

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

AUGUST 23, 2022

MEETING Minutes

Attending: Justin Alcorn, David Benson, Martin Consentino, Sue Dean Dyke, Bradley Eckert, Susan Efroymson, William Frank, Jonathan Goldman, Christine Henry, Marc Lefkowitz, Allison McCallum, Gretchen Mettler, T. Nadas, Jessica Schantz, Patti Substelny.

Excused: Laura Black

Absent: Lee Barbee, Andre Witt.

1. Call to order
2. PUBLIC COMMENT - Diane Hallum spoke for 3 minutes
3. ROLL CALL
4. YEAR 49 (FY 2023) CDBG APPLICATION HEARING

• HEIGHTS EMERGENCY FOOD CENTER – FOOD PANTRY Debbie Shewitz

Heights Emergency Food Center is a government-funded food pantry partnered with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and Hunger Network of Cleveland.

• CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS – OFFICE ON AGING SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
Dynesha Stover-McDonald

CDBG funds allow the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging to employ 2 part-time social workers. The social workers service the entire community, assess senior resident's need for services, and help those residents access services. Potential clients are referred by police and fire departments, the city website and by concerned family, neighbors, and friends. When a senior is required to move, a social worker can help with the transition.

• CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS - PARKS AND RECREATION Joe McRae

We're A Village of Efficacy mentoring program (W.A.V.E.) provides in-school and out-of-school, interactive, social-emotional based, enrichment sessions for males and females spanning elementary school (5th grade) to high school (12th grade). W.A.V.E. also implements summer camps and facilitates project based, service-learning programs which are focused on older adults. City staff work with the non-profit Compassionate Manhood to help staff service-learning projects for the at-risk youth. The CDBG funding will provide staffing, supplies, and materials for the service-learning.

• AGUDATH ISRAEL OF OHIO - GESHER Rabbi Eric Frank

Gesher, a Benefit and Resource Center is a benefit referral program. An initiative of Agudath Israel, Gesher helps eliminate cultural barriers to accessing and applying for assistance programs and uses dedicated staff to help families meet the challenges of financial hardship. It is part of a growing effort across Ohio to provide all residents with trained benefits counselors who can advise clients about the local, state, and federal benefits for which they are eligible. Any person, regardless of religious affiliation, that enters Gesher's offices is aided. It is Gesher's aim to connect our clients with quality services, which will eventually lead to economic self-sufficiency.

- OPEN DOORS ACADEMY – YOUTH PROGRAMMING Kristen Gates

Open Doors Academy's Middle School Program includes mentoring, homework help, service-learning projects, and enrichment programming delivered mostly in the afterschool setting. This program addresses developmental barriers that inhibit the learning process, provides youth with a safe environment to explore new interests, and opens doors to opportunities that otherwise might not be available. The program provides scholars with a safe environment to address academic issues, develop soft skills, and build healthy peer relationships. In addition to our core learning model, we provide youth with daily opportunities to complete their homework and receive academic support through small group tutoring. We also incorporate project-based learning experiences, team-building exercises, mindfulness practice, local, regional, and national service learning, and field trips. The target population for this program are middle school scholars from the Monticello and Roxboro campuses. Nearly 70% of scholars live in extremely low- to moderate-income households and 95% identify as African-American.

Open Doors Academy's High School Plus Program begins freshman year of high school and continues through one full year after high school graduation. It prepares scholars for post-secondary education, training, or career exploration. Programming consists of work-based learning experiences (e.g., job shadowing and career panels), opportunities for volunteering in the community, paid summer internships, workshops focused on developing work skills, college tours, national service-learning trips, and individual mentoring and support. Each one of our scholars meets with his or her mentor at least once a month to establish and review both short-term and long-term goals focused on high school graduation and postsecondary and career planning. ODA provides career-readiness services for scholars through a partnership with Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a community-based nonprofit workforce development organization that serves teens and young adults in under-resourced areas in Northeast Ohio. The target population for this program are Cleveland Heights scholars and alumni. Approximately 60% of ODA scholars from Cleveland Heights High School campus come from extremely low- to moderate-income families and 92% identify as African American.

- LAKE ERIE INK – INK SPOT PROGRAM Amy Rosenbluth

CDBG funds allow Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth (LEI) to directly ensure that youth in our community have equitable access to the arts and to opportunities where they can express themselves creatively and authentically. Through our Ink Spot after school programs, which serve youth at 4 CHUH elementary and middle schools, LEI engages youth in creative expression activities and provides academic support twice a week throughout the school year. Using literary arts as one way to inspire and engage with youth, the Ink Spot offers youth a space and resources to learn new ways to express their ideas and connect with others in a collaborative and positive environment. They gain communication skills, and learn new forms of expression such as poetry, play writing, comics, and personal narrative. Their confidence grows as they share their work with others.

- FUTUREHEIGHTS – COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING Micah Kirman

FutureHeights' Community Capacity Building Program is designed to empower groups that are typically under-represented in our community to engage with boards, committees, commissions, councils, and city leaders with the goal of seeking leadership positions on those committees. The program also facilitates the creation and development of neighborhood and civic groups, to address neighborhood concerns, create neighborhood plans, and take corrective actions to resolve those concerns.

- FAMILY CONNECTIONS – YOUTH PROGRAMMING Karen Gillooly

Family School Connection is a school-based home visiting program for kindergarten students not on track for reading at grade level. Our part-time Family Coaches meet with identified students during the school day. They meet with parents/caregivers and the child during home visits and offer various evening events designed to increase and improve parenting skills and build connections among families. Our goal is to increase the reading skills of those students who arrive in kindergarten unprepared. Particularly this year, many more students will start school unprepared because they did not attend a preschool program due to the COVID pandemic or their parents kept them back from starting kindergarten last year. We engage parents/caregivers in their child's education and emphasize the importance of this involvement. Classroom teachers identify students who need our assistance, and we reach out to their parents to participate in our program.

A Parent Cafe is a gathering of parents, for parents and by parents. It is a parent education experience designed to create opportunities for parents to connect, share and learn from each other. It provides a safe space and appreciates that all parents have something to offer and have what they need to be successful parents. Each Parent Café is guided by trained Parent Table Hosts. Parents gather in small groups and explore questions that really matter to them. Through these meaningful conversations, parents are working to build five Protective Factors that will benefit their family. The Five Protective Factors have been shown through research to prevent child abuse and neglect. Thirteen of our staff are trained to provide the Parent Cafe model. We propose offering two cafes. Each is four 2-hour sessions offered weekly. Food and childcare are provided.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS Committee Chairs are: Jon Goldman - Commercial; Lee Barbee - Finance; Brad Eckert and T. Nadas Co-Chairs - Neighborhood Actives; Chris Henry and Patty Substelny - Preservation & Housing.
7. NEW BUSINESS – there was no new business.
8. ADJOURNMENT 8:48 pm

Submitted,

Gretchen Mettler, Secretary