



Legislation Text

File #: 17-337, **Version:** 1

ACTION REQUESTED:

Communication from the City Manager and the Director of Community Development with a Recommendation to APPROVE an AGREEMENT, which Supersedes all Previous Agreements, with the EAST BLUFF NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICES (EBNHS), Regarding the Use of Special Service Area (SSA) Funds for FY2018.

BACKGROUND: The City has been a major supporter and sponsor of EBNHS activities throughout the years and has demonstrated a strong commitment to the agency by providing public funds, building capacity, and leveraging EBNHS neighborhood programs.

On December 13, 2011, City Council approved Ordinance No. 16,781 levying the EBNHS SSA for FY2012. In addition to the levy, Council agreed to place EBNHS funds in escrow in order for the EBNHS to demonstrate their ability to implement specific, measurable programs and activities that directly benefit the households in the SSA.

On May 8, 2012, City Council received and filed a detailed status report by Council Member Timothy Rigenbach regarding the EBNHS efforts to achieve specific and measurable benchmarks identified by the City Council for the EBNHS FY2012 program year. On July 24, 2012, the City Council approved a request to forward a letter of commitment to the EBNHS to allocate \$15,000 of FY2012 SSA funds for the FY2012 EBNHS Health and Safety Loan Program, provided the City entered into an agreement with EBNHS for FY2012.

City Council and Staff worked with the EBNHS Board of Directors during 2012 to develop a new agreement, which superseded all previous agreements. Council entered into the agreement on December 11, 2012 for FY2012 and FY2013 and approved Ordinance No. 16,916 to levy SSA funds for FY2013.

On November 26, 2013, City Council entered into an agreement for FY2014 and approved Ordinance No. 17,042. As part of the 2014 agreement, \$15,000 was designated to the Health and Safety Loan Program. The Health and Safety Loan program was proposed to provide 0% interest housing loans up to \$5,000 to eligible low income households that reside in the EBNHS SSA in need of emergency housing repairs.

Per the 2012-2013 agreement and the 2014 agreement, the Health and Safety Loan program was required to meet State and local requirements. In the fourth quarter of 2012, EBNHS submitted a draft of the Health and Safety Loan Program to the State of Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation for review, to determine whether or not EBNHS was exempt from the requirements of the Residential Mortgage Licensing Act of 1987. They engaged in dialogue with the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation and made multiple revisions to the program, as requested by the State.

On September 12, 2014, an interpretation was provided by the State that based on the revised program, EBNHS is exempt from licensing requirements through the State of Illinois in operating the Health and Safety Loan Program. Once the revised Health and Safety Loan Program is approved by Council, as part of the attached agreement, EBNHS can proceed with issuing Health and Safety Loans. For 2012 through 2014, a total of 45,000 (15,000 per year) was placed in a City account for use by EBNHS upon State approval of the program. This is required to be matched by \$45,000 by EBNHS. As a result \$90,000 was made available for the issuance of Health and Safety Loans by EBNHS in 2014, continued quarterly disbursements in 2015.

On December 9, 2014, City Council entered into an agreement for FY 2015, in which \$15,000 was devoted to the Health and Safety Loan Program and the remainder was devoted to operations. On June 23, 2015, the agreement was modified to devote \$40,000 to operations, with the remainder devoted to the Health and Safety Loan Program.

On December 8, 2015, the City Council entered into an agreement for FY 2016, in which all funds were devoted to operations (no additional funds were directed to the Health and Safety Loan account).

On, July 12, 2016, the agreement was amended, as, EBNHS borrowed \$15,000 from the Health and Safety Loan account for operations during 2015. Per the SSA agreement with the City, these funds were restricted for the issuance of Health and Safety Loans. In addition, \$10,108.86 of SSA funds designated to the Health and Safety Loan fund, and required to be matched by EBNHS, were not matched. As a result, the EBNHS Health and Safety Loan account is \$25,108.86 short.

In place of a repayment plan, as proposed by EBNHS, the following items were included as part the 2016 amended agreement:

1. SSA funds for 2016 will continue to be devoted to personnel and operating expenses, with no additional funds designated to the Health and Safety Loan Program.
2. The EBNHS shall immediately open all financial records to the City. These records will remain fully available to the City as long as Special Service Area funds are provided to the EBNHS.
3. The EBNHS Executive Director and/or other staff shall complete a course of training on budgeting, technical, and financial management acceptable to the City by December 31, 2016.
4. The composition of the EBNHS Board shall be restructured and the bylaws revised, as necessary, following a board retreat facilitated by the LISC and the City of Peoria.

On, November 15, 2017, the City Council entered into an agreement for FY 2017, in which all funds were devoted to operations (no additional funds were directed to the Health and Safety Loan account).

Some of the notable EBNHS accomplishments for 2017 include:

- 1) Health and Safety Loan Program
 1. Eight (8) New H&S Loans approved in 2017, for a total of 20 Health & Safety Loans.
 2. EBNHS has partnered with Navicore to offer credit repair; Chase Bank, Heartland Bank, Associated Bank and PNC Bank for underwriters; the City of Peoria for the EVGC TIF match as well as the Health Department for Lead abatement.
 3. EBNHS Has partnered with Heartland Bank for neighborhood residents credit repair and opening of checking and savings accounts
 4. Assisted 20+ residents with EVGC Housing Program application.
 5. EBNHS is forming relationships with landlords to improve the quality of the rental property in the community by keeping open communication with landlords/tenants as well as tenant referrals.
 6. EBNHS has completed 25 projects in the 2017 Community Core boundaries (22 Paint & Porch, 2 siding and windows, 10 Lawn & Landscape and 5 Locks & Lights), while forging relationships with hard to reach residents.
 7. EBNHS partnered with 7 different organizations (Dream Center, Mission Peoria, ReBuilding Together, Glen Oak Christian Church, City of Peoria, Public Works and Keep Peoria Beautiful) and held 8 successful work days as part of the Community Core.
 8. Employment Opportunity - With the help of our Resident Officer and the Community Core Initiative,

EBNHS was able to recommend 22 neighborhood residents for employment.

9. EBNHS Manages 16 units in partnership with IFF. This relationship has opened the door with new partnerships throughout the City (HSC, Advocates for Access, Salvation Army, VA and many more). EBNHS has processed over 30 applications for occupancy and successfully filled 16 units.
10. EBNHS in partnership with Resident Officer Hightower, has started a tutoring program that works with the youth in the neighborhood scholastically as well as spiritually. This program offers help with homework and visits with community leaders. EBNHS has partnered with University of Illinois and they have provided 2 tutors for our after school program.
11. EBNHS has partnered with Glen Oak Community Learning center with the help of Mr. Grace to offer a reading program through the summer.
12. Because of our relationship with Peoria County Adult Probation Department, EBNHS has received 10,000 + public service hours performed throughout the SSD service area. This includes lawn care, trash removal, painting, minor repairs, cleaning, weeding of the gardens and upkeep of the pocket park. There were 50 individuals that gave back directly to the communities they offended.
13. EBNHS, with the help of the City of Peoria, has completed the Butterfly Habitat Monarch on Wisconsin Ave. (801 Behrends) The butterfly Garden. Lawn Order participated in painting the pallets for the fence and drawing butterflies on the fences.
14. Lawn Order Academy - This program was started for the at risk youth to give them a different outlook on life through accountability in the community, financial responsibility, as well as educational and personal goals. There are 50 youth that mow vacant lots throughout the city in this program with a waiting list of 100+. (Second year). Lawn Order maintains 55 residential yards in the East Bluff as a result to the mowing vacant lots for the City of Peoria. Residents wants to help contribute to keeping the youth busy and staying out of trouble.

For a full list of accomplishments, please see memo attachment B.

The same agreement adopted for 2017 is proposed for 2018 (Attachment A), with the following changes:

- ❖ H & S Loan Program - For 2018, \$7,500 of Special Service District funds will be devoted to the Health and Safety Loan Program, and will be matched by \$7,500 of EBNHS private funds; for a total of \$15,000 devoted to the Health and Safety Loan in 2018. SSD funds devoted to the Health and Safety Loan Program will be disbursed in January of 2018. EBNHS will deposit their match in the Health and Safety Loan Account by the end of each quarter, for the first three quarters. The match amount is \$2,500 each quarter, for the first three quarters. EBNHS final match amount must be in the Health and Safety Loan account by September 30, 2018. Funds designated to the Health and Safety Loan Program through 2017 have been exhausted. All repayment of issued loans must go back in the Health and Safety Loan account toward the issuance of additional loans.
- ❖ City and LISC Appointed Board Members - Instead of one board member appointed by the City and one board member appointed by LISC, as was done in 2017, two board members will be appointed by the City for 2018; the 2017 City appointed board member will remain the same. The 2017 LISC appointed board member will also remain the same but will be appointed by the City for 2018.

The Dashboard report developed in 2011, serves as the EBNHS work plan (Exhibit 1). For the 2017 work plan, the following change was made to the dashboard:

- ❖ Goal and Benchmark 1: EBNHS will still submit at least 2 grant applications quarterly, with limited duplication in grant sources but EBNHS has added fundraising to this benchmark. EBNHS board members will participate in fund raising activities. These activities will include an end of year appeal and a major fundraising activity. The goal is to raise \$45,000.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: FY2018 SSA funds will be dispersed quarterly per the agreement terms.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS: No public meetings were held regarding the 2018 proposed agreement.

IMPACT IF APPROVED: The EBNHS will receive EBNHS Special Service Area funds for revenue received by the City from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018, for the use of personnel and operating expenses.

IMPACT IF DENIED: An agreement between the EBNHS and the City of Peoria would not be approved and no SSA funds would be dispersed for 2018.

ALTERNATIVES: N/A

EEO CERTIFICATION NUMBER: 00725-151231

WHICH OF THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE COUNCIL'S 2014 - 2029 STRATEGIC PLAN DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION ADVANCE?

1. Attractive Neighborhoods with Character: Safe and Livable

WHICH CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTOR(S) FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DOES THIS RECOMMENDATION IMPLEMENT?

1. Reinvest in neighborhoods.

DEPARTMENT: Community Development