

Montpelier Community Fund Board

Minutes, December 14, 2016

City Hall, Clerk's Meeting Room, Montpelier, Vt.

Present: Bernie Lambek, Michael Sherman, Judy Stermer, Ron Wild, Christine Zachai

The Montpelier Community Fund Board convened at 4:30 p.m. in the City Clerk's conference room, City Hall, Montpelier, Vermont.

Select recorder of minutes and actions: Michael Sherman.

Minutes shall record the rationale for any grant not funded or funded less than prior year.

General statement for introduction. Proposed by Bernie Lambek and adopted by the board.

The Montpelier Community Fund (MCF) Board received grant requests for FY 2018 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018) totaling about \$190,000. Based on the MCF Board's understanding of how much money will be appropriated for MCF grant programs, the board is faced with difficult decisions, and it cannot recommend funding all applicants in full. While we acknowledge that the projects and programs submitting grant applications all make a contribution to the well-being of our community and its residents, our decisions not to fund some grant requests or to fund some at less than the amount requested must be understood in the light of the limits of city revenues allocated for the Montpelier Community Fund.

Discussion of grant criteria and funding. For the amount available, the board will use the total amounts granted for FY2017 as a general guideline for amount recommended for FY2018.

Review and determination of submitted FY2018 grant applications.

American Red Cross. Request, \$2,500. Application did not report some important information—e.g., tracking volunteer hours, towns contributing and amounts. Narrative reports statewide activities; does not specifically address Montpelier or its needs. Historically, MCF has awarded \$500. Level of service in Montpelier does not warrant large increase. **Recommend \$1,000** (partial; increase from FY16).

Capital City Band. Request \$1,000. Financial summary contains errors, confusing presentation of fiscal information. Board wants City Band to show a greater effort to raise money outside of MCF grant. Need better understanding of audience numbers—at least approximate numbers of people attending summer concerts. **Recommend: \$750** (partial; decrease).

Capital City Concerts: Request \$1,500. Michael recused himself. Large number of volunteer hours; good ticket sales, business support; financial information a bit confusing, but indicates

solvency. Good community outreach and service. High quality presentations. **Recommend: \$1,500** (full; level funding).

Capstone: Request \$2,000. Michael abstained. Enormous organization that provides diverse and deep assistance to large number of people. Good support from surrounding communities. Good application. **Recommend: \$2,000** (full; level).

Center for Arts and Learning: Request \$3,000. **Recommend: \$1,500** (partial; increase) for unrestricted general support.

Central Vermont Adult Basic Education, Request: \$6,000. Valuable services, but number of Montpelier clients is low and has declined from previous year. Using calculations presented in the application, Montpelier fair share is less than amount requested. **Recommend: 5,000** (partial; decrease).

Central Vermont Council on Aging. Request \$7,000. **Recommend: \$7,000** (full; level).

Central Vermont Memorial Civic Center. Request \$2,000. Public skating is a valuable service, but needs to be more accessible: more time, more regular, and scheduled so that individuals and families can take better advantage of the program. **Recommend: \$500** (partial; level).

CIRCLE. Request: \$3,000. **Recommend: \$3,000** (full; level)

Community Connections. Request \$5,000. **Recommend: \$5,000** (full; level).

Community Harvest. Request \$5,000. **Recommend \$3,500** (partial; increase). Board Recognizes growth and increase of productivity.

Downstreet Housing. Request \$5,000. **Recommend \$5,000** (full; level).

Everybody Wins. Request \$2,000. Ron recused himself. **Recommend \$2,000** (full; increase). To help them keep going; urge more fundraising activity.

Family Center of Washington County. Bernie recused himself. Request \$3500. Need is apparent and services are important. Research-based planning and service, skilled and accredited workers. Application could make a stronger case. Offer more insight to activities and provide information about unduplicated individuals served. **Recommend \$3,500** (full; level).

Focus on Film (GMFF). Request \$1,000. Bernie recused. **Recommend: \$1,000** (full; level).

Friends of the Winooski. Request \$500. **Recommend \$500** (full; level).

Girls/Boyz Washington County. Request \$2,500. **Recommend \$2,000**. (partial; level).

Good Beginnings. Request \$1,000. **Recommend \$1,000** (full; increase).

Good Samaritan Haven. Request \$4,000. Applied late for FY2017. **Recommend \$4,000** (full; increase from last funding request for FY15[\$2,500]). Recognize the difficulty of identifying services to Montpelier residents because organization is serving homeless people.

Green Mountain Youth Symphony. Request \$1,500. **Recommend \$1,000** (partial; level)

Green Up Vermont, Request \$300. **Recommend \$300** (full; level).

HomeShare Now. Request \$1,200. Recognize the need and problem organization seeks to address. Housing expensive and available rentals limited. But small number of people matched (as opposed to contacts). Not clear about increase of matches in current year. High cost/person/home. Number of matches low. **Recommend \$1,000** (partial; level).

Glen Hutcheson, The Front. Request \$1,000 for lighting improvements. Board encourages them to become a nonprofit organization. Support efforts to create artist collective. This organization needs to reach out beyond MCF. . **Recommend \$0** (no funding; decrease).

Just Basics. Request \$18,790.36. Recognition of increased needs and demands, need for staff to do fundraising. **Recommend \$14,000** (partial; substantial increase).

Justice for All. Request \$20,000. **Recommend \$1,000** (partial; new applicant) Support some start-up efforts and recognize problems addressed by this applicant; application did not address specific needs or services for residents of Montpelier. Organizations needs to look for wider and diverse sources of financial support.

Kids' Fest. Request \$1,000. **Recommend \$1,000** (full; increase).

Lost Nation Theater. Request \$7,500. **Recommend \$6,000** (partial; level).

Montpelier Chamber Orchestra. Request \$2,500. **Recommend \$2,000** (partial; level).

Montpelier Gospel Choir. Request \$1,000. **Recommend \$750** (partial; level). Note: MCFB request for report on previous grant as part of the application should be more than budget data.

North Branch Nature Center. Request \$5,000. **Recommend \$4,000** (partial; increase from FY 2016).

Onion River Exchange. Request \$1,200. **Recommend \$0** (no funding; decrease). Seeing very little growth in program and usage of existing programs. Unclear about usage by Montpelier residents vs membership numbers.

Our House. Request: apparently \$500 but not clear from application. **Recommend \$500** (full; increase).

People's Health and Wellness. Request \$1,500. **Recommend \$1,500** (full; level).

Prevent Child Abuse. Request \$1,200. **Recommend \$1,200** (full; level). Need better reporting on indicators and measures of effectiveness of programs. What is the basis for program design?

Sexual Assault Crisis Team. Request \$2,500. Increase in number of Montpelier residents served. Part of statewide network on sexual violence; would like more information about level of quality of volunteer training. **Recommend \$2,500** (full; increase).

T.W. Wood Art Gallery. Request \$10,000. Need clearer information about number of Montpelier residents served. Request is not commensurate with other arts organization grants. **Recommend \$5,000** (partial; level).

Turtle Island. Request \$7,500. **Recommend \$1,500**. (partial; increase, first time funding). Budget presented in an unintelligible format.

Vermont Center for Independent Living. Request \$5,000. **Recommend \$4,000** (partial; level) Diverse funding, doing important work, but number of Montpelier residents served does not justify a higher amount.

Vermont College of Fine Arts. Request \$8,000. Intention is to move forward with tuition-free studio intensive camp. Target middle and high school, not overlap with T.W. Wood. Need for grant amount is unclear and raises questions about how computed. Why tuition-free for all; regardless of need and town of residence? What was the residence of participants in the camp previous summer? Application does not demonstrate the need for MCF funding. Unclear what expenses are being mitigated with MCF funding. **Recommend \$0** (no funding; level).

Ward Joyce. Request \$2,500. Park is an enhancement of public space. However, other downtown improvement funds available for funding, and we encourage exploring those. **Recommend \$ 1,000** (partial; new applicant).

Washington County Diversion. Request \$2,000. **Recommend \$2,000** (full; increase)

Washington County Mental Health. Bernie recused. Request \$10,000. Would like to see a specific program request. **Recommend \$2,000** (partial; new applicant)

Washington County Youth Services Bureau (Basement). Request \$20,000. Level of support is not in line with other funds awarded by MCF. **Recommend \$18,000** (partial; small decrease). Intent is to bring the agency more in line with other applications.

Winooski Natural Resource Conservation District. Request \$900. Not recommended because it is a “unit of state government.” **Recommend \$0** (no funding; new applicant).

Following first review, the Board reviewed actions to verify decisions.

Total after second review \$120,000.

No second meeting necessary.

Adjourned, 10:20 p.m.

Submitted,

Michael Sherman