helping others to join the program. Ms. Mitchell noted that YAM has been recognized by the Congressional Black Caucus, Jesse Jackson, Maxine Waters, and Jan Schakowsky for their involvement in the community and strength of their program. She said YAM has been active for 27 years and 97% of participants have gone on to attend college. Ms. Mitchell noted that the program is offered to youth in the Chicagoland area, especially Evanston and they are now branching out to more suburbs to the west. Ms. Mitchell stated that in view of the current economic situation; the YAM Board of Directors has decided to make the retreat a long weekend instead of having a week-long trip costing approximately \$350-400 per student; this would to reduce the cost and make the trip accessible to more students. She strongly recommends the YAM Excel College Retreat to all students because it is a great educational and uplifting experience. Ms. Mitchell recognized that this program is not limited to a certain group based on economic or racial background; it is open to all races and genders. She wished more of the male members were able to make it this evening, noting that they had other commitments.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey asked how many students attended the retreat this summer. Ms. Mitchell responded that approximately 40 students attended, however they are anticipating more students next year with the time and fee changes. Chair Rainey also requested that they correct the inconsistencies in the program budget numbers and participants because these numbers have to be reported to HUD. Mr. Rodgers concurred and will take care of before the November 11th meeting. She commended Ms. Mitchell on being a great spokesperson for the organization. Ald. Bernstein seconded that and complimented the entire program and what they have accomplished. Ald. Jean-Baptiste suggested that they get more males to come with them with then return before the Committee. Mr. Rodgers thanked the Committee for all their support.

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago & N.W. Indiana/Fit To Be Me
Contact Info: Patricia Reyes, Girl Recruitment Manager

Address: 650 N. Lakeview Parkway, Vernon Hills, 847-573-0500

Amount Requested: \$10,500

Summary: Ms. Reyes quoted the Girl Scout mission which is “To build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place.” She noted that the Vernon Hills Regional Service Center would like to expand “Fit to Be Me” Program for girls in Evanston. She explained that the Fit to Be Me Program is an umbrella program designed to teach girls how to live healthier lives through exercise, improved healthy and nutritional choices, the understanding of positive body images and emotional development. Child and adolescent obesity and weight control are among today’s top public health concerns. Approximately 9,000,000 children over the ages of 6 are obese and since 1980 the percentage of over-weight girls (ages 6-19) has doubled. Ms. Reyes noted that type-2 diabetes is quickly becoming an issue among youth, especially among African-American and Hispanic girls. She said that advocacy is critical to educate and influence girls to lead healthier lives and this is why they would like to continue their Fit To Be Me Program in Evanston.

Ms. Reyes explained that the requested grant of \$10,500 will help them provide serve 175 girls, ages 11-17, with their healthy initiative. She said their program will impact girls on the west and south sides of Evanston through collaborations with Evanston-based youth services such as Family Focus and Y.O.U. They will also collaborate with additional Evanston-based businesses and professionals to offer this exciting program to Evanston girls. Ms. Reyes noted that 115 girls will participate through Family Focus and 60 girls will participate through Y.O.U. She said that participants will be drawn directly from the CDBG Target Area and /or low income households. She noted that their collaborative partners have systems in place to ensure that girls who participate in their program are from low income households. Each girl’s experience will consist of 6-8 hours of outcome-based programs in 30-90 minute weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly sessions and additional guest presentations, educational based field trips to support their healthy program.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey said that one of the things that she is very impressed with is the fact that this organization has already secured \$16,000 in outside funding. She commended the Girl Scouts for their efforts and finds this program very valuable in helping many girls in the specified age group and economic category make better choices and develop healthier living styles.

She noted to the Committee members that she has noticed that so many more applicants are asking for less and less funding and making more effort towards securing outside

funding which she finds admirable and is one of the goals that this Committee has been stressing to accomplish with the applicants that come before them year after year.

Open Studio Project Inc.

Contact Info: Ms. Dayna Block, Executive Director

Address: 903 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, 847-475-0390, Email:
www.openstudioproject.org

Amount Requested: \$3,500

Summary: Ms. Block first gave an open invitation requesting for volunteer participation. She thanked the Committee for their past support of their Art and Action Program. She stated that Open Studio Project is a non-profit arts and social service agency that has been in Evanston for 8 years. They offer fee-for-service classes, have an extensive community outreach program and a mission-driven gallery. She noted that her organization is requesting funds for their Art and Action Program. She gave a brief summary of their program goals. Ms. Block explained that the Art and Action Program provides free year-round after school and summer programming to at-risk youth between the ages of 9 and 18 years. She noted that they served approximately 550 low-to-moderate income youth this year. They work in collaboration with Evanston-based service providers such as Peer Services, Y.O.U., 21st Century, and others. She said they have multi-week classes using drawing, painting and sculpture combined with writing, which is a method she developed working with two other art therapists. Ms. Block noted that she teaches this method at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and it is also taught in graduate programs around the country.

Ms. Block explained that teens come into their studio and write down what they want to gain from being in the program. The range of reasons stated by their students includes trying to figure out and understand why they got into an argument with another friend to substance abuse issues. Each student writes an intention statement, and then makes art using really simple materials. The program staff encourages each student to explore the materials and urges them to try and get back into a “kindergarten state of mind” where they are not judging their work. Afterwards, each student is given the opportunity to write about their work; this is referred to as “witness writing.” Ms. Block explained that they gather as a group and offer an opportunity for each student to read what they wrote (or not if the student prefers). Each student has a notebook in which they write weekly notes that is kept at the studio for them. She said the students are encouraged to express their true inner feelings without holding back and it is strongly stressed that they will not be judged or reprimanded for anything they write. Ms. Block tells her students that she will review their notebooks each week to ensure there is nothing that indicates to her that they could possibly hurt themselves or others. Total confidentiality is assured, however

she is obligated to report any concerns for their safety or wellbeing identified from their writing to the counselor from their agency.

Ms. Block noted that the goals of the program are to help student to express difficult emotions, especially anger and despair, to increase the students ability to manage emotions that lead to violent behavior and substance abuse, to demonstrate healthy emotional self-expression, to increase ability to make healthy choices regardless of outside influences (a challenge at the high school level), demonstrate motivation towards self-improvement and positive life styles and increase empathy and social skills. She said each course ends in a performance and exhibit that is curated by the students, who choose what artwork and writing to put in the exhibit. Ms. Block stated that this is a very positive experience for the students for three reasons: 1) their family and friends come; 2) sometimes their parole officer or social worker attend and the student is seen as an artist versus a trouble-maker; and 3) this exhibit is attended by the community which she feels is very important for others to see the individual through their artwork and writing the truth of their experience and instead of getting in trouble for it, the student is valued for expressing what they are truly feeling inside and become better understood as a person. Ms. Block concluded by reading several statements made by students from her most recent class and their experience from this program. All the student statements read were from kids dealing with substance abuse problems and their overall feelings of how the program has helped them in some way or another.

Questions and Comments: Ald. Hanson stated that she is a big fan of this program. She feels the program is unique to this community and very valuable in helping many youths who struggle with emotional and substance abuse problems. She requested information on the next scheduled exhibit because she would be very interested in attending; other Committee members expressed the same interest. Ms. Block assured them she will forward the information and welcomed their attendance.

Evanston Youth Initiative

Contact Info: Mr. Jonathan Peppers, President, Mr. Ronny Canon, Vice President

Address: P.O. Box 5582, Evanston, meetings are held at the Levy Center on Dodge Avenue on the first Saturday of each month, 847-414-5073.

Amount Requested: \$25,000

Summary: Mr. Peppers said that the Evanston Youth Initiative came about out of necessity after a loss of life of young Evanston man in July, 2005 due to violence. He said that several members of the community got together to try and figure out what they can do to deal with the violence in the community and improve life in the community in general. Through several meetings and much brainstorming, the group formed a mission statement which is: "to unite resources to help develop and support productive skills to support and help Evanston Black youth and families." Mr. Peppers stated that in trying to achieve this mission statement, they have met with representatives from District #202

including Bill Stafford and Dr. Witherspoon, who have been very receptive, and representatives from District #65 including Dr. Hardy Murphy and other members of his staff. He noted that their organization has promoted the Million Father March two years in row at both of the Evanston school districts. Both events have been very successful and they would like to continue because this event is supposed to be a year-long commitment. Mr. Peppers noted that their organization has met with Mr. Sol Anderson from the City of Evanston and the Evanston YMCA. He noted that they are trying to meet with Evanston social service organizations and agencies to try and improve the life of community residents, deal with violence life in general to keep such incidents from happening. For example, by improving parenting, and student self-esteem and motivation through mentoring and assistance to bring their grades up. Mr. Peppers noted that the organization generally holds 3 events during the year and would like to hold more events; with the projection of possibly doubling that number to at least 6 events. He said the request for funds would help them to achieve this goal this increase in events per year by enabling them to better coordinate with the City's Youth Coordinator, Mr. Anderson. Funds would be used for computer equipment, office furniture and supplies needed and an information management system to help them accumulate all of their statistical data in a more readily available and organized format to aid them in doing their work more effectively and better deliver their services.

Mr. Peppers informed that so far they have held several meetings with members of the targeted community; the first meeting was at the Fleetwood Jourdain Community Center in collaboration with the Evanston Police Department and included various seminars. These seminars allowed members of the community to feel free to have open exchange of communication and discussion with members of the Police force. From that meeting, the Police and community members were able to better understand each other and move forward in a more combined effort.

Mr. Ronny Canon informed the Committee of the Evanston Youth Initiative main goals. He stated that their intent is to reach out to community members, representatives from both Evanston school districts, and the Evanston Police Department to come together to support community residents and parents most in need of help. All parties would communicate their concerns and from there figure out a way to work together to start resolving the many violence issues that face our neighborhoods and affect our youth.

Question and Comments: Chair Rainey asked for more elaboration on how this organization interacts with the City's Youth Coordinator, Mr. Sol Anderson and the Youth Advocate and other programs. Mr. Peppers responded that they constantly keep in close contact and dialogue with Mr. Anderson. Both parties make it a point to attend each others programs and events. He commended Mr. Anderson's work and respects their working relationship. Ms. Burrus stated that from the presentation this evening, she understands what the organization is trying to accomplish, however she would like to have further information on what outcomes are anticipated because this information would be very helpful for a full understanding of the program and how the requested funds would help achieve those outcomes. Mr. Peppers responded that the outcome

would be to improve life in general by continuing the efforts to bring the community together with the noted institutions to work more efficiently and effectively towards a goal of lessening violent behavior and incidents among youth Ald. Bernstein asked where they were looking to locate their office. Mr. Peppers responded that a location has not been determined. Ald. Bernstein asked who they planned to have speak at workshops. Mr. Peppers responded that they would have motivational speakers and individuals who specialize in education and community building. The Committee members acknowledged the value of the Million Father March which promotes the involvement of fathers and male role models with their children on the first day of school and throughout the school year; they commended the efforts of this organization.

Evanston Community Defender Office/Legal & Social Work Services

Contact Info: Ms. Naria Santa Lucia, Executive Director, Ms. Patricia Gladen, Evanston resident and President of the Board of Directors, Mr. Jerry Esrick, Board of Directors member

Address: 828 Davis Street, Suite #304, Evanston, 847-492-1410, Website at www.evanstondefender.org. The representatives welcomed all and any volunteer efforts.

Amount Requested: \$50,000

Summary: Ms. Lucia stated that they are here this evening to request CDBG funds to support their legal services and social work. The Evanston Defender's mission is to integrate legal representation and social work services on behalf of Evanston youth and families. She said they operate from the core belief that if a young person feels alienated at home or disengaged, they are more likely to act out/ react through delinquent behavior. Therefore they do not think of their clients' issues as just legal, but consider the whole situation; they make sure that they address the needs at home in the family and in the community through their social work program. Through this approach, they are able to provide exceptional legal representation. More important, they are able to give their clients the tools to move forward and turn their lives around, and to prevent recurrence of delinquent behavior and lifestyle. She stressed that their main goal is to assist and counsel the client so that they don't have to represent them again and so they become productive members of the community.

Ms. Lucia noted that the Evanston Community Defender Office has been in existence for over 30 years, but there are new, exciting and interesting developments in their organization. Their Board has spent a lot of time in strategic planning and organizational development in the areas of programming and created a 3-part program approach: 1) Legal Advocacy and representation, 2) Juvenile Delinquency prevention, and 3) Client and community restoration. She assured that their agency looks forward to in the future years of building on their existing programs in these 3 areas and growing to better serve their Evanston community clients. Ms. Lucia noted that they would like to expand on some of their existing programs in place specifically "Aggression Replacement Therapy"

working with YOU they would work directly with the high school and junior high schools in Evanston by teaching and educating targeted youth about their rights, conflict resolutions and advocacies. Also they would like to expand this program and deliver this training working with the Summer Youth Employment Program in the 2009. They are also working with the Center for Independent Futures. She noted that all the above mentioned are part of the juvenile delinquency prevention program. However, legal advocacy and representation is the highlight of what their organization does. Ms. Lucia explained that they represent young people in juvenile delinquency proceedings, adult felony proceedings and school disciplinary matters, and link all of their clients with social services. She noted that they are looking to expand their client base by working directly with the Juvenile Division at the Public Defender's Office in downtown Chicago to identify more Evanston clients; they are also working with juvenile probation to serve individuals whose cases are not being prosecuted before a judge but are being resolved through negotiation. She stated that such cases are the ones her organization is going to start making an effort obtaining directly from Juvenile Probation and helping those individuals to turn their lives around with assistance from their social services program.

Ms. Lucia noted that their request for funding would provide necessary resources to the Evanston Community Defender Office to deliver legal and social work services to Evanston young people in need and support for needed case management, community outreach, and individual or family counseling. Ms. Lucia informed the Committee that they have requested funding from the Illinois Bar Association and other outside agencies to support their organization. Ms. Lucia stated that in the area of client and community restoration, one of the important things they do is help their clients expunge and seal their records. She pointed out that this is very important because if you are a juvenile, you do not have the opportunity for housing or education if you have an open criminal record. Therefore, her agency tries to educate all of their clients about the opportunities to assist them through such problems. She noted that one of the really exciting things they are working on is to set up an expungement help desk at the Skokie Court House to assist low-income Evanston residents 21 years of age and under.

Ms. Lucia informed the Committee that the Evanston Community Defender Office has recently hired a new juvenile attorney and a new social worker and has expanded their program to include social work interns. Their organization has received in-kind services from a Chicago design company that is owned by Evanston residents and they have designed a new logo for their agency as "Evanston Defender" because Evanston Community Defender Office is such a mouthful. Also they have developed a new tag line called "Integrated Legal and Social Services for Evanston Youth" and are launching a major outreach campaign through schools, churches and other social organizations to let them know about their program and ensure that if any young person gets into trouble in Evanston and needs legal and/or social assistance; their program will readily available.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey questioned the assistance provided for any clients outside of Evanston and how they handle those individuals. Ms. Lucia responded that they do receive many clients in that category and have the resources to refer them to

other local agencies that will assist them in the same level as what they are offering to Evanston residents. However, in an emergency case, they will try and assist the client.

Ald. Hansen asked what is the catalyst for the help desk at the downtown court house. Ms. Lucia explained that they offer expungement assistance to qualifying clients and find their help desk is very helpful and convenient for the large amount of foot traffic that comes through the court house downtown. Ald. Hansen asked if they expect the same response at the Skokie court house. Ms. Lucia answered yes and it will also give them a change to work with more Evanston clients. Ald. Hansen questioned the potential of duplication of services and suggested that there is a need to do some homework to see if other agencies are already doing/offering the same expungement services. She asked if this program works with the Evanston Police Youth Program. Ms. Lucia replied that they do work directly with the Evanston Police Department. Also, from her knowledge, the Evanston Community Defender's Office offers more for the citizens of Evanston than any other community or agency within this immediate area.

Chair Rainey asked what trends they are seeing among their clients. Ms. Lucia responded the majority of cases involve aggravated battery, some sexual behavior issues; with numerous lesser cases involving car thefts and burglaries, violation of probation, etc. She noted that most of their clients are under 17 years of age. Some clients whose income is above 50% of area median may be able to pay a percentage of the cost of services. Chair Rainey asked if they do a means testing for their clients. Ms. Lucia said they do a full survey of each client per their court reporting requirements as well as follow the CDBG guidelines for income. Chair Rainey asked what other outside funding they are receiving. Ms. Lucia responded that they receive funding from several private entities including the Illinois Bar Association. Chair Rainey supports this program because their service is very valuable to many citizens that otherwise would not be able to obtain legal help.

Ald. Jean-Baptiste asked what their involvement/interaction is with the parents of minor clients. Ms. Lucia responded that in many cases services are initiated when the parents come to their office because they are at their wits end and have no where else to turn.

Mr. Richmond questioned if there is follow up with clients to check on their progress; or do they refer for follow up services. Ms. Lucia replied that that at present they do not have a complete follow up procedure in place but would like to do so in the near future as permitted based on staff. Unfortunately in many cases the client follows up by coming back for additional assistance; this is why the social work services component is essential.

Ald. Bernstein asked what their relationship is with Y.O.U. Ms. Lucia informed that they are in the discussion stage of a potential merger to get to know what each agency offers. They plan to develop joint training programs and refer clients to each other. Ald. Bernstein remarked that he is impressed with the growth of this agency. Ms. Lucia gave

much of the credit to her board members who have put in a lot of time and energy in their program who in turn, gave her credit for “bringing a breath of fresh air” to their agency.

Legal Assistance Foundation of Metro. Chicago/Evanston Legal Services

Contact Info: Mr. Bill Kolen

Address: 828 Davis Street, Suite #201, Evanston, 312-347-8381, Evanston. #847-475-3703

Amount Requested: \$12,000

Summary: Mr. Kolen said that the Legal Assistance Foundation offers free legal services for low income and senior citizens. They currently have 6 offices throughout the Cook County area with the office in Evanston serving the north and northwest suburbs. The legal assistance their agency offers varies from domestic violence, foreclosure issues, legal debt issues and bankruptcy, and assistance to tenants in subsidized housing matters. He continued that they provide high quality legal advice, counsel clients regarding their rights, assist with any documentation needed for hearing, and also represent clients at administrative hearings and in State and Federal Courts. Mr. Kolen noted that there has been a rise in clients due to the recession and he foresees the need to provide more services in the near future due to the everyday challenges many people are facing during this period. The requested CDBG funds will help continue offering these services in which they have assisted over 500 families here in Evanston.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey asked at what stage clients come to them for legal assistance with mortgage foreclosures. Mr. Kolen responded that within the past year, over 30 Evanston residents have come to them for legal assistance regarding foreclosure; most due to predatory lending situations. He acknowledged that in some cases the client is not able to retain their home; however they will provide legal counseling and assistance to the client about the options available for proceeding. Ideally, they provide every legal avenue possible to avoid foreclosure proceedings to save their ownership and guide clients to avoid recurrence of their situation. Chair Rainey recalled a report that was distributed from the City Housing Planner regarding other agencies providing foreclosure counseling, specifically the Interfaith Housing agency. She suggested that the two agencies work together in providing referrals to each other. Mr. Kolen agreed. Chair Rainey questioned the assistance to subsidized housing clients and what this agency does to assist them. Mr. Kolen responded that they work with tenants/clients living in CHA housing or who receive housing vouchers with eviction issues, inspections and other housing issues. He said tenants in these situations are usually unable to obtain decent legal assistance to represent their cases and are left vulnerable. Chair Rainey made a suggestion that this agency send representatives to attend the 5th Ward monthly meeting, which meets this Thursday at Fleetwood Jourdain Center, because the Ward alderman Holmes has invited CHA representatives to attend

their meetings and it would be advantageous for many residents to also know that legal help is available. Mr. Kolen thanked her for that reference

Ald. Jean-Baptiste reiterated that when faced with foreclosure, many homeowners are unaware of their rights and how to proceed. He suggested the need for more advertising of LAF's services and involvement with the community to make aware of the availability for legal assistance for those in need. Mr. Kolen assured that they will make every effort to do this. Ald. Jean-Baptiste questioned what assistance this agency is offering for debt purchase cases. Mr. Kolen explained that they provide legal assistance to clients whose debt was purchased in a similar manner as to homeowners dealing with foreclosure. He reiterated that this is why they are asking for additional funding to continue their services.

North Shore Senior Center/ESVSS/Evanston Senior Services

Contact Info: Jordan Luhr, Ms. Liz Gordon

Address: 161 Northfield Road, Northfield, 60093 and 840 Dodge Avenue, Evanston, 60202, 847-724-6027

Amount Requested: \$30,000

Summary: Mr. Luhr gave an overview of their program with the main purpose of helping Evanston seniors living at the low or moderate income levels to remain independent for as long as possible. Their agency's task is make possible for these independent senior citizens to obtain basic necessities and medical care, make arrangements for homemaker help and assistance, obtain government benefits, assist with managing their money, etc. He noted that services are prioritized by immediate need, however their main objective is to provide services so all seniors are able to maintain their quality of life and continue living in and contributing to their community. Mr. Luhr noted that the CDBG funds requested will aid in the continued and growing assistance to the Evanston senior citizen population, especially the immigrant population of seniors that are in need of assistance in their elder years to live productively in this community. He noted that to his knowledge, they are the only organization in this area that provides such services to the immigrant senior citizen population; therefore their agency is not duplicating services offered by others in the Northshore.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey commended this agency's work and supports their efforts. Ald. Jean-Baptiste asked for a percentage breakdown of the ethnic groups they have assisted. Ms. Gordon responded that most recently, they have experienced a majority influx in Hispanic and Polish senior immigrants that have needed their assistance.

Meals at Home/Home Delivered Meals for Seniors & Disabled

Contact Info: Patricia Carlson

Address: P.O. Box 279, Wilmette, Il, 847-251-6827, email:
mealsathome@sbcglobal.net

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Summary: Ms. Carlson first thanked the Committee for all their past support for funding. She welcomed any volunteers to come forward by contacting their agency.

Ms. Carlson informed the Committee and the public that Meals at Home is celebrating its 40th anniversary of service, which began on October 14, 1968. They have delivered food to the homes of seniors and other adults with disabilities over these 40 years. Their clients' needs for services vary from circumstances such as diabetes, mental illness including dementia or heart disease. Other clients are recovering from surgery or chemotherapy. Ms. Carlson noted that in the last year, 62% of their clients were referred to Meals At Home by social workers, doctors, or medical professionals, agencies or local governments. Their service area covers Evanston, Wilmette, Winnetka, Kenilworth, east Glenview and east Northfield. In the last 5 years; approximately 75% of their clients live in Evanston and they have delivered approximately 181,000 meals via 35 routes. She noted that some clients receive food 6 days per week; many others are on a 5-day schedule. Ms. Carlson stated that the requested CDBG funds would help pay for food for their low income Evanston clients where meals are delivered by volunteers at lunch time Monday through Saturday, including holidays. She described a typical meal and noted that they accommodate general diets and special diets such as cardiac, diabetic, mechanical chopped, gastric reflex, renal, etc. Ms. Carlson said most of their meals are prepared the kitchens of Evanston and St. Francis Hospitals; also the kitchen of Three Crowns Park prepares approximately 5% of their meals and Jilly's Café donates 8 meals clients on Thursdays. She noted that survey data collected from their clients showed highest satisfaction with the volunteer staff delivering the meals and satisfactory scores for the quality of meals delivered.

Ms. Carlson stated the main request for CDBG funds is to cover the ever rising cost of food. St. Francis Hospital has raised their cost for preparing meals; Evanston Hospital has informed them that their costs will be going up in cost by 9% within the next year.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey stated her support for this program and the need for such services to an ever growing senior population in the Evanston community.

Mr. Richmond took this opportunity to acknowledge the recent death of a young Evanston resident, Mr. Kevin Foster, which made national news because of his untimely death due to renal failure. He too supports this agency's efforts.

Music Institute of Chicago/Taking Music to Seniors

Contact Info: Chuck Hawes, Director of the New Horizons Band

Address: 1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, 847-905-1500

Amount Requested: \$3,000

Summary: Mr. Hawes explained that the New Horizons Band is a large concert band based on the public school band model except that it is designed for adults; taking into consideration the learning styles and interest of adults and their previous music experience. He noted that some of their member have been musicians in the past but have not played their instruments for a number of years. He said that they have a number of ensembles of players in the larger concert band that give approximately 30 concerts throughout the year at venues that can't accommodate the concert band. Performances are held at many nursing homes, senior residences and adult day care centers and health care facilities throughout the community. Last year, they performed 5 of their concerts at Evanston senior facilities and the grant requested will enable them to provide more concerts for the Evanston senior community. Mr. Hawes noted that there is a growing body of medical research which discusses the benefits that accrue from both performing music and listening to it. He said that music reaches portions of the brain that are unique, and different from the areas for language and other forms of input. Performing in a musical ensemble is a cooperative, non-competitive activity that is mentally and physically stimulating and is a valuable component as you get older that keeps the brain functioning. He pointed out that when seniors go back to playing a musical instrument that they played in the past, start playing an instrument at the beginner level, or listen to big band music from their past, it is a very stimulating experience. The experience takes them back to a different time and era that relates to good memories for them. He noted that this nostalgic music experience has had a positive impact on many Alzheimer patients. Mr. Hawes concluded that this program is equally fun and a rewarding experience for those in the band as it is for their senior audience members.

Questions and Comments: Chair Rainey asked if new Horizons Band has played at the Council for Jewish Elderly Center on Howard Street that has a wonderful day care program for Alzheimer patients. She suggested they consider giving a band performance there in the future. Mr. Hawes said that he does not recall if they have performed there but that they will include them in their upcoming schedule of performances, if they so desire. Chair Rainey mentioned that she did see from their list of performances that they did visit the Dobson Home which is in her ward and received a very positive reaction from their residents. She commended this program and noted that, unlike most funding requests that have to do with relieving pain and suffering, this brings enjoyment and enrichment.

III. STAFF/CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ms. Mary Friedl, 1313 Cleveland, Evanston

Ms. Friedl quoted from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

“No otherwise qualified individual with disabilities in the United States.... shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activities conducted by the Executive agency.”

Ms. Friedl noted that the City of Evanston signed a Voluntary Compliance Agreement with HUD earlier this year to ensure accessibility of CDBG-funded programs and projects. It is in the spirit of that Voluntary Compliance Agreement she offered comments on three applications for CDBG funds from: Connections for the Homeless Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago & N.W. Indiana, and YWCA of Evanston/North Shore. Ms. Friedl’s comments are attached.

Committee members acknowledged the importance of assuring accessibility to programs and facilities funded with CDBG and thanked Ms. Friedl for her advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities and her input on the CDBG applications.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee members commended Ms. Flax on the helpfulness of input on applications provided with their application notebooks.

Application reviews for Connections for the Homeless and the YWCA Evanston/North Shore will be rescheduled on October 28th.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline E. Brownlee