

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
CDBG SPECIAL COMMITTEE PY50
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 20, 2024**

ATTENDANCE:

City Council Members: Mary McBride-Lee, Co-chair; Jazmarie Melendez, Co-chair; Richard Ortiz, Aikeem Boyd, Jorge Cruz

Citizen Union: Kathleen Ortiz, Orlanda Strong, Keith Cryan, Carmen Hernandez, Jessica Ortiz, Kelly Nims, Vaughn Sims, Denise West, Silvia Smith, Kelly McGee

HCD Staff: Anjerice Miller, HCD Senior Manager; Milta Feliciano, ESG HOPWA Program Mgr; Melissa Oliveira, CDBG Program Mgr; Ava Showah, Admin./IDIS Finance Coordinator; Obiara Nkwo, HOME Program Mgr.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair McBride-Lee called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. and outlined the rules of the public hearing as follows:

- Presenters will be given a two-minute limit to present the application.
- When the signal sounds to end the presentation, questions from the Council members and Citizen Union will be addressed.
- Presenters are requested to answer the questions without long testimonials and refrain from lengthy comments.
- Any Council members in the audience that have a conflict of interest with an application must leave the chamber during the presentation.

Attached is the list of CDBG public service applications with the PY 50 amounts requested.

Application Number	Agency Name	PY 50 Request
	CDBG- Public Service	
30080-01	Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation - Klein Theatre Arts	\$20,000.00
30089-02	Ortiz Boxing Gym, Inc. - Ortiz Boxing	\$68,000.00
30056-03	Downtown Cabaret Theatre - Subsidized tickets for Bridgeport Schools	\$138,434.00
30061-04	McGivney Community Center - After School Program	\$40,000.00
30130-05	Bridgeport Fire Department - Free Smoke Alarm	\$50,000.00

	Program	
30124-06	COB Department of Aging - Recreational Activities for Seniors	\$48,720.00
30062-07	COB Dept Public Facilities - Senior Trips and Program	\$20,000.00
30052-08	COB Dept of Public Facilities - Mayor's Conservation Corp.	\$70,000.00
30128-09	Community Resources for Justice - Bathroom Renovation	\$27,000.00
30040-10	Community Resources for Justice- Support Services for Formerly Incarcerated Individuals	\$50,000.00
30059-11	Holistic Recovery Solution Inc. - HRS Inc.	\$15,000.00
30084-12	Children in Placement - Connecticut, Inc. - Gaurdian ad Lietm Program	\$30,000.00
30100-13	Wakeman Boys & Girls Club - Smilow-Burroughs Clubhouse Out of School Program	\$20,000.00
30136-14	Wakeman Boys & Girls Club - Madison Ave. Community Clubhouse Out of School Program	\$20,000.00
30107-15	nOURish Bridgeport - Ensuring low-income Bpt. Resident's access to affordable, nutritious fresh food	\$50,000.00
30101-16	Recovery Network of Programs - McGrath House Kitchen and Bathroom Renovations	\$85,000.00
30140-17	Liberations Program - Mobile Outreach Program	\$18,312.00
30046-18	Hip Hop 1001 - Multi media Center	\$10,000.00
30114-19	Center for Family Justice - The Elizabeth M. Pfiem Camp HOPE America - Bridgeport and Pathways to HOPE Mentoring Program	\$50,000.00
30057-20	Caridnal Shehan Center - After School & Saturday Program	\$15,000.00
30137-21	Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust Inc. d/b/a Building Neighborhood Trust - ERA Capacity Building Prograam	\$60,000.00
30133-22	The Jewish Home for the Elderly of Fairfield County, Inc. DBA Mozaic Senior - Adult Day Services	\$15,000.00
30039-23	Career Resources - Bridgeport Reentry Welcome Center	\$150,000.00
30053-24	Bridgeport Field of Dreams Foundation - BFDF Focus on Sports as a Vehicle for Conflict Resolution	\$30,000.00
30064-25	Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District - Downtown Bridgeport Colorful Crew Beautification Expansion	\$20,000.00
30180-26	Cardinal Shehan Center - Facilty Upgrade	\$256,100.00
30156-27	Save Our Babies Inc.	\$80,000.00
30050-28	HomeBridge Ventures, Inc. - Building Hope	\$75,000.00

30172-29	Applied Behavioral Health Institute, Inc. - Tony Cinquanta Veterans Service Center	\$25,000.00
30144-30	Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders - Building Today's Youth... Tomorrow's Leaders	\$69,000.00
30145-31	Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders - Caribe Connections Parent Workshops	\$30,000.00
30134-32	McGivney Community Center - Facility Upgrade	\$225,500.00
30042-33	Applied Behavioral Health Institute, Inc. - Training for Success Vocational and Educational Program	\$25,000.00
30120-34	Central Connecticut Coast YMCA/Bridgeport YMCA - BPT Y-Ralphola Taylor Community Center	\$250,000.00
30182-35	COB Health and Social Services - Utility Shut-off Protection Program	\$50,000.00
30066-36	Children's Center for the Art - The Body Heals	\$35,000.00
30105-37	COB Dept. of Public Facilities - Maintaining the Park City's Urban Canopy	\$270,000.00
30131-38	Greater Bridgeport Symphony Society, Inc. - Music Mentorship Program	\$25,000.00
30162-39	Hall Neighborhood House, Inc. - HNH Senior Podiatry, Vision, and Hearing Education Program	\$25,000.00
30106-40	Hall Neighborhood House, Inc. - Science Educators for the Alan Wallack STEM Learning Center	\$50,000.00
30141-41	Hall Neighborhood House, Inc. - Hall Early Learning Center Computer Literacy Program	\$16,860.00
30090-42	CT HopeHouse Inc. - Youth Global Citizen Program	\$98,000.00
30125-43	The Color a Positive Thought - Social Emotional & Mental Health Project	\$50,000.00
30086-44	The Village Initiative Project, Inc. - V.I.P. College Tours	\$100,000.00
30097-45	The House of Darla - The Art of Heart: Empowering Youth from Foundation to Future	\$40,000.00
30138-46	The United Mentoring Academy, Inc. - The Light Program	\$585,000.00
30111-47	Hall Neighborhood House, Inc. - HNH Health Clinic COVID-19,RSV,Flu, Strep Throat, Screening Machine	\$45,000.00

The following applicants came forward--not in order of the application number, but in the order as called by Co-chair McBride Lee.

City of Bridgeport
Citizens Union HCD Committee
ECD&E CDBG Public Hearing #1
March 20, 2024

Note: Applicant names were not provided on a sign-up sheet, and are referred to as representatives of the application.

1. ESG HOPWA: Milta Feliciano, Program Manager, thanked the Committee, Citizens Union, and HCD staff for the holding the public hearing for the CDBG applications. She outlined the rationale for the request to supplement the budget for HOPWA region that addresses homelessness and endangered individuals that covers the region of Bridgeport, Norwalk, Danbury and Stamford.
2. HOME Program: Obiara Nkwo, Program Manager outlined the rationale for the request to supplement the budget for HOME that provides sanitary residence and addresses affordable housing for individuals that are at risk of homelessness.
3. 30080-01 Klein Memorial Auditorium Foundation – Klein Theatre Arts: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support student enrichment through green screen technology that will supplement the budget for wages for interns.
4. 30089-02 Ortiz Boxing Gym, Inc. Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support after school program for students to provide free fitness training enrichment programs including competitions with funding for travel expenses for transportation and hotels, etc.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

The staff are all volunteers that work to keep at risk students out of trouble, focused through exercise and fitness coaching, and the program has grown with past grant funding to include females and free competition funding for all students.

5. 30056-03 Downtown Cabaret Theatre: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support after school program for students to provide subsidized theater tickets for Bridgeport Schools to experience live theater.
6. 30061-04 McGivney Community Center: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support after school program for students focused on STEM to provide funds for cameras and photography labs and improvements and facility repairs to their studio.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

The programs are for students in grade levels K-8 and are focused on STEM with arts & crafts and also address social and emotional needs and instructional development, The staff works with volunteers and mentors that work to keep at risk students on a path of academic success

7. 30052-08 COB Dept. of Public Facilities: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support Mayors Conservation Corp. with local community events for family engagement such as holiday events, farmers markets, teen gatherings.
8. 30130-05 Bridgeport Fire Dept.: Lance Edwards, Fire Chief, Bridgeport Fire Dept. outlined the rationale for the request to support the City program of providing free smoke alarms + installation that provides home safety and accident prevention. Smoke inhalation is #1 cause of death. Dual detectors also include carbon monoxide detectors. That they have been installing for over 10 years.

In response to questions, of how many units? 1,500 smoke alarms – dual detectors are 1,000 for carbon monoxide. How advertised? Billboards are used along with pamphlets at the health department and they also go door to door distributing fliers/pamphlets and public service postings on the City website.

9. 30124-06 COB Dept. of Aging - Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support for recreational activities for seniors.
10. 30062-07 COB Dept. of Public Facilities - Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support for four senior centers – Black Rock, East Side, Eisenhower Center Programs to increase nutrition health & fitness, social leisure activities, isolation prevention.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

Programs include exercise classes, dance yoga craft activities, painting, crocheting – looking to expand to exercise – get out of chairs, vendors not used for salaries or admin costs include transportation to shopping, Walmart, second hand stores.

Funding goes for enrichment and recreation activities. Not used for salaries – Where are instructors from? Vetted vendors apply and collaborate with directors in state certified instructors.

How many serviced? 150 daily 8am – 3m – reach out to establish Bridgeport business services for volunteers and donations such as adult diaper donations.

Swimming water accessibility? – none swimming pool that was available was sold no longer available. Collaborated with Parks Dept. then moved to Health Dept.

11. 30057-20 Cardinal Shehan Center – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for facility upgrades. The programs are for subsidized family costs per month for drop-off, including transportation, field trips on scale based on family size/scholarships.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

The minimum wage increases resulted in increases in budget shortages. Prior grant awards were used for ADA compliance, kitchen improvements, gymnasium.

Yes, social emotional needs are addressed with response to DCF referrals, behavior challenges, along with using collaborative efforts with other non-profits.

12. 30180-26 Cardinal Sheehan Center Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the after school and Saturday programs.

Responses to questions and comments from the Citizens Union.

Funds are used to support and outlined budget supplements needed. Having access for adults to water for behavior & emotionally challenged is key and grants will be used for pool improvements, aquatic chair lifts, for all to have pool accommodations.

Yes, other individuals are allowed to use kitchen and rentals for groups, events, parties, helps subsidize budget. Individuals and non-members can also use the facilities.

13. 30128-09 Community Resources for Justice: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for incarcerated re-entry, transition housing for the family re-entry service center – enterprise housing – domestic violence – youth counseling and programs.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

Dept. of justice referrals are used for case management, they visit prisons twice/week – help change their paths. Youth prevention programs include individual counseling services for work with school referrals – outreach center services – integration with other agencies to provide 6 month interim housing and financial counselling to help individuals learn how save \$ and using subsidy programs.

14. 30059-11 Holistic Recovery Solution: Charlene Lee and Crystal Morris Bell – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for start up computers phone office supplies furniture and for public relations marketing of services to nurture healthy environment in recovery open certified support sober living home for women & children.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

How is communicated? Case management with DCF DEMUS and Public health referrals & foundations for a house from word of mouth communication efforts to collaborate business to business social media.

15. 30084-12 Children in Placement, Connecticut, Inc. Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Guardian programs. They work with the court of probate using volunteer advocates with DCF cases involved with the wellbeing of the child. social emotional –

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

How many people are served? Approximately 3,000 cases.

16. 30100-13 Wakeman Boys & Girls Club: Sabrina Smeltz – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the critical services for the Smilow-Burroughs Clubhouse Out of School Program. The objective is to support youth to inspire them in need to reach their potential. Located at Fairfield Ave programs this will help fund staffing for after school programs, grant funds are used retain staff team workforce development programs.
17. 30136-14 30100-13 Wakeman Boys & Girls Club: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Madison Avenue Community Clubhouse after school programs.
18. 30107-15 Nourish Bridgeport – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the farmer’s markets – SNAP food stamp program matching for farmers nutrition using Bridgeport bucks and education programs where chefs deliver for staffing direct delivery.
19. 30101-16 Recovery Network – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the McGrath House kitchen and bathroom renovations. They work with Dept of Housing Operations with mental health, substance abuse & housing post incarnation with shelter for homeless. They are currently at capacity.
20. 30140-17 Liberations Program – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the mobile outreach program. They have been in operation since 1971 as a non-profit, for this 3rd year of funding used for outreach worker and coaches.
21. 30046-19 Hip Hop 1001 Public Housing: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the replacement of AARPA funds that have run out.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

Programs include children’s music & art programs, and new technology of podcasting for fifteen Bridgeport schools in the Lighthouse Program including high schools: Central, Bassick, Harding.

22. 30114-19 Center for Family Justice: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Eliabeth M. Pfiem Camp HOPE America, Bridgeport and Pathways to HOPE Mentoring Program. These programs change lives of youth affected by domestic violence and child abuse with year long mentoring to age 17 & beyond, given chances that matter. Pathways to success provides no cost camping supplies for summer camp programs.

23. 30137-21 Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Building Neighborhood Trust, ERA Capacity Building Programs to address housing insecurity providing individuals to be household safe & affordable options serving 51 individuals this year and grants used will replace AARPA funds to meet needs & demand for services to increase staff.
24. 30133-22 The Jewish Home for Ederly of Fairfield County, Inc. Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the RN Community Mosaic adult day services. They partner with Jewish Community senior services and is nurse run for elders with medical needs support to avoid nursing home to be able to live at home. They provide support to 30 low income individuals in support of research that older adults is fastest growing segment, and increase with those with dementia, assistance to shower/toilet therapeutic nursing.
25. 30039-23 Career Resource – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Bridgeport Premiere Re-entry Welcome Center. With AARPA funds going away there is a budget gap to keep services growing for welcome center. They are working with Rep. Rosario for state funding serves 5,000 citizens with families making communities safer, including CPR first aid, court appearance help with Dept. of Justice for visitation of those incarcerated.
26. 30053-24 Bridgeport Field of Dreams: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the programs for student athletes. Resource shows when treated with pride & dignity, there is success in classroom.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

How many people are served? Approximately 3,000 cases, free for Bridgeport students. They hire students for clinics as coaches and public school interns gives them a first time as job, they have support of Superintendent of schools & public services, and they partner with University of Bridgeport, Sacred Heart University, and Fairfield University volleyball team as mentors,

27. 30156-27 Save our Babies – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the support of youth. Programs include basketball fitness with a banquet for incarcerated re-entry to allow those to give back to community support system.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

How many kids are served and are there school referrals? Students aged 11-18+ are provided field trips such as Nicks games, Jets football games. They have an annual toy & coat drive, and they fill in when they fall short of donations, providing over 500 coats. The mentorship program serves 17 kids to attend workshops each month, they bring in

police officers to expand offerings to pay mentors \$20/ hour. Also parental reach out to students in intercity and word of mouth referrals for the troubled kids.

28. 30050-28 HomeBridge Ventures– Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the building hope project for individuals returning from incarceration. They provide a safe space to address trauma, help them create relationships, and employment placement.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

Location? How many served? Lafayette Circle location served 200 people last month providing computer literacy, workforce development, safe environment and financial support during re-entry. They use funds to provide stipends to those most at risk members of community, helped 40 people for first year. They have a Zen den meditation room that is one of the therapies to help them return as citizens and they share guidance efforts with probation officer.

29. 30172-29 Applied Behavior Health Institute: Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for the Home of the Brave Veterans and Tony Cinquanta Veterans Service Center. Funds are used to address mental health needs and share with Home Bridge to service Vietnam vets. They have intake case manager former Marine Corps combat veteran that is a great resource for veterans mental health, therapist, emergency food pantry, dental hygienist.

30. 30142-33 Applied Behavioral Health Institute - – Representatives of the applicant outlined the rationale for the request to support and outlined budget supplements needed for Training for Success Vocational and Educational Program. They provide veterans employment & education collaborate with Housatonic College & University of Bridgeport with job applications and interview preparation. Sourcing out employers that employ returning from incarceration, and a new program for women, they have two houses for males experiencing homelessness.

Replies to questions and comments from the Council and Citizens Union members:

Address mental health? Clinical evaluations are provided to address and treatment programs for those with PTSD

Co-Chair McBride Lee asked the assembly if there was anyone who wished to make public comments, and repeated the question three times, and hearing none, she announced the public hearing was now closed and would be continued tomorrow.

Co-Chair McBride Lee thanked those for attending and presenting their applications.

ADJOURNMENT

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Telesco Secretarial Services