

**1st Public Hearing – 2023 Community Development Block Grant Program
July 24, 2023 @ 5:45 p.m.**

City Council Chambers, City Building, 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, Pennsylvania on Monday, July 24, 2023 @ 5:45 p.m.; Council convened as a Hearing Board in order to hear and receive comments, written and oral, reviews and have discussion on the 2023 Community Development Block Grant Program. Mayor Walsh opened the meeting at 5:45 p.m. Other Council Members present were: James Aughenbaugh, Diane Bernardo, Shane Dietz, and Pat Reasinger. Also present were: City Solicitor, Toni Cherry; Acting City Manager/City Engineer/Public Works Director, Chris Nasuti; Public Works Superintendent, Scott Farrell; Redevelopment Authority Director/Assistant Public Works Superintendent, Joe Mitchell; Finance Officer, DeLean Shepherd; Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer, Zach Lawhead; Police Chief, Blaine Clark and Administrative Secretary, Bobbie Shaffer.

Mayor Walsh opened the hearing at 5:45 p.m. and promptly turned the meeting over to Redevelopment Authority Director/Assistant Public Works Superintendent, Joe Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell read the Notice of Public Hearing for the City of DuBois, PA – FY 2023 CDBG Program in its entirety.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
FOR THE CITY OF DUBOIS, PA
FY 2023 CDBG PROGRAM**

Notice is hereby given by the City of DuBois that a Public Hearing will be held on July 24, 2023, at 5:45 P.M., prevailing time, in the DuBois City Council Chambers in the DuBois City Hall, located at 16 West Scribner Avenue, DuBois, PA 15801. The DuBois City Hall and Council Chambers are accessible to the physically disabled. Persons requiring special accommodations to participate in the hearing may call Mr. Joe Mitchell, Executive Director of DuBois Redevelopment Authority at (814) 371-2000, Ext. 204, to make those arrangements. Persons with hearing and/or speech impairments may contact the City through the PA Telecommunications Relay Services at 1-800-654-5984 or dial 7-1-1.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to discuss the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program in general, the needs of the City of DuBois, and the City's performance under the previously funded CDBG Program Years. In accordance with PA Act 179, dated Oct. 11, 1984, P.L. 906, No. 179, as amended, the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has allocated to the City of DuBois \$308,699.00 in FY 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds from the State's CDBG Entitlement Grant from the U.S. Department of HUD.

At least 70% of the available funds must be used for activities which principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons. The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) set the date for submission of the FY 2023 Application as October 27, 2023. In preparation for funding, the City will conduct a public hearing on the housing, community development, and economic development needs of the City of DuBois.

The following types of activities may be eligible for funding under the CDBG Program: water and sewer line replacement and improvements; housing rehabilitation; new construction of affordable housing; construction and reconstruction of public/community facilities; recreational facilities; public services that are a new or a quantifiable increase in the level of service; street and road improvements; historic preservation; the removal of architectural barriers; economic development; acquisition and relocation; clearance and demolition of property; costs to dispose of real estate; general administrative costs; planning; audit; environmental clearance; and the preparation of the application.

If the City would undertake the acquisition, demolition, and/or rehabilitation of residential properties that could result in displacement of families or individuals, then the City's policy for minimizing such displacement would be in effect. The City is responsible for replacing all low- and moderate-income housing units that may be demolished or converted as a result of the use of CDBG funds.

Mr. Mitchell asked if there were any questions, then read down through the Purpose of the Public Hearing:

1st Public Hearing – 2023 Community Development Block Grant Program (Cont'd.)

Purpose of the Public Hearing (Cont'd.)

- Discuss the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program in general.
- The City will receive \$308,699.00 in FY 2023 CDBG funds from the PA Department Community of Economic Development (DCED).
- Applications are due electronically to DCED using the Single Application Format by Friday, October 27, 2023.
- The city must conduct a public hearing to determine local needs for community development, housing, public services, and economic development.
- Residents, organizations, agencies, etc. are given the opportunity to participate in the planning process.
- The City's performance under previous CDBG Program Years.

Mr. Mitchell then went over the Program Guidelines:

- The City must prepare an application which outlines its plan on how it will spend the FY 2023 CDBG funds.
- Funds may be used for eligible activities such as: water and sewer line replacement and improvements; housing rehabilitation; new construction of affordable housing; construction and reconstruction of public/community facilities; recreational facilities; public services that are a new or a quantifiable increase in the level of service; street and road improvements; historic preservation; the removal of architectural barriers; economic development activities; acquisition and relocation; clearance and demolition of property; costs to dispose of real estate; general administrative costs; planning, audit; environmental reviews; and the preparation of the application.
- At least 70% of the project activity costs must benefit low-and moderate-income persons.
- A maximum of 18% may be used for administrative costs.
- A maximum of 30% of the project activity costs may be spent on demolition and clearance costs.
- All activities must meet one of the three (3) national objectives of the CDBG Program: principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons; removal of slums and blighting conditions; and activities having an urgent need.

Mr. Mitchell asked for comments and questions:

Solicitor Cherry asked if he could define the numbers that would constitute low to moderate income. In the past the number was 54% low to moderate income.

Mitchell stated that as a city, when they did the last census, we did not qualify citywide; after that census, we challenged it, we did our own survey, hired an independent company to assist us with that and we requalified at 52.4%. That qualification only lasted for five years, that five years expired in 2021 which should have been backed up by the 2020 Census, which we are in 2023 and still have not received the 2020 Census. So, we currently do not qualify as Citywide. As for actual numerical figures, it's a sliding scale depending on how many people are in your household. If we did a specific area, like a block, we would actually go house to house to survey those persons. The last two years, we have done waterline replacements in the block group that still qualifies for block group wide, which you can do because that project benefits the entire block group area.

Kathleen Clement

So there is no income amount such as under \$30,000 annually to qualify?

Mitchell said there is, but it goes by how many people live in your house. That number escalates accordingly to the number of people and the total salary for all the persons within that household.

She asked if there was anything in writing. Mitchell said he can get it for her, but you have to be very careful when you hand out that information; you can't say this is grant dependent, it is just a simple yes or no you may fall below this number.

Deb Mechling

Can any of the numbers be taken from the consolidation figures? Mitchell said they have a very specific survey; we actually hired a third party when we did the citywide survey. We had college kids help us, which had to be specially trained how to actually ask the right questions when they went out into the field. It is totally random, we let them come up with our random number generator which was associated with all the addresses in the city, so you can't cherry pick. They are very very good about not having you be able to manipulate that.

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(Cont'd.)

Mitchell asked if there were any other questions. If anyone does, following this meeting you are more than welcome to contact me or if you have any projects you would like to discuss offline, please call or come in and see me. We will be taking ideas for the next couple of weeks, and we will be re-advertising for a second hearing which we will announce at an upcoming Council meeting.

Mitchell turned the meeting back over to Mayor Walsh.

Walsh stated we have no further business to discuss at this Public Hearing, meeting is adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

ATTEST:  APPROVED: 