

Council met in a **PUBLIC HEARING** on Monday, April 27, 2020 in Council Chambers with President Megyes presiding. Members physically present: Greer, Heitic and Jaber. Members remotely present: Angeloff, Coburn, Debevec, Frey and Griffin. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to discuss the FY2019 CDBG Funds.

Ms. McFadden of the Planning Department stated any time they make a change to their allocation of CDBG funds, HUD requires them to make an amendment to their Consolidated Plan and Action Plan. She said they also have to provide a 30-day public comment period to allow citizens the opportunity to provide their input on how they are going to be reallocating those funds. She said when they receive any additional funding from HUD not only do they have to amend the action plan but they also need approval from City Council with the proposed amendment as well as hold a Public Hearing. She stated this particular public hearing is for the COVID-19 Infectious Disease Fund and HUD has reduced the public comment period to 5-days so they can expedite the funds and quickly begin assisting the community. She said the City of Barberton has been allocated an additional \$386,869 in CDBG Funds used to prevent, prepare for and respond to the Corona Virus which is part of the CARES Act. She stated these funds must be used for COVID-19 related expenditures and is typically a last resort type of funding. She said there are specific guidelines in place on how this money can be used. She said the eligible CDBG activities will include but are not limited to: business assistance to retain employees that are low to moderate income or businesses located in the low to moderate areas census tract, assistance to support congregate living facilities, digital equality, meal and delivery distribution services and public services to include but not limited to emergency shelter, homelessness, domestic violence and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Ms. McFadden stated any resident that would like to comment can email her at mmcfadden@cityofbarberton.com or contact her office at 330-848-6721. She said this is also posted on the City's website under the Planning Department.

President Megyes asked if any Council Members or Members of the Administration have any questions.

Mrs. Debevec asked where exactly were the adjustments made from the original budget. Ms. McFadden stated they are amending it right now and they are adding funds to that FY2019 Budget. She said they are adding the \$386,869 to include the activities that she outlined. Mrs. Debevec asked if they have not been added to the line item yet. Ms. McFadden stated that is correct because she first had to have a public hearing, a 5-day comment period from residents and council has to approve the amendment and then HUD will release those funds to them. Mrs. Debevec asked ordinarily when council passes the CDBG Budget, they have what the money will be allocated for and are they asking them to pass legislation to accept the revisions but they don't what the revisions are and how the money is planned to be spent. Ms. McFadden said they don't because it is almost like looking into a crystal ball. She said they don't know specifically how the COVID-19 funds are needed in the community. She said they know the businesses will need working capital and as time goes on, they will be able to get a better hold on what those needs are. She stated this is unprecedented and they can't determine right now what those needs are but what they can say is to be vague and that say they are going to use it for all the activities, but not limited to them, and as long as they meet the HUD CDBG guidelines. She said it is special circumstances and they want to expedite the funding so they can get it and use it as soon as possible. Mrs. Debevec asked if it reimbursable like the normal CDBG fund. Ms. McFadden

stated she does not believe that it is because it is a one-time funding, not like the normal allocation. She said all of the specifics have not been released by HUD and they still have not told them everything that they need to know and they are still waiting for the HUD representative to contact them with the specifics. She said that is why she can't answer her question and she is assuming that it will be.

Mr. Griffin asked if there was a deadline on spending this money. Ms. McFadden said there is no specific deadline but they are going back and amending the 2019 Action Plan and they can use that money right away because they have the 2019 money and they can add to that. She said they have not received the 2020 money yet so they are working on the 2020 Action Plan which tells HUD how they are going to spend that money. She said for right now they can use it for 2019 and then as long as she adds it to their Action Plan for 2020, they can use it for that year as well.

President Megyes asked if there are any other questions. President Megyes asked if anyone in the gallery had any questions. President Megyes asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mayor Judge told Ms. McFadden that he passed out to the council that were present the "Quick Guide to CDBG Eligible Activities" which she outlined (revised April 6th.) He said after discussions with the US Senators and Congressmen every community has stressed the need for flexibility for the use of this money and he thinks there is a lot ambiguity and generalities when it comes to this funding. He said Ms. McFadden has been on the phone with State and Federal Reps. trying to get answers but everyone is in the same boat as us trying to get this appropriated so when the money is released, they can get the money to residents and businesses that need it.

President Megyes asked three times if there were any more questions or comments. There were none.

President Megyes said hearing no questions or comments, the public hearing is closed at 8:00.

Craig Megyes
President of Council

Renee Fox
Clerk of Council