

**CITY OF OCONTO FALLS  
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CLOSE PROGRAM**

Council Chambers – Municipal Building  
500 N. Chestnut Avenue - Oconto Falls, WI 54154

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020 - 6:30 PM  
MINUTES**

Public Hearing called to order at 6:30 PM by Mayor Brad Rice

Mayor Rice read the Public Hearing Notice and indicated the notice was published in the Oconto County Times Herald on July 24 and July 31, 2020 and posted at the Oconto Falls Municipal Building, Oconto Falls Library, Witt's Piggly Wiggly, and City Website.

**Public Notice:**

*Notice is hereby given, that the City of Oconto Falls Common Council will hold a public hearing regarding the proposed Community Development Block Grant CLOSE - Public Facilities (CDBG-CL-PF) and Community Development Block Grant CLOSE – Planning (CDBG CL-PLNG) projects on Tuesday August 18, 2020 beginning at 6:30 pm in the Municipal Building; located at 500 N. Chestnut Avenue, Oconto Falls. This hearing is open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend and provide comments on the proposed projects.*

*The agenda for the hearing is as follows:*

- *Overview of the CDBG-CL-PF and CDBG CL-PLNG programs*
- *Presentation on proposed projects*
- *Public Comment*
- *Adjourn public hearing*

*Additional information on the two CDBG-CLOSE projects can be obtained by contacting Vicki A. Roberts, City Administrator at 920-846-4505.*

**Roll Call was taken:**

**Council Present:** Mayor Brad Rice, Aldermen: Marty Coopman and Devin Wirtz

**Also present:** City Attorney Larry Jeske, Deputy Clerk Nancy Brye, OCEDC Director Paul Ehrfurth, Ashley Bahrke, Samantha Doney, Debbie Arndt, Barb Salscheider, Melanie Rice, Tom Clark, Jim Damp, Loretta Shellman, Dale Konop, Max Mayer, Allie McDonald, Clint Braun, Stacey Goedel-Birr, Hansel Canady, Stephanie Holman, Warren Bluhm, John Wolford, Kimberly Bruesch, Peter Bruesch, Andy Mercier, and Nicole Wasmer

Mayor Rice turned the floor over to Paul Ehrfurth from Oconto County Economic Development Corporation.

Ehrfurth presented an overview of the CDBG-CL-PF and CDBG CL-PLNG programs. Communities in Wisconsin operated Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs which were overseen by the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA). With the recent close of these RLF programs, unused funds and receivables were returned to the state. Approximately \$1.7 million was sent back to the DOA from the City of Oconto Falls. The DOA is giving communities an opportunity to apply for grants to receive these funds back; however funds are limited to specific eligible projects. Ehrfurth explained eligible projects are: areas that have individuals with 51% low to moderate income; areas with slum and blight; and areas with an urgent need. Ehrfurth met with the City Administrator to discuss projects in which these funds could be used and presented them to the City Council at their meeting on July 14, 2020. One project that fits the criteria of areas with slum and blight was a 50 parcel area on Main Street. Maximum grant application funds for this project would be \$75,000 under the CDBG-CLOSE Planning Program. The committee suggested the Council retain a consultant to come up with a revitalization plan on the 50 parcel area for the Main Street area. Ehrfurth presented a map showing the area in need of revitalization. Another project that fits the criteria which benefits individuals with 51% low to moderate income was to make improvements to the Senior Center. These improvements would include installation of an elevator, expansion of restrooms, and make the building ADA compliant. Estimated grant application funds for this project would be approximately \$1,000,000 under the CDBG-CLOSE Public Facilities Program. Ehrfurth indicated there will be remaining funds available after these 2 projects; therefore we will need to look into additional projects that fit the grant criteria in order to utilize all funds. There would be another meeting and another public hearing for any additional projects. The Council has approved plans and resolutions at their July meeting and is holding this public hearing in preparation to proceed with seeking proposals from consultant firms to come up with revitalization plans on the Main Street and Senior Center revitalization projects and to proceed with grant applications to the DOA.

Mayor Rice opened the floor for public comment and input. A few basic questions were asked by the public and answered by Ehrfurth. Concerns were as to how long it would take to hire a consultant and how long it would take to complete the projects. Ehrfurth indicated they would like to issue a RFP and RFQ in the next two weeks as the application needs to be submitted by the end of this year. Once an application is approved, we would have 2 years to complete a project. Ehrfurth commented there would be extensive involvement with property owners. With everyone's cooperation, these projects will be great assets to the community.

### **Adjournment:**

After asking 3 times if there was any further input and hearing none, Mayor declared the Public Hearing adjourned at 6:55 pm.

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City Administrator Vicki Roberts