City of Takoma Park
GRANTS REVIEW COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 18, 2015

The City of Takoma Park Grants Review Committee met on Wednesday, February 18, 2015, in the Rose Room, Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park.

Members Present: Elizabeth Boyd, Gary Cardillo, Vineda Myers, Lesley Perry, and Jennifer Wofford

Members Absent: Akena Allen, Franca Brilliant, Pamela Coffey, and Doris Duarte

Staff Present: Sara Anne Daines, Director of Housing & Community Development

1. **Call to Order**
   Meeting called to order at 7:07 pm.

2. **Minutes – September 18, 2014**
   Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted, with the addition of the following as a second paragraph to *3. Discussion of Grants Process* from Jennifer Wofford:
   > The committee discussed the calendar and other methods of being more thorough in performing our responsibilities to the city, including in-person interviews with final candidates.

3. **Discussion of Grants Process**
   Call for Letters of Intent will be announced on Friday, February 20. Sara Daines clarified the purpose of the informational meeting. The committee agreed that this meeting should be run by Takoma Park Staff. Grants Review Committee members may attend. A sign-in sheet will be available at the meeting so that the attendees can be added to the distribution list for grant application notices.

   The committee asked that organizational budgets be added to the LOI.

   The committee discussed the differences between each grant program and confirmed that a link to grant requirements will be clearly listed on the LOI to ensure that applicants are aware of the requirements.

   The committee will review Letters of Intent to confirm that the eligibility requirements are being met. Anyone meeting the eligibility requirements will be invited to submit an application. Rubrics will be used in the application review, not LOI review.

   Applications are currently in a Word document format. Sara has been looking into a common application format. Gary provided the information on Washington Regional Area Grantmakers (WRAG). Lesley offered her assistance in finding a format that would work for the committee.

   Jennifer noted that our applications must ask who the organization is benefitting, how many people they reach or serve, and in what way are their lives being impacted. We also must make sure to include specific numbers for target audience and reach. Questions getting at this information exist, but need review and clarity. Applications are still being revised and the Committee hopes to find an application tool that will better streamline the applications, avoiding differences.

Action:

- Committee will provide Sara with names/email addresses of any individuals/organizations who might be interested in submitting or could distribute the call to their contacts.
- Sara will place the rubrics used in previous years on the Dropbox for committee review.
- Sara will send links to common applications for review.

4. Discussion of FY16 Grants Schedule

Sara provided a preliminary schedule for the FY16 review based on the schedule sent to the committee by Jennifer via email. Slight changes were made in the dates to provide more time for application review in May.

The committee discussed the inclusion of interviews in the schedule. While everyone agreed that there was a definite need to hear from the applicants if the committee needed clarification, the method of receiving this clarification was debated. Committee members who were not at the previous meeting asked for clarification on the need for three weeks of meetings and interviews. Lesley asked about the need for interviews if the committee will have a chance to send clarifying questions at an earlier point in the review. Vineda highlighted the need to allow applicants a venue to speak rather than relying on written responses. Franca Brilliant wrote in by email her 'strong support" of in person interviews, and Jennifer spoke in favor of in person interviews in order to be thorough and careful in our decisions. Since consensus was not met, Sara confirmed that the additional weeks could be marked as tentative since it would be preferred to set aside the time as needed and the discussion could be continued at the next meeting.

The committee agreed we'd like to have City staff present during our meetings, in case their assistance is needed.

Action:

- Sara will distribute a revised version of the schedule for review by the full committee.
- Committee will vote on the inclusion or format of interviews at a later date.

5. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Lesley Perry, Grants Review Committee Secretary