

**Housing Trust Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
Temporary Emergency Rental Assistance  
April 23, 2020**

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TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: July 6, 2020  
TIME: 2:10 PM

**Attendees:** Gloria Leipzig, Judie Feins, Betsy Lipson, Rachel Heller

**Temporary emergency rental assistance program**

- Housing Trust interested in using our CPA grant (\$250K) for a temporary emergency rental assistance program for income eligible Belmont residents affected by Covid-19 situation. This would be administered by Metro West Collaborative Development.
  - Here are drafts of the MWCD program guidelines, application and participation agreement. Draft 1BR \$750, 2BR \$950, 3BR \$1150. We will find out if these can be higher in Belmont.
  - MWCD will process applications, run a lottery, ensure eligibility, disburse funds to landlords, collect landlord W-9s and issue end of year 1099s. MWCD administrative costs: \$500 per disbursement.
  - Urgent to move on this because we need Town Meeting approval to modify the warrant language allowing this type of use of our grant. We need to get the timeline for getting articles on the warrant.
- We discussed that our HPP revealed many Belmont residents will have housing payment shortages. More investigation into current data is needed to show an estimate of households that would potentially be housing insecure because of Covid-19.
- When could funds be available? Even in towns that have approved use of CPA funds for this type of assistance (such as Newton), the timeline for fund disbursement would be about July.
- Discussion that housing assistance will be needed for months, not just immediately.
- Housing Trust will inquire about town guidelines regarding procurement (Gloria). MWCD would need to receive our CPA funds in order to disburse, as opposed to getting a reimbursement (Gloria to ask Floyd about this).
- We discussed options then decided to ask MWCD the extent to which Belmont could tailor the program. Agreement to prioritize income needs at 80% AMI and below.
- Discussed idea of public fundraising to help bolster the fund if there's a big demonstration of need
- Funds can only be used for rental assistance. Announcements need to communicate about other support programs, such as RAFT for those who qualify. RAFT offers case management/counseling and can direct people to other resources.
- Discussed possibilities of doing rounds of funding (first wave, second wave) to ascertain need. Because MWCD will keep a waiting list, we'll have a good sense of the need for additional rounds of funding. Our town will create a grant agreement with MWCD that will ensure unused funds are returned to the Housing Trust.

- If there's strong demonstration of need, HT could submit a special application for additional \$200K for November TM.

#### **Development of a rationale to present to TM**

- Discussed pulling together quantitative data, such as from MAPC, (Betsy), and qualitative data from the following local sources:
  - Council on Aging - Judie
  - Food Pantry - Judie
  - Town Social Worker - Judie
  - Select board - Judie
  - Veteran Office - Judie
  - Religious Council - Judie
  - Schools – Judie
  - Waverly Woods, Royal Belmont, Hill Estates - Gloria
- Pull together list of other assistance programs to show there's no duplication of funding being provided (i.e., eligibility and use, etc.)

#### **Next steps**

- Housing Trust will meet Tuesday 4/28 to discuss proposed approach and vote on amended warrant article
- CPC needs to vote on amendment
- Find out the timeline and process for submitting the amendment (Betsy)
- Develop proposal

Submitted by Betsy Lipson April 23, 2020