

Belle Plaine, Iowa
March 6, 2024

The Belle Plaine City Council met on March 6, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Belle Plaine City Hall with Mayor Lyle Morrow presiding. Present were Councilpersons Garrett Landuyt, Judy Schlesselman, Charmaine Wickwire, and Mitch Malcolm. Councilperson Adam Papesh was absent. City Administrator Stephen Beck and City Clerk Sandy Walton were also present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Wickwire, seconded by Malcolm to approve the Consent Agenda, Council Minutes of February 21, receiving & filing of the minutes from the January 23 meeting of the Belle Plaine Community Library Board of Trustees, and bills received. All voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Resident Comments: None

Mayor Morrow opened the public hearing at 6:33 p.m. concerning the CDBG-DR Housing Grant Application #2.

Paul Mitchell from ECICOG reviewed required information regarding the proposed project activities for this grant:

1. How the need for the proposed activity or project was identified. The City of Belle Plaine has determined that CDBG DR funding assistance would be greatly beneficial in helping to create additional rental units in the community. There were only 123 rental units as of December 2022, and while a 5-unit project was funded with CDBG-DR funds was awarded and is under construction, approximately 42 more units are needed to meet current population needs. The August 10, 2020, derecho storm impacted housing availability throughout Iowa, and more significantly in Benton County. This created even more pressure to create rental housing in the community.

2. How the proposed activity or project will be funded and the source of the funds. The construction of four rental housing units in Belle Plaine will be funded with \$390,000 in CDBG DR funds, if awarded, and private developer funds of an estimated \$198,700.

3. The date the CDBG DR application will be submitted. The application will be submitted online no later than March 31, 2024.

4. Amount of federal funds to be requested. The amount of federal funds to be requested is \$390,000.

5. Estimated portion of federal funds that will benefit persons of low and moderate income. At least 51% of the funds will benefit households with incomes at or below 80 percent of the area's median income level.

6. Where the proposed activity or project will be. The proposed project activity will renovate the upper story of the King Theater Building, located at 720 12th Street in Belle Plaine, Iowa.

7. Plans to minimize displacement of persons and businesses as a result of funded activities or projects. Because the developer currently owns the building, and

because the residential units have not been lived in for years, no displacement is anticipated to occur.

8. Plans to assist persons actually displaced. Again, because the developer currently owns the building, and because the residential units are vacant, no displacement is anticipated to occur.

9. The nature of the proposed activity or project. The upper story of the King Theater Building will be completely renovated to create four rental units. Three of the four will be rented to low- to-moderate income households and all units will be marketed for the first four months to rent to households who were impacted by the 2020 derecho.

Then Paula reviewed the required community development and housing needs assessment as follows:

Community Development and Housing Needs Assessment - City of Belle Plaine

Community development and housing needs for low- to-moderate-income persons and others were assessed utilizing observations and data from the *Comprehensive Plan and Housing Needs Analysis* as well as 2016-2020 data from the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) and U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. Further conversation with community stakeholders (city and county officials/staff, as well as local housing and economic development organizations) were utilized to establish unmet community needs.

Community Development and Housing Needs of Low- to Moderate-Income Persons

1. Prioritized rehabilitation of the existing housing stock, particularly the 47% built prior to 1939, only 5% of the current housing stock was built since 2000, and those owned by 41% of homeowners in Belle Plaine who are also low- to-moderate-income persons.
2. Increased opportunity for home purchases for low- to-moderate income homebuyers, as currently 13% of homeowners and 41% of renters in Belle Plaine are cost-burdened, which is defined as spending greater than 30% of monthly income on housing costs.
3. Increased opportunity for affordable rental units for low- to-moderate income renters, as 94% of renters are low- to-moderate income persons.
4. Affordability supported through zoning, permitting, and technical assistance. The American Planning Association supports updating zoning, code and land use policies to create a more predictable permitting process, to decrease costs and expedite construction process.

Other Community Development and Housing Needs

1. Increased opportunities for economic development through efficient and well-maintained infrastructure and local workforce support through improved transportation and day care options as this further strengthens business and encourages continued community investment.
2. Expanded opportunity for recreation activities as vibrant communities with opportunities for social and civic engagement attract and retain residents.
3. Expanded housing options for those over age 65 who are 23% of the population in Belle Plaine as compared to population over age 65 across of Iowa of 17.6%. Senior citizens require adequate housing alternatives to remain in the community as they age. Expanded rehabilitation opportunities for those over 65 to make homes safer and energy efficient while improving older existing housing stock.

4. Expanded owner-occupied and rental housing options to accommodate existing population and future growth. The current vacancy rate in Belle Plaine is less than 1%. There are only 123 rental units, approximately 47 more units are needed to meet current population needs.

Planned or potential activities were developed in consultation with the Belle Plaine City Council and City Clerk in alignment with established strategic priorities in the Comprehensive Plan, Capital Improvement Plans and annual budget.

Planned or Potential Activities to Address Housing and Community Needs

1. High Priority: Apply for funding under the Community Development Block Grant-DR Program to increase housing options for low- to-moderate-income households.

2. High Priority: Prioritize Street, park/recreation, and public service improvements to make the best use public dollars and provide amenities and opportunities to attract and retain residents.

- Continue to identify roads and bridges in need of repair and restoration from derecho damage and as well as routine maintenance.
- Develop plan to identify water quality solutions.
- Develop plan to identify opportunities for innovative daycare solutions to support workforce.
- Continue to identify opportunities to expand recreation activities.

3. High Priority: Continue with Phase 2 of the Downtown Master Plan and the expansion of upper story living opportunities in the Central Business District.

4. High Priority: Update and review goals and identify other Capital Improvement Projects to establish or expand services enhancing public safety and ensuring services are provided at affordable rates for persons, especially those with low- to-moderate income. Date and location assessment was prepared: City of Belle Plaine City Council Meeting, Belle Plaine City Hall, on March 6, 2024.

Number of local residents participating including council persons: 8

Mayor Morrow closed the public hearing at 6:43 p.m. with no other comments from the public.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Landuyt to approve Resolution #24-03-03; a resolution authorizing and directing ECICOG to submit application and associated documents for funding for the CDBG_DR Round 2 to the IEDA. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Malcolm, seconded by Wickwire to approve Resolution #24-03-04; a resolution authorizing a service agreement with ECICOG (stating that the City will contract with ECICOG if the grant is awarded). On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Landuyt to authorize the mayor to sign the following required documents relating to CDBG-DR Housing Grant Application #2: Project Assurance Form, Developer Assurances Form, Duplication of Benefits Certification, Subrogation Agreement, Applicant Disclosure Report, Federal Assurance Signature Page, Receipt for Contractor Fraud Checklist, and ECICOG Service Agreement. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Kellie Van Ree, a Benton County Supervisor Candidate, was present to introduce herself as a candidate for the Benton County Supervisor role and briefly tell of her background and goals. The City Council thanked her for attending.

Jacob Sprengeler from Anderson-Bogert, Jesse Teibodeau and Mark Harle from the Iowa DOT gave a presentation on the Highway 21 overlay/school crossing project. They shared the proposal of the 4-3 lane conversion and the pedestrian hybrid beacon signal planned for the school crossing. This is roughly a \$800,000 project with the DOT covering most of the costs and the city purchasing the signal. They provided drawings of the plans and left them at city hall for us to share.

Based on feedback from the majority of local residents, the Council chose to proceed with mosquito control for 2024. Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Malcolm to approve signing a contract with Mosquito Control of Iowa. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Wickwire to approve the first reading of Ordinance #24-1; an ordinance amending the code of ordinances of the City of Belle Plaine, Iowa by amending provision pertaining to downtown parking. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0. The second & third readings will follow at the next two council meetings.

Motion by Schlesselman, seconded by Malcolm to approve the first reading of Ordinance #24-2; an ordinance amending the code of ordinances of the City of Belle Plaine, Iowa by amending provision pertaining to snow emergency-downtown area modification. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0. The second & third readings will follow at the next two council meetings.

Motion by Wickwire, seconded by Landuyt to approve the renewal of a Class B Retail Alcohol License with Sunday Sales for Family Dollar Stores of Iowa, 509 13th Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa. All voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Malcolm, seconded by Landuyt to approve the renewal of a Class E Retail Alcohol License with Sunday Sales for Zip Mart, 702 13th Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa. All voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Malcolm, seconded by Wickwire to approve Resolution #24-03-01; a resolution approving usage of ARPA funds for a new pool heater. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Schlesselman to approve Resolution #24-03-02; a resolution approving usage of ARPA funds for phase I of the new water meter & meter reading software project. On roll call vote, all voted aye, motion carried 4-0.

City Administrator Steve Beck reported that we heard back on the Direct Technical Assistance grant (precursor to the BRIC grant) and have been invited to submit the full application. Fehr Graham is pushing hard to finish the Preliminary Engineering Report in time for us to apply for a possible grant through the State Revolving Fund which is due in

April. BPCDC members toured the Hart Building. They will attend the March 20 meeting to discuss next steps. The City of Belle Plaine Iowa Facebook page is in development and should be ready to launch soon. We received environmental reviews back for both the fire generator and tree canopy grants. Public Works has hired Brant DeMeulenaere who will start next week. We have decided not to pursue the part-time public works position at this time. The appraiser was here to look at the Medical Center building. We should have the results by next week.

Mayor Morrow attended the Benton County Assessors Meeting on March 5th. It was a learning experience, and he will attend the monthly meetings going forward. There will be a BDG meeting later in March. The police department has had a police officer resign. A new candidate is being interviewed next week. We may approach Benton County to see if they can help with some interim coverage so as not to burn out current staff.

Correspondence: None.

Old Business: The City Council would like to get a list of homes that have been inspected in order to follow-up. Steve will get with Chief Hudson to get a current list.

We need to reinstate the sidewalk repair program that has not been active since the derecho. A couple of council persons have volunteered to create their own lists but have asked that public works create one also. Steve will compile and bring it to an April council meeting for further discussion.

Resident Comments: Officer Garwood addressed the council asking if they could investigate city cell phones for the police or police vehicles. Personal cell phones have been problematic lately and having a city phone through FirstNet gives them priority lines. This will get addressed with Chief Hudson.

Committee of the Whole: With BPCDC no longer being an active participant in the administration of the Business Incentive Grants, we are updating materials for potential candidates. The current and proposed changes have been reviewed and a few updates will be made. New documents will be available at city hall and posted to the website by next week.

Motion by Landuyt, seconded by Malcolm to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye, motion carried 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Lyle Morrow, Mayor

Attest: _____

Sandra Walton, City Clerk

Transcribed by the City Clerk subject to Council approval.