



**Planning & Development Division**  
*Planning & Economic Development Department*

Room 160  
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Community Development Committee Meeting Summary

Tuesday, January 05, 2021, 5:30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting- Web- EX

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Hamilton Smith called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm

Attending: Hamilton Smith, Valerie Joeckel, Theresa O'Halloran-Johnson, Steve Wick, Mike Mayou, Pat Sterner

Absent: Breanna Ellison, Mark Osthus, Anthony Reed-Fuglestad

Staff Present: Ben VanTassel, Suzanne Kelley

2. Approval of Meeting Summaries

October 27, 2020 Meeting  
November 17, 2020 Meeting  
November 24, 2020 Meeting  
December 8, 2020 Meeting

MOTION/Second: Sterner/ O'Halloran-Johnson moved to approve the meeting summaries. Vote (6-0)

3. Overview of Public Comment Period and Public Hearing

Manager Ben VanTassel described the Public Comment process. He reviewed the comments that had been emailed prior to the meeting. There were no questions on any public comments received.

4. Public Hearing on FY 2021 Annual Action Plan & Funding Recommendations

(All attendees will have 3 minutes to address the committee.)

Chair Smith opened up the public hearing.

Jason Beckman from SOAR provided highlights of the program, including how SOAR had a 70% success rate, their partnerships with the schools, colleges, and local employers. Their focus is on jobs that do not have traditional trainings. They also work with trade unions.

Jordan Johnson and Erich Lutz provided an update on the Life House programs, including the Economic Development job training, Public Service, and ESG applications. They explained the Life House has been very active during the pandemic. The ages they serve range from 14 to 24; 61% are BIPOC and 20% are LGBTQ+. They explained they have an outreach program, but most of the people are referred by friends and community partners. They also describe the success of the Legitimate Hustle training programs.

Justin Markon provided an update on the two Entrepreneur Fund programs. Growing Neighborhood Business is a six-week course program that focuses on market and sale strategy with an outcome of developing a Strategic Business Plan. Starting Neighborhood Business is a 12-week comprehensive training program that is focuses on minority owned businesses with the goal of development a Strategic Business Plan.

Margret Litts provided an overview of the YWCA programs; one is childcare and the other is a transitional housing program for young mothers. During the pandemic, their building had a waterline break that created a challenge for the building and operations.

Zayla Asquith-Heinz provided an overview the Community Action Duluth free tax site programming. She stated 1.8 million dollars was recouped during last year's tax assistance. She also explained how this program assists people with the digital divide.

5. Next Steps

Ben VanTassel explained that the recommendations for the 2021 Action Plan would be reviewed and voted upon at the January 26, 2021 meeting. Afterwards, the recommendations would be presented by the CD Committee to City Council on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

6. Adjourn

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021