



**Longmont Housing and Human Services Advisory Board
Minutes of July 9, 2020 Meeting**

- Members Present: Ann Baldwin, Jake Marsing, Madelyn Woodley (joined at 7:23 pm), Graham Steers, Polly Christensen (Council Liaison), Brian Coppom, Kaitlin Abbitt (joined at 6:35 pm), Shaquita Yarbrough, Deanna Blair, Karen Phillips
- Members Absent: None
- Staff Present: Karen Roney, Kathy Fedler, Eliberto Mendoza, Nicole Blair
- Guests Present: Jen Garner with Root Policy conducting Focus Group
- Agenda Item 1: **Call to Order:** LHHSAB Chair Brian Coppom called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm
- Agenda Item 2: **Public invited to be heard:** No public present.
- Agenda Item 3: **Approve minutes from the June 11, 2020 meeting:** Deanna Blair called for a motion to approve the minutes with the correction of the Center for People With Disabilities site update to reflect they served 2000 people not 200; Jake Marsing seconded the motion. Ann Baldwin abstained as she was absent from the June 11, 2020 meeting. Motion passed 8-0-1.
- Agenda Item 4: **Technical Review Group (TRG) Recommendations on Habitat Funding Request:** Staff member Fedler reviewed memo of recommendation for the second quarter Affordable Housing Fund application cycle. Two applications were originally received but one applicant withdrew. The remaining applicant, Habitat for Humanity is requesting \$120,000.00 from the Consortium’s set-aside of HOME funding for CHDO (Community Housing Development Organization). The advisory board felt that the joint meeting on June 11, 2020 with TRG and being a part of the Habitat for Humanity presentation was very useful in making their vote tonight. TRG recommended full funding as a grant. Jake Marsing motioned to approve funding of \$120,000.00 as a grant from HOME set-aside funds to fund Habitat for Humanity; Karen Phillips seconded. Passed Unanimously.

Agenda Item 5:

Loan modification request from Longmont Housing Development Corporation (LHDC): Staff member Fedler reviewed the memo on the Loan Modification request from LHDC. The Loan was originally issued in 2015 in the amount of \$800,000 to purchase land. The loan is a 5 year interest only loan at 2% and was due and payable in March 2020. LHDC has been making their interest only payments and will make their 2020 interest only payment. LHDC requested the due date be extended to March 2021 to allow them more time to figure out options as the development of the land hasn't progressed as originally forecasted. Graham Steers motioned to approve the loan modification request from LHDC, and was seconded by Shiquita Yarbrough. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 6:

Human Services Needs Assessment Focus Group: Staff member Mendoza gave a brief introduction on the process and Jen Garner with Root Policy provided highlights and an overview of the data that has been collected done thus far. The draft Human Service Needs Assessment will be completed by the end of July 2020. Jen Garner then facilitated a focus group discussion with the Advisory Board. Currently Root Policy is in the Community Engagement of phase of assessment and due to COVID the deployment has obviously changed. Four focus groups have been held so far. The number one priority that has been communicated is help keeping people in stable housing. Child care continues to be a concern on many fronts such as parents working but cannot afford/locate child care as well as child care providers are struggling with operating their business as increase in need for supplies to comply with CDC requirements. The digital divide is a concern, lack of internet connection, lack of devices, and lack of facilities with devices. Another concern that has surfaced is knowing where to access resources when you need them. Folks just don't know what is available in the community; it's important to continue to outreach so community knows what resources are available and how to access them. Advisory Board provided feedback and discussion around these topics. Some ideas and points that the advisory board also shared were: the Advisory Board needs to identify and create something that is actionable now; need to create a sense of community among Longmont neighborhoods, and help people connect with each other within their neighborhoods. As an Advisory Board it is important to maximize our impact on the community. Board Member Woodley offered for anyone who has any ideas to email them to her and she can request that they be added to the August newsletter that the NAACP distributes.

Agenda Item 7:

Discussion about requesting increased funding: During the June meeting and as a response to the issues of race and equity occurring throughout the country, one of the advisory board members suggested that

the HHSAB send a letter to the Longmont City Council requesting an increase in funding of 10% to the Human Service funding to help address the root causes of social issues; it was suggested that this funding be re-directed from the police services budget. The advisory board member prepared a draft letter for consideration and further discussion for the July meeting.

There was much discussion around this topic along with varying opinions. Advisory board members shared personal experiences along with their views and ideas for change. The Advisory Board noted that this is a difficult discussion and shared appreciation for everyone sharing their experiences and opinions. It is difficult for people with privilege to understand what people of color have experienced. The advisory board expressed its desire to move from talking to action. System changes take time; what commitment can we make toward persistent and sustained action that will result in changes over time? Is the advisory board willing to challenge the system? What is the result of sending this letter?

Some initial reactions were: excellent letter, moral stance to take, however public safety has worked hard to be responsive and believe that Longmont Police are doing a good job, need the increased funding but don't believe it should come from public safety 100%. What is the possibility of looking at other departments within the city and see where money can be reallocated from? Need to fund human service funding at a higher rate without reallocating money from other city departments.

The Advisory Board has a desire to move quickly with this letter to City Council and would like for City Council to request feedback from groups who have experiences with the police department such as people of color, people with mental health, people experiencing homelessness, etc. Council needs to take a comprehensive approach to how people are experiencing policing in this community. Council Member Christenson encouraged the advisory board to not just send the letter, but to also speak before City Council about issues included in the letter; Council needs to hear everybody's voice on this.

Police department receives grants from other agencies to provide a variety of programs such as LEAD, CORE and the Angel Initiative, which are great programs. The question raised was whether these programs be run by law enforcement or by another department within the city or even an outside non-profit. It is important to be clear about what the advisory board is asking for; the community cannot do without its law enforcement service. The advisory board is not in any way suggesting that we defund our police force and want to be very clear about that when communication goes out. There are good officers who risk their lives daily for everyone's

safety; the police department needs to continue its work to be equitable and inclusive so there is consistency in behavior among all officers. The intent of this conversation and subsequent communication is not about defunding the police but about rethinking policing and asking what is their job and what should they be doing. No community is exempt from this conversation.

The Advisory Board needs to be thoughtful about what is being asked in the letter and the letter needs to be written to provoke the discussion that is going to provide the framework for what the Advisory Board wants and ensure that the request cannot be easily dismissed and not sure that asking for 10% of the police budget is the best way to go about it. How does the Advisory Board fund the human services that we know are so essential, how do we address issues of racism in our society's culture, how do we address racism in our police department and other areas of government? What is our role? These are all points that need to be considered when working on the letter.

Graham Steers motioned to submit the letter as written to Council; the motion was seconded by Jake Marsing. The motion failed 2-7-0. Members felt like points that were discussed tonight and that attempts need to be made to address the points raised and include in the letter. The Advisory Board feels like they have one chance to be heard and considered, and want to spend more time to think through their actions and content of this letter. It is important to understand one another before we send a letter; we want to have unanimous approval of our letter among advisory board members, so that it is impactful for City Council and demonstrates that we considered many sides of this issue. It was suggested that Graham Steers take the lead and revise the letter to include some of the things that were shared tonight as he did a great job writing the letter initially. Jake Marsing motioned to ask 3 members to serve on subcommittee, along with staff member Eliberto Mendoza to refine the letter, evaluate it and bring the letter back to a special meeting of the Advisory Board the week of July 20, 2020, Graham Steers seconded. Passed unanimously. The goal of the subcommittee is to try and get us something we can all get behind including how much money is the Advisory Board asking for and how is it going to be disbursed. Subcommittee discussion was held and decided on Graham Steers, Deanna Blair, Madelyn Woodley, and staff member Eliberto Mendoza. Staff member Eliberto Mendoza will take the lead on setting the subcommittee meeting and ensuring it's noticed.

Agenda Item 8: ***Other business:*** None

Agenda Item 9:

Adjournment: There being no other business to conduct the meeting adjourned by consent at 10:00 p.m.