

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was conducted by the Human Affairs Committee on Monday, February 11, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire, Chairman, presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman June M. Caron, Vice Chair
 Alderman Patricia Klee
 Alderman Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja

Members of the Committee absent: Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

Also in Attendance: Carrie Schena, Urban Programs Department Manager

PUBLIC HEARING

FY20 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT & HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PLANS (Comments on Past Performance and Identifying Future Needs for the Fiscal Year 2020 CDBG & HOME Program Annual Action Plan)

Chairman Wilshire

Tonight we have the public hearing on the Community Development block grant and I'd like to invite Carrie to join us please. This is our annual CDGB process and this year we have \$1.4 million dollars in requests and only about \$693 to allocate, so it is going to be a tough year. I just want to point that out; all good causes, all good organizations looking for funding, we will do our best. Did you have anything to add Carrie before we ask for public comment?

Carrie Schena, Urban Programs Department Manager

Not really, I mean if you want me to just give a brief overview of the programs. So each year the City receives Community Development Block Grant Funds and HOME Investment Partnership Program funds. We put out a request for proposals each year for the CDBG funds. Typically we used to receive our allocation in about February from HUD, that has been delayed over the past few years. Last year it was May when we received our number, so we will work on an estimated number. We don't know what the allocation will be, it's a formula. They are anticipating or the word is that nationally CDBG will be level funded at the Congressional level. That doesn't mean we will get the exact same amount. The formula takes into consideration population, poverty density, housing density, things like that; so it does vary from year to year.

What I have presented is just a round-off of last year's entitlement to give us a number to work on. As we develop the action plan, we should have a contingency for if the grant comes in a little higher or lower how those funds might be allocated. Sometimes communities say – well if we have a little more money we will fund this project. Others say – we just disburse it proportionally; there are various ways we can address that.

Tonight's Public Hearing is to get input on what we think the priorities should be and that is from the community on this year's Action Plan. This is the fifth year of the Consolidated Plan which is the big plan that we do, it is a 5-year plan and it involves a lot of community input and that sets the priorities and identifies the needs for how these funds should be spent over a 5-year period. As I mentioned this is the last year of that 5-year plan. We have done well in meeting a lot of the goals in the plan given the funding that we have received. Unfortunately the funding typically has been reduced each year, rather than increased. We haven't been able to meet all the targets, I think we will also never really truly solve all of the goals or the needs in the community. But we have pretty much kept on target to what that 5-year plan identified.

This coming summer we will start that process again so just a little plug that we will be looking for community input to develop another 5-year plan. But tonight's Hearing is just to speak about our 1-year plan that will be submitted as soon as we get that number from HUD. Typically the funding doesn't come in until the fall on a good day; so although we are starting the process now, sometimes it is almost a full year before we have the money and can really get the projects rolling out in the community. That's it.

Chairman Wilshire

Ok for those of you who haven't signed up, I guess I should get the sign-up sheet, could I have my yellow sign-up sheet. If any of you haven't signed up, there is a sheet in the back if you want to speak; probably most of you have already, ok. Please give your name and organization for the record.

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR

Rocky Morelli, Opportunity Networks Ok the benefits of being early. I am Rocky Morelli, I am the Executive Director of Opportunity Networks. I guess I am the new kid on the block; this is our first appearance in front of this group making this request. In other ways I am an old kid on the block, I grew up in Nashua, born in Nashua. I have been the Executive Director of Opportunity Networks for 31 years. We are a Nashua-based non-profit; we go back to 1980 when we were started by a local parents group that also started at the same time or in a similar period the Mount Hope School and the PLUS Company – Kim is over there.

At our inception we were known as the STEP Program; in the 80's we changed to Nashua Employment & Training Works and then in 2006 we went into a merger with the Souhegan Valley Association and became Opportunity Networks. We work with individuals, primarily adults and students transitioning out of high school that have development disabilities or other acquired disabilities. We tend to focus on trying to find people employment. In many cases it is supported employment where we develop jobs for them and put the necessary supports in place for them to be able to maintain some level of part-time employment and in some cases full-time employment.

We believe strongly it promotes workplace diversity which we think is good for all communities. We have had a great success rate; I believe we are working with somewhere in the vicinity of 40 local employers and supporting 50 individuals from Nashua but a total of 170 some odd individuals overall. One of the greatest impacts that we also bring to a community, it is not only do we support the individual with the disability but it creates a situation where there is a lot less pressure on their families that they have to provide care for them so that they are able to maintain regular scheduled, regular jobs, regular lifestyles, that allow them to stay active in their current situation without having to make drastic changes to their family structure.

We are asking for building repairs. We do a lot of work throughout the community, we are big on inclusion and integration but we do work out of our facility. Our facility, we moved in 30 years ago in 1988 so it is kind of a little bit rundown and we think it is important that we make some repairs. The way that our funding works, we receive a lot of State and Federal funding, a lot of Medicaid dollars.

It is hard for us to budget money for capital repairs and those types of things, that's why we seek your assistance.

The other area that we tend to do a lot of focus on these days is really working with people to live healthy lifestyles. When people have disabilities they can be very lethargic in their routines, they don't always make good, healthy choices and we are spending a lot of time focusing on those types of activities which we also think bring savings to the health care systems, other parts of the community and really make it so that the awareness of health and wellness is an important piece for everyone throughout the community. We have developed relationships with a number of the local health facilities, Conway Ice Arena, those types of things. So it is very important and those are the things we focus.

So I thank you for this opportunity to just explain a little more to supplement our application which has other information in it, but I appreciate the opportunity so thank you.

Chairman Wilshire

Thank you very much, keep up the good work. Good evening, how are you?

Norm Bouthiette, Boys & Girls Club Good evening, very good, yourself?

Chairman Wilshire

Good thanks.

Mr. Bouthiette That's good. Norm Bouthiette, Chief Executive Officers of the Boys & Club of Greater Nashua. First and foremost I just wanted to thank you for your help over the past several years. And for that matter the long-standing support that probably goes back decades of making our building safe and prepared and maintained for the 3,000 registered club members that belong to the Boys & Girl Club and the other 3,000 members that also join us from the community that are non-registered. On a given day, we have about 500 school-aged children that attend the Boys & Girls Club.

Of course, a 50,000 square foot building with a \$3 million dollar budget and business plan of 70% of that \$3 million is fundraised because it is so critical to make sure that we are serving the kids that need us the most. 66% of our kids are either at low, medium or high risk income children from very, very low moderate incomes. So that's the important thing at the Club; last year we got the funds for the HVAC units which we are going to be working with a bid coming in another couple of weeks with Bob Rice and hopefully that project will be done by June if not earlier and that is our plan.

The project that we have on the table right now is not really an exciting project sort to speak but it is a very important project because we have a very serious drainage problem in the north side and the northwest of the Club. It is the Teen Parking lot and also the Kids Club Playground and it is on the side of the pool where we have a lot of water that comes down off the roof. We park our vans in the back and there are times when our vans have to be relocated and staff has to relocate their parking and it is a very serious standing water issue that occurs several days and sometimes weeks afterwards.

The project itself when it was scoped was about \$140,000.00. Once you bring in, as we all know, get civil engineering and get the scope of the project it does get quite expensive. This proposal we are asking for \$80,000.00. We felt that there are a couple phases in this and we certainly will help do our part with the engineering and design as well as some of the construction. I have photos as well that I will share with you in a few minutes of the four locations that we have. Recently on that last storm that we had, I know it is unusual, we had an awful lot of flooding in the City.

We had basically about 18 inches depth in the middle of our parking lot and we had pumps going to make sure that it was about 5 feet from the back of the Club, from the Teen Center where the water could have come in if we didn't get the pumps going. So we have done that several times, it happens about four times a year it seems like on a quarterly basis. It is a point where the playground gets, the kids aren't able to use the playground quite like they could all the time because the playground is under a lot of moist mud and water and so forth.

So that is what basically what the – the weekends too, because we have a lot of rentals and we have the team out there and so some of the programs can be limited from that water that remains there and is not properly drained and so forth. So part of the project will be to do some culverts but more importantly it is sort of like a reservoir that will be on the other side of one of the nulls in the back of the parking lot. So that is basically what we are looking for some help and I just hope that you can see these photos that I will pass out, it will explain very well and it will show you the photos of the water. Here you go Carrie, there are two there and one here.

I don't know if I want to take the time to go over this or not but I will just wrap it up because there are quite a few other folks that are here and I don't want to take too much time. But you can see the dumpsters are basically floating back there and you can see the vans where the water is going up to the tires. We have had staff that have gone out there at 8:30 or 9:00 because as you know we transport our kids home at night and so forth so it gets to be a very unhealthy situation in the back of the Club.

Chairman Wilshire

Norm I have a question, do you have catch basins back there at all?

Mr. Bouthilette What's that?

Chairman Wilshire

Do you have catch basins in the back?

Mr. Bouthilette That's a great question, yes we have, they are dry catch basins and they just don't handle to be honest with you I don't think they were properly engineered once upon a time and I'd rather not get into that history. And the other catch basin that is in the middle of the parking lot does extend out to where there's a ballfield there and the end of the City street there, Simon Street, there is a catch basin there. But the situation is that we've had that looked at several times, but the one that is in the middle of our rear parking lot actually, I'd say it is about 8 feet deep, but it goes up. And so when the water comes down the side of Grand Ave. on the side by the gymnasium and so forth, that water just comes right into the parking lot and it has nowhere to go once that drain is set up. I've had the City many a times, they have been real helpful coming to I don't know what the terminology is but to blow them out or whatever or to clean them up and jet them or whatever. It still hasn't worked over the time.

We are kind of at wit's end and if you can help us with this little cause, I know money is always – you know – there are so many great causes and great projects that sometimes fall in precedence over something like this. But any help would be beneficial for us to just try to do the best job possible in taking care of this particular matter. So other than that, thank you very much and if you ever want to come over for a site visit bring your galoshes. I did have a photo of a kid with a yardstick but I didn't want to give you too many visuals.

Chairman Wilshire

Thank you Norm.

Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja

Norm do you have any more copies of this?

Mr. Bouthilette Yes I do.

Alderwoman Melizzi-Golja

May I have one more just to put with our minutes, thank you.

David Villotti, Nashua Children's Home Madam Chairman and members of the Committee, I am David Villotti, Executive Director of Nashua Children's Home, 125 Amherst Street. Nashua Children's Home provides residential care for – we were founded in 1903 first of all as the Nashua Orphanage Association so we've been around in Nashua for a number of years providing services to at-risk children and their families.

Our largest and longest standing program is our residential program which provides for 46 boys and girls between the ages of 6 and actually up to 21 years of age. These are kids that are sometimes horrifically abused, sometimes involved in delinquent behavior, certainly a great need. They are referred by our State's Child Protective & Juvenile Justice Agency. So that is our largest program.

We also provide educational programming for 30 students that are identified with special education needs, referred by local school districts. Then we have our transitional living program which operates almost entirely on charitable contributions which provides housing and on-going staff support and encouragement to 9 young adults that are 18 year olds that have aged out of the Child Protective Juvenile Justice System and face the challenges of adult living on their own absent any financial support from their families of origin.

The proposal we have for you tonight and we certainly appreciate all the support from this Committee for block grant funding for various projects for Nashua Children's Home throughout the years is to replace the windows in our girl's home at 86 Concord Street. We are asking for \$45,600.00. It is a large, old brick mansion there, one that goes back to the 1890's as far as its inception. We have owned that property since 1993 and certainly none of the windows have been replaced at that time. It provides housing for 12 adolescent girls and there is greatly a need for energy efficiency and a number of other factors to have those windows replaced.

I wanted to talk a bit about the value of Nashua Children's Home to this City and its tax payers and I wanted to talk a little bit about the realities of Court Ordered placements for youngsters in the Child Protective or Juvenile Justice System. When these youngsters go to Court and there is an order to place them in residential care, they may not be placed at Nashua Children's Home. They may be placed at the Spaulding Youth Center in Northfield, they may be placed at the Easter Seals New Hampshire in Manchester; they may be placed at the Mount Prospect Academy in Plymouth; they may be placed at other various organizations throughout the State. When that happens and those youngsters are identified with special education needs, this City and its tax payers as far as special education funding is on the hook for \$45,000.00 which is interestingly the amount we are asking for the assistance for but it is that amount that the City needs to pay to those organizations for special education programming for those students.

It really happens without any control by the Nashua School District as far as where those kids will be placed. So they really need to just simply write the check if that youngster is ordered to the Mount Prospect Academy in Plymouth and that Nashua kid goes to Plymouth and they are educated at that

facility. The Nashua School District writes a check for \$45,000.00. Conversely, if that same student is placed at Nashua Children's Home, for residential programming and continues to attend their same educational programming in the Nashua Public Schools, it costs the City and its tax payers \$0 additional dollars. They continue to attend their same educational programming, transportation is often provided by Nashua Children's Home for them to do that so there is cost savings of \$45,000.00 per kid, per year. Typically about half of the kids at Nashua Children's Home are City of Nashua residents, typically about 80% of those youngsters are identified with special education needs.

So doing the math, you can see that there is a significant cost savings per year, every year to this City and its tax payers by the very existence of Nashua Children's Home. Beyond that, it is also really the best service we can provide for youngsters to keep them local. What we know, having done this work for so long, is that the number one factor and the success of kids coming out of residential care is the ability to help them maintain membership with their families and to maintain connections with their home community; not the community up in Plymouth or the community in Portsmouth. Because what we do know is that when those kids age out, they will be coming back to this community, to this City and they are going to be best off if they maintain those connections over the years.

So we are able to provide a service to this City and its taxpayers and its families and its at-risk youth by keeping kids local and keeping them local at a cost that is much less than if they were placed in a facility. So once again we ask for your support for this project. We think that it is something that is well in need, and thank you again for all of your support over the years. Thank you.

Donna Arias, The Young Council Good evening, thank you for having us out here. I am the new Executive Director for the Youth Council and I just wanted to give a quick overview of our organization and then the proposal we put in. So we are a small non-profit that has a nice 125 year old building downtown; we've been here for 45 years. We provide services to at-risk youth and their families, we provide counseling. A lot of the kids that we take really couldn't afford to get counseling otherwise. We run a suspension center for Nashua kids grade 5 through 8 and we also provide Court Diversion for first time offenders which has some significantly lower recidivism rate which of course is also a cost savings.

So we put in a \$40,000.00 bid to replace our 30 year old heating system on the second and third floors of the building which really obviously having heat in New Hampshire in the wintertime allows us to provide services or we could not be open. It was interesting because the day after we put in the proposal the heat went out on both floors. They were able to work something and get it working again, they came right out the next day, which we were lucky in the cold weather to have that happen but the concern is that if we really don't do something about it we may not make it through another winter. So thank you for your consideration and help with us in this critical need.

Kim Shottes, The PLUS Company Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening. I am Kim Shottes the Executive Director of the PLUS Company which is located right over there at 19 Chestnut Street. We bought our building about 7 years ago and actually received CDBG funds for half of our parking lot back then. The other half apparently didn't need it – no.

We provide supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders. We serve over 400 individuals and we use our Chestnut Street offices sort of home base for folks. People come, begin and end their days there, some people may spend a good part of their day there particularly if they are elderly and medically frail. We are calling our proposal – "they're old and we're cold" because we are also looking for an HVAC system. The units are up on our roof, we actually have 6 units, we had to replace one earlier this year. So we are looking to have 5 replaced. The interesting thing is because they are up on the roof, it is much cheaper to do them all at once because they have to bring a crane in. So every time you bring a crane in, obviously if you do one-offs, it would just cost more money. We are requesting \$77,500.00 to have those 5 units replaced.

We are hoping that you will take that into consideration. Are there any questions?

Krishna Mangipudi Thank you for giving me this opportunity to come up in front of you and talk to you about an organization that we are trying to bring into town. My name is Krishna Mangipudi and I am a resident of Nashua and volunteer around the community. So in one of my peeking and poking around I identified a problem within our community where it seemed like there were people in the opportunity gap that could benefit from some help and with a little bit of incremental help I felt that they could then become self-sufficient.

I talked to several different organizations within the community including the Nashua Soup Kitchen and several other organizations. And what I totally suspected was indeed true and more recently there was a study that was commissioned by the City through a group of students from MIT; they also collected some collaborating data and confirmed what I had already started looking at. That is the basis for what I am trying to ask money for because I am here and as I was looking around I also came across a few other individuals, Steven Michaud and Kyle Schneck who through some funding from the City were trying to give out micro grants to individuals. And they had about a \$60,000.00 or \$70,000.00 budget which they had for about the last 6 or 7 years and were trying identify individuals that could benefit from micro funding. They did not have too much success with it. So they were sitting on some cash that they were trying to deploy in the community and so I saw this as an opportunity to kind of work with them and work together. The meeting of the minds kind of made this a 1+1 equals 2 kind of situation.

We identified an organization, we were trying to create or I was actually trying to create an organization on my own with a playbook that I had which is a pretty daunting task. Along the way I was also on a Committee that was commissioned the Mayor which was looking at different aspects of things that could benefit the community. And in those discussions with the community leaders what came out were three different initiatives. One of them was to look at micro grants as a viable option for looking into opportunities for other people that were falling through the opportunity gap.

So I was appointed on the Steering Committee, I built up a list of members or asked for members of that and we all together identified an organization called "E for All" that was already doing what we were envisioning, starting up and bootstrapping in the community. They were widely successful in Massachusetts and most of you were at the presentation a few weeks ago. So I will save you a lot of that overview and just give you a quick overview of it. I would also like to recognize Jerimiah Hernandez who is here on behalf of E for All; he is one of the employees. When we put this all together he would be spearheading some of the effort that we would be doing in the community here.

So again long story short, we identified E for All and we approached them and we have been looking at this organization for about 6 or 8 months now to confirm that whatever they gave us was really true and they were doing what they claimed to be doing only to find out that they were doing a lot better than that. So again a few statistics, the organization has been around for 6 years, they are working on Lowell and Lawrence, Fall River and New Bedford, and in Lynne. Within those communities they have created about 400 entrepreneurs in the last 5 years. Do I have those numbers right?

Jerimiah Hernandez I am Jerimiah Hernandez for the record there you go I learned the last time I was here. 300 entrepreneurs and 6 programs, two that you missed were Holyoke and Cape Cod and we are looking to expand into other communities. They have launched over 600 new jobs in all of those communities and on the South Coast one we are 3 years into our program with 232 new jobs in our community. So absolutely accelerating economic and social impact in communities just like yours throughout Massachusetts.

Mr. Mangipudi Some more numbers so these businesses are generating over \$8 million dollars in revenue per year and these organizations and people that have started these small businesses were previously unbankable, meaning that no bank would ever approach them and give them the money for the businesses that they started. They are now in a position where they have \$11 million dollar capital that they have gone after. And so again like I said this is just astounding numbers. And a few other numbers too, of all the start-ups, 73% of them are women owned; 59% were previously unemployed people, these are entrepreneurs now, and then 57% of them are minority owned and 52% are owned by immigrants. So this is exactly that kind of demography that we are trying to reach within Nashua whether it be the community or some of the other organizations that I talked about. I think it is a good fit in bringing that organization here and setting it up as a public and private partnership, it will only benefit our community. So the money that we are looking for is about \$80,000.00 to offset the \$150,000.00 that we were asking for initially. Thank you for the initial \$70,000.00 that you granted to us. What we want to do with that money is to bootstrap ourselves and start out in this community and bring the kind of results that we just talked about. Any questions?

Alderman Caron

So I am looking at their proposal and it says \$80,000.00 but you list it as \$40,000.00 did you cut that in half?

Mr. Mangipudi No we did not, we were looking at \$150,000.00 over 3 years and so \$70,000.00 was allocated in the past. So what we are looking there for from this year is \$40,000.00 of additional money.

Alderman Caron

Ok thank you.

Chairman Wilshire

Thank you very much, thank you Jeremiah.

Michael Reinke, Nashua Soup Kitchen Hi my name is Michael Reinke I am the Executive Director for the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter here in town and I speaking to our proposal of the CDBG funding. Just a little bit about us, the Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter has been in our community since 1981 is when the kitchen opened up; 1984 is when the shelter opened up. The two organizations merged in 1989. The first building we purchased for shelter over on Ash Street was in 1986, the second building I believe was in 1992. In that time the building on Ash Street has generally housed 14 single men with the exception of during the winter months when we add an additional 6 single adult men and 3 families. The building on Kinsley Street has housed 5 single women and 2 families. So at any given point in time they are housing respectively 20 to 30 different individual human beings. These are buildings that were never designed to be shelters, they were designed to be single family homes, maybe duplexes. So we estimate that in the 30 years they have been operating as shelters, they have probably received about 100 years' worth of use.

I know that some of the members of the Committee have actually taken a tour of the buildings, I would encourage you to take a tour of the buildings again. But they have shown those 100 years of use; the best thing is that keep people warm, they keep people safe. But we believe that we can rise to a new bar in terms of how we provide services for our most vulnerable citizens in Nashua, those people who don't have a place to stay the night. So we are asking for funding both because there is a huge need. The facilities we have, again, they are adequate but we believe that they could be a whole lot better. We are asking because we actually save the City of Nashua money as in if we provide shelter to folks, that means when they don't necessarily need to go to the City of Nashua's Welfare Department and be put up in a hotel which costs whatever hotel rates are.

But I think probably most importantly we are asking because we believe that we as a community owe it to our most vulnerable citizens to have a place not just where it is – Oh we are going to keep you out of the cold – but a place where you can call home; especially for kids. If you look at, there is something called a “coordinated entry line” where if you are homeless you can call this line and say – where can I go to have some place that will provide me a place to stay? And even though in general in terms of homelessness across the country, the greatest population tends to be single, adult men. I have been actually working in shelters since 1987 and most of the people that you see tend to be single adult men. In Nashua, the greatest unmet need are single women and families and that is because there are 2 other providers of emergency shelter for single men there is the Rescue Mission and also Maple Street through Harbor Homes, provides shelter for single adult men. We, the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter are the only provider of dedicated space to single women, we have 5 beds and we are the only provider of emergency shelter for families. There are several other organizations in town, the Front Door Agency, Marguerite’s Place, Mary’s Place, Family of Promise over in Hudson that provide transitional, long-term housing for families that are homeless. We are the only place that says – ok tonight if you need a place to stay, you can stay here.

So what we are looking to try to do is we have talked at length with St. Patrick’s Church and Diocese of Manchester over on Spring Street to take an old elementary school building that was originally built in 1982, I’m sorry 1892 but hasn’t been used an elementary school in about 40 years. It has had a couple of uses since then, currently it provides a place for the Gate City Bike but it hasn’t been used as a school in about 40 years. We’d like to turn it into a shelter for single men, single women and families. This would at least double the number of beds we would be able to provide to single women. This would at least double the number of families that we would be able to serve. But before we do any of that, there is an issue with the building which is that if you were building a building 100 or so years ago, they tended to use a lot of asbestos. So we looked at it and we got an estimate from a very reputable company about how much it would cost to abate the asbestos and we basically said – we will take care of the renovations, we will take care of making this a warm safe and wonderful place for families to stay, for kids to stay. But we could use some help with the asbestos abatement because it is a pretty big deal as you see.

So our application is just around abating asbestos. We feel pretty confident about this project; we have a 40-year lease with the Diocese of Manchester, it is a 40-year lease that they are letting us use the building for free so that is a pretty big gift on the part of the Diocese of Manchester. But even if for some reason our project weren’t to go through, we think abating the asbestos would be good for the City of Nashua because again that building has not been used and it right in the heart of downtown hasn’t been used fully as a building for about 40 years. So if we were to abate this asbestos regardless it would be helpful to the City of Nashua because then that building could be brought to new life. Anybody who goes into that building is going to need to take the asbestos and deal with it and so we think it is a great investment for the City of Nashua whether we are providing emergency shelter for families, single women and single adult men or whatever else we are doing, it would be great to see that building – it was built over 100 years ago – it would be great to see that building passed down to people 100 years from now and say – Look at this wonderful building, look what we could do with it. It is about a 5,000 square foot floor, so it’s actually 21,000 square feet for the entire building.

Chairman Wilshire

Now you said you have this shelter specifically for women and families, have you had to turn anyone away this winter?

Mr. Reinke

We do actually, we get calls every week from families seeking emergency shelter. Sometimes those families will end up going to the City of Nashua Welfare Department and Bob Mack and his

wonderful stuff to receive some kind of assistance. Sometimes they may not be eligible; sometimes they may not be from Nashua specific, but maybe from Hudson, maybe from Merrimack, maybe from Litchfield or Hollis. Then they are coming to us or we will say – actually all our family rooms are full you need to find somewhere else. That means that you have families doubling up, tripling up – I once had a family come in, this was in April/May and mom and two kids were living with 5 adults and 7 kids in a 2 bedroom trailer. They said they were able to do that because it was February but is April now and we need a place to stay. So people will sometimes make do but there's a huge need out there and it is not being met.

Chairman Wilshire

Can you guess how many nights or how many times you've had to turn away people just this year?

Mr. Reinke

If you look at the numbers from Coordinated Entry in terms of the number of single women who have called and have not had a place to stay it is a little bit over 40 and if you look at the families that have called it is between 40 and 50. I don't remember the exact number but it was a little bit higher than the single women. That's a snapshot; there are more people that call and just say – I need a place to stay and we are like – we don't have a place to stay for you. And part of it is that the City of Nashua in general is doing well. If you own a home in Nashua you probably saw the value of your property go up which is great. But if you are a single mom with a kid or two kids and you need a place to stay; a 2 bedroom apartment according to Department of Housing & Urban Development, the average rent for a 2 bedroom in Nashua went from a little bit, I'm going to ask Carrie for help, a little bit over \$1,200.00 a month last year to now over \$1,400.00 this year. This is a \$200.00 increase but it is more than a 10% increase in terms of rent. It makes it really, really difficult for, especially for families with kids. Is that about right?

Chairman Wilshire

Do you have any questions for Michael? Thank you very much. Thanks for being here.

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION - None

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Chairman Wilshire

And that concludes our public hearing. Is there anyone that didn't sign up to speak that would still like to speak? Seeing none I will call the public hearing closed at 7:47 and open the regular meeting of the Human Affairs Committee.

The public hearing was declared closed at 7:47 p.m.

Alderwoman Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja
Committee Clerk, pro tem