

Office of the City Clerk

# The City of Morgantown

Linda L. Tucker, CMC  
389 Spruce Street, Room 10  
Morgantown, West Virginia 26505  
(304) 284-7439 Fax: (304) 284-7525  
ltucker@morgantownwv.gov

**AGENDA**  
**MORGANTOWN CITY COUNCIL**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**  
**March 29, 2016**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**NOTE:** Committee of the Whole Meetings of the Morgantown City Council are intended to provide an opportunity for the Council to receive information, ask questions, and identify policy options in an informal setting. No official action is taken at these meetings. At this Committee of the Whole Meeting the following matters are scheduled:

**PRESENTATIONS:**

1. Community Development Block Grant
2. Republic Services
3. Transit Authority Presentation
4. Proposed TIF District – Housing Authority

**PUBLIC PORTION:**

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:**

1. Proposed TIF District
2. Boards and Commissions
3. Stewart Street Urban Landscaping project

**\*If you need an accommodation contact us at 284-7439\***

City of Morgantown  
Community Development  
Office

Date: March 22, 2016

To: Jeff Mikorski, City Manager

From: David Bott, Community Development Administrator 

Re: Community Development Block Grant Draft 2016 Annual Action Plan

I submit for consideration on the City Manager's Report the Draft 2016 C.D.B.G. Annual Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The City of Morgantown C.D.B.G. Entitlement is \$366,375, recaptured funding from previous years projects that have been closed \$39,824.84 bringing the 2016 fiscal year funding to \$406,199.84. The Morgantown Housing Authority also anticipates \$16,366 in program income. Program Income is maintain by the Fairmont Morgantown Housing Authority and rolled over into the Housing Rehabilitation Program. Total available funding for 2016 is \$422,565.84.

- The Administration and Planning cap and the Public Service cap can only be applied to the annual entitlement.
- The Draft 2016 Action Plan addresses antipoverty, housing, rehabilitation and infrastructure.

The Fiscal Year for the 2016 Action Plan will begin July 1, 2016. The Community Development Office will contract with successful projects and monitor their progress towards completion June 30, 2017.

**City of Morgantown CDBG FY 2016 Action Plan**

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Program Caps</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>Requested Funding</b>	<b>Proposed Funding</b>
\$366,375				
		<b>Adminstration &amp; Planning</b>		
	20%	\$73,275.00 Human Rights Commission	\$ 73,275.00	\$ 73,275.00
		<b>Total</b>	\$ 73,275.00	\$ 73,275.00
		<b>Public Service</b>		
	15%	\$54,956.25		
		Bartlett House	\$ 72,000.00	\$ 22,956.00
		MAYSP	\$ 14,800.00	\$ 12,000.00
		Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
		Connecting Link	\$ 23,500.00	
		Literacy Volunteers	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
		<b>Total</b>	\$ 143,300.00	\$ 54,956.00
		<b>Housing</b>		
		Homeless Housing Project		\$ 10,000.00
		Habitat for Humanity	\$ 34,637.80	\$ 25,000.00
		Housing Authority	\$ 147,000.00	\$ 107,680.00
		<b>Total</b>	\$ 181,637.80	\$ 142,680.00
		<b>Non-Housing Community Development</b>		
		City of Morgantown		\$ 29,824.84
		<b>Total</b>		\$ 29,824.84
		<b>Rehabilitation</b>		
		Service League	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,000.00
		Christian Help	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
		United Way	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
		Salvation Army	\$ 25,464.00	\$ 25,464.00
		<b>Total</b>	\$ 135,964.00	\$ 105,464.00
		<b>Grand Total</b>	\$ 534,176.80	\$ 406,199.84

# **Community Development Block Grant 2016 Annual Action Plan**

**Draft**

Community Development Office  
389 Spruce Street  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
304-284-7508  
304-284-7430 (Fax)

## Source of Funds

The City of Morgantown C.D.B.G. Entitlement is \$366,375, recaptured funding from previous years \$39,824.84 bringing the 2016 fiscal year funding to \$406,199.84. The Morgantown Housing Authority also anticipates \$16,366 in program income. Program Income is maintained by the Fairmont Morgantown Housing Authority and reallocated into the Home Rehabilitation Program. Total available funding for 2016 is \$422,565.84. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations require the City of Morgantown to verify that all funds are utilized within the corporate limits of the City of Morgantown, or with support agencies that provide 51% of their services to City of Morgantown residents.

## Executive Summary

The planning process actively encouraged participation of the city's housing and community service organizations, including the Morgantown Housing Authority, affordable housing providers, service agencies that assist the low- and moderate-income and principally low- and moderate-income clientele, advocates, and others. The City of Morgantown encourages citizens to provide input and participate in the planning, implementation and assessment of the CDBG program. This Action Plan is developed through public hearings, the use of existing data from previously approved plans and studies, consultation with a wide variety of local non-profit agencies, and discussions with other City of Morgantown departments. For-profit, non-profit, community and faith-based organizations were engaged several times throughout the prior year to assess city needs and priorities.

The city's Development Services Department, Community Development Office is the lead agency overseeing achievement of the Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated planning process actively involves the housing and community development organizations in the city, including the Morgantown Housing Authority, nonprofit providers of affordable housing, service providers to the city's low- income and special needs populations, advocates, and others.

The City of Morgantown has allocated its CDBG funds based on: principally benefiting Low/Mod income persons; or an activity in which predominantly low- and moderate-income areas or which has a presumed benefit; or an activity with an income requirement of low- and moderate income persons. All allocated funding has been utilized in a timely manner and within budget. The City has never had a problem with timeliness or projects or annual funding percentages.

- Affordable/Accessible Housing is the first unmet need in Morgantown and may provide a challenge for individuals who may have limitations because of age,

mental or physical disabilities, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. Barriers to independent living are varied from affordable housing and rents, accessibility in multi-unit rental property, rehabilitation and retrofitting for those who own their homes.

- Assisted living also presents an issue for individuals who may be living independently but require assistance with daily activities or travel outside their home.
- Transportation is a challenge for many for various reasons.
- Adequate level of care for the elderly, substance addicted individuals and persons living with HIV/AIDS is another underserved need in the City.
- Employment and Job Training is an underserved need identified as many individuals dealing with limitations found in this subgroup do not have the requisite skills to obtain or maintain employment.
- The reduction in Federal CDBG funds limits the City's financial resources to meet the underserved needs in Morgantown. Since 2004, the funding for the City of Morgantown's Community Development Block Grant funding has decreased. As the funding levels decreased the ability to accomplish all the goals has diminished. However, the core values of the CDBG program, housing, assisting low and moderate income individuals and families have been maintained. The Housing Rehabilitation program has been one of the most needed and successful projects utilizing CDBG funding.

## **Description of Projects**

### **Administration & Planning - \$73,275**

#### **CDBG Administration \$73,275**

Activity: Administration

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: N/A

Regulation Citation: 570.206 (a)

Project: #2016 - 1

CDBG Administrative costs are necessary for project management, implementation, and inspection of the non-housing community development projects. Administrative costs include, but are not limited to, staff salaries and fringe benefits for one full-time staff member and a part-time or intern position, general operating supplies, environmental inspections, postage, mileage expenses, printing, miscellaneous services and charges, legal expenses, fees, travel and training, and dues and subscriptions.

## **Public Service- \$ 54,956**

### **Housing First Model – \$22,956**

Activity: C.D.B.G. Public Services Sub-recipient  
Source: C.D.B.G. Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele  
Eligible Activity: Public Services  
Regulation Citation: 570.201 (e)  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Homeless 1, 3  
Project # 2016 - 2

The Bartlett House, Inc. intends to place people experiencing homelessness into permanent supportive housing situations and decreasing/eliminating their stay within emergency shelters. Emergency shelters will serve as a triage entry point to assess each individual presenting for service.

### **Morgantown Area Youth Services Project (MAYSP) – \$12,000**

Activity: CDBG Public Services Sub-recipient  
Source: CDBG Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income  
Eligible Activity: Public Services  
Regulation Citation: 570.201 (e)  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Anti-poverty  
Project: #2016 - 3

The Morgantown Area Youth Services Project operates under the fiscal administration of the Monongalia County Commission. MAYSP provides intervention services to youth and families primarily from low-income households that are experiencing delinquency and substance abuse problems. The proposed CDBG funded program would expand services to reach low-income youth and families living in the City of Morgantown experiencing substance abuse and underage drinking problems.

### **Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club - \$12,000**

Activity: CDBG Public Services Sub-recipient  
Source: CDBG Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele  
Eligible Activity: Public Services  
Regulation Citation: 570.201 (e)  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Anti-poverty  
Project: #2016 - 4

The Project Learn initiative provides after-school and summer educational enhancement and tutoring activities to at-risk students ages 6-16. The program includes homework help, tutoring services, high yield learning activities, collaboration with schools, character education, and parental involvement. Prevention Programs are offered every day

including the Smart Moves prevention program and character education. The Boys and Girls Club is available to the students during non-school days and through the summer. Project Learn with the Mountaineer Boys and Girls Club serves low and very-low income children in the City of Morgantown.

The Smart Moves and Fan Club help develop skills essential for transition between youth and adulthood. Family activities and meetings play a critical role in the program. Additionally, the program will include conflict resolution and anger management education.

### **Literacy Volunteers of Monongalia and Preston Counties -- \$8,000**

Activity: CDBG Public Service Sub-recipient

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Limited Clientele

Eligible Activity: Public Service

Regulation Citation: 570.201 (e)

Consolidated Plan Objective: Anti-poverty

Project: #2016 - 5

Literacy Volunteers of Monongalia and Preston Counties (LVMPC) will grow the free community literacy classes. The subjects range from English as a second language, a writing lab, US citizenship, high school equivalency and technology.

### **Housing Programs - \$132,680**

#### **Home Rehabilitation Program Fairmont/Morgantown Housing Authority \$102,680, \$16,366 Program Income**

Activity: Housing

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Income Housing

Regulation Citation: 570.202 (b) (9) (10)

Consolidated Plan Objective: Housing

Project: #2016 - 6

#### **General Home Improvements**

Assisting low-income homeowners make modest repairs to their homes. Qualified residents could apply for up to \$20,000 at 2% interest for up to 15 years. For elderly and disabled persons, this can be a forgivable loan with 20% forgiveness rate per year over 5 years. These improvements could include roof replacement, heating and cooling units, electrical or plumbing upgrades, windows, flooring, sidewalks, porches, siding, etc.

#### **Rental Rehabilitation Program**

Designed to increase the quality of low-income rental units in the City of Morgantown, Landlords will be able to apply for \$10,000 at 1% interest for 10

years to make modest renovations to their rental units. As an incentive to improve the appearance of the structure, participating landlords may be eligible for \$2500 grant for approved exterior improvements. Landlords must agree to rent to families with a household income at or below 80% of median income for the life of the loan. Dependent college students are not eligible residents.

### **Emergency Repair Program**

Assisting low-income homeowners with the cost of repairs that may be viewed as emergency in nature and could threaten one's health and safety, such conditions could include a leaking roof, failing pipes, faulty electric systems, broken furnace, etc. The Emergency Repair Program would provide a one-time grant of up to \$2,500 to make the home safe again.

### **Barrier Free Program**

Assisting families with the necessary modifications or adaptations that will make their home livable as needs change. Without modifications within their homes many elderly or persons with disabilities run the risk of moving to assisted living facilities due to failing health or physical limitations. Adaptations may include installing grab bars, handicapped showers, modifying home entryways.

### **Lead Based Paint Assessment/Testing and Clearance**

Federal law requires lead based paint intervention on federally funded housing programs over \$5,000. Morgantown Housing Authority will complete lead based paint assessments, testing and clearance for projects as needed.

### **Down Payment Assistance Program**

The Down Payment Assistance Program will assist low-income first time homebuyers with a \$2,500 grant for down payment when purchasing property in the City of Morgantown. Homebuyers will need a 3-5 % down payment from savings, which could average \$2,778 for low-income households. By removing the down payment barrier, this grant could make the difference in a family's quest for homeownership.

### **Mon County Habitat for Humanity -- \$30,000**

Activity: Housing

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Income Housing

Regulation Citation: 570.202 (b) (9) (10)

Project # 2016 - 7

Mon County Habitat for Humanity created "A Brush with Kindness" home preservation program. The program is designed to assist low income homeowners in the Jerome Park area maintain and repair the exterior of their homes.

**City of Morgantown - \$10,000**

Activity: Homeless Housing Project  
Source: C.D.B.G. Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele  
Eligible Activity: Public Facilities  
Regulation Citation: 570.202  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Homelessness  
Project: #2016-8

This is housing funding and will be used to provide infrastructure, rehabilitation and health and safety improvements to housing for the homeless. The funding will be available to any organization working to expand housing to be used to house individuals and families that are experiencing homelessness.

**Infrastructure - \$ 180,012.34 Contingent upon HUD approval.**

**City of Morgantown - \$**

Activity: Public Facility Improvements  
Source: C.D.B.G. Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele  
Eligible Activity: Public Facilities  
Regulation Citation: 570.201 (c)  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Infrastructure  
Project # 2016-9

The C.D.B.G. Program will provide for ADA infrastructure as part of The Streetscape Improvement project on Walnut Street. C.D.B.G. funds will be leveraging Department of Transportation and local funding. *(This funding will come from two cancelled projects for the Walnut Streetscape from 2013 and 2014. HUD must approve the change once approved \$154,187.50 will be reallocated. The 2013 and 2014 projects are delayed waiting on sign off from the State of West Virginia.)*

**City of Morgantown - \$29,824.84**

Activity: Public Facility Improvements  
Source: C.D.B.G. Entitlement  
National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele  
Eligible Activity: Public Facilities  
Regulation Citation: 570.201 (c)  
Consolidated Plan Objective: Infrastructure  
Project: #2015-10

The City will use CDBG funding to address various infrastructure needs in low and moderate Census Tracts throughout the city.

## **Rehabilitation – \$105,464**

### **Service League of Morgantown Old Stone House Rehab -- \$10,000**

Activity: Non-profit Rehabilitation

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Income

Eligible Activity: Non-Residential Historic Preservation

Regulation Citation: 570.202

Consolidated Plan Objective: Infrastructure

Project # 2016 - 11

Restoration of the windows and doors at the Old Stone House. A local historic architectural firm and the State Office of Historic Preservation will be consulted to determine the need for each window and door. There are eleven (11) windows and two (2) exterior doors.

### **Christian Help -- \$50,000**

Activity: Emergency Exit Door Replacement

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele

Eligible Activity: Rehabilitation

Regulation Citation: 570.202

Consolidated Plan Objective: Anti-poverty

Project # 2016 - 12

Christian Help is a social service agency serving the low and extremely low populations in the community with a multitude of services, i.e. food pantry, clothes closets for both men and women, job and skills training, and a number of other services. The HVAC system is in need of replacement. CDBG funding would be used to provide a climate controlled system for the five story building. The project will include the electrical system and the installation of a heat pump for each individual floors.

### **United Way Agency Rehab -- \$20,000**

Activity: Roof Rehabilitation

Source: CDBG Entitlement

National Objective: L/M Income Limited Clientele

Eligible Activity: Rehabilitation

Regulation Citation: 570.202

Consolidated Plan Objective: Anti-poverty

Project: #2016 - 13

The United Way Office building on the corner of Spruce and Walnut Streets is need of an electrical upgrade. Funds will be used for replacing existing wiring and installing a 1200 amp service and electrical panels.

**The Salvation Army of Morgantown – \$25,464**

Activity: Remodel of Commercial Kitchen

Source: CDBG Funding

National Objective: Area Benefit

Eligible Activity: Rehabilitation

Regulation Citation: 570.202

Consolidation Plan Objective: Anti-Poverty

Project #2016 – 14

CDBG funds will be used to complete a remodeling of the commercial kitchen used for the hot dinner program in Monongalia County. The remodel will allow for a more efficient food preparation, storage and serving.

### **Geographical Distribution**

Bartlett House Inc., will house the homeless Citywide

Morgantown Area Youth Services Project this is a citywide program targeting low-income children and families.

Mountaineer Boys & Girls Club, The Boys and Girls Club facility is located in the Woodburn School in Census Tract # 107.00.

Literacy Volunteers is located in the City Library Census Tract 101.00

Home Rehabilitation Program, Project, The Housing Rehabilitation Programs are citywide by application targeting low and moderate-income individuals and families.

Monongalia County Habitat for Humanity, Inc., Jerome Park located in Jerome Park Census Tract 107.00

Service League, Old Stone Hose Rehab is located in Census Tract 101.00

Christian Help, HVAC project is located in Census Tract 101.00

The United Way electrical upgrade is located in Census Tract 101.00

The Salvation Army kitchen remodel is located in Census Tract 101.00  
Housing or the emergency shelter.

### **Homeless**

The Bartlett House Inc. will address homelessness with the Housing First Model. This model places the homeless people in permanent supportive housing within 30 days of

their being introduced into the HMIS system. The focus is to house them in temporary if the appropriate permanent housing is not available immediately.

### **Anti-Poverty Strategy**

The City continues to assist social service agencies with education, job skills training and after school programs for working parents. Programs with a direct impact to their client receive special attention as well as programs meeting the goals in the Consolidated Plan. Due to an increase in young adults becoming homeless, emphasis was given to programs assisting youth and teenagers in this program year.

The Morgantown Housing Authority will assist families with the necessary modifications or adaptations that will make their home livable as needs change. Many elderly or disabled persons run the risk of moving to assisted living facilities due to failing health or physical limitations without livability improvements to their homes. Adaptations may include installing grab bars, handicapped showers and modifying home entryways.

The Salvation Army will remodel their hot meal kitchen that provides approximately 30,000 hot meals annually. This program targets the extremely low income and low income people and providing in many cases the only substantial meal of the day.

### **Lead-Based Paint**

Federal law requires lead based paint intervention on federally funded housing programs over \$5,000. Morgantown Housing Authority will do lead based paint assessments, testing and clearance for projects as needed.

### **Other Actions**

The Down Payment Assistance Program will assist low-income first time homebuyers with \$2,500 grant for down payment when purchasing property in the City of Morgantown.

### **Monitoring**

To ensure appropriate use of public dollars while maintaining a consistency with Federal program requirements and regulations, the City of Morgantown Community Development staff will plan, implement, and administer a monitoring plan for each project. In addition, this monitoring plan will ensure satisfactory progress toward the Consolidated Plan goals, promote program accountability, and further demonstrate compliance with Federal requirements.

The Community Development staff will periodically conduct on-site monitoring of sub-recipient agencies. As stated in each contract, payment is made by reimbursement only.

Quarterly reports and an end-of-year performance report are also required for each project. Staff will also work with the sub-recipients on a regular basis as a resource for technical assistance in planning, implementation, project evaluation, and capacity building.

## **Citizen Participation**

### **Summary of Public Hearing/Input and Approval Process**

The Community Development Administrator opens each meeting by providing information about the Community Development Block Grant Program and the expected funding levels. The discussion then turned to the status of the program year soliciting comments.

All meetings are published in local newspapers, Channel 15, and the City Web Site. Flyers were posted at sites around Morgantown to encourage low- and moderate-income individual participation. The City Administration reviews the propose projects for compliance for compliance with Federal regulations.

### *Council Presentation*

At the March 29, 2016 City of Morgantown City Council Committee of the Whole meeting, the CDBG proposed FY 2016 Action Plan was presented to the City Council. Council Meetings are public and televised.

### *30 Public Comment Period*

The Draft FY 2016 Annual Action Plan for all agencies or groups receiving funding from the 2015 CDBG entitlement begins a 30-day public comment period April 1, 2016 through April 30, 2016. During the public comment period, copies of the FY 2016 Annual Action Plan are available at City Hall, the Morgantown Library, and on the City's Web Site.

### *CDBG Technical Meeting*

The November 12, 2015, CDBG Technical Meeting presented prior to the proposal kick off meeting giving prospective agencies an opportunity to explore their desire to pursue funding. CDBG National Objectives and the City's Consolidated Plan Goals and Strategies are gone over with explanation of eligible and non-eligible activities.

## **Fair Housing**

The Community Development Office continues to work with community agencies to address and support Fair Housing actions.

## THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority is proposing to develop an affordable active adult retirement community on a vacant 20 acre parcel owned by the Housing Authority in the city's 3<sup>rd</sup> ward. The project site is located off Liberty Street and runs along Braddock Street to the west. The project will be an independent living facility for persons 55 and older at or below 150% of the area median income (moderate income) that will consist of 150+/- rental/ownership units, approximately 40 assisted living units and approximately 10 memory care units. Key elements of the development shall include modern architectural design standards that are consistent with FMHA Morgantown Homecoming concepts; accessibility, high energy efficiency to Energy Star standards, outdoor green and recreational space to be linked with WVU green space, on-site community space with amenity package, social, recreational and educational opportunities linked with WVU and other area institutions/businesses, and other such elements that are indicative to the latest and most desirable in retirement living. The development will also include a wide scope of amenities that may include fee based housing keeping, interior and exterior recreational facilities, shops, multi-purpose rooms/facility, social and educational facilities, and other amenities common to an attractive Class A retirement community. The project will offer a continuum of care model that will include an assisted living and a memory unit. This model will provide residents care options that prevent institutionalization and promote the maximum level of quality of life. The project costs for the retirement village are estimated to be between \$50 and \$60 million dollars.

Adjacent to the retirement community is planned a Family Scholar House Complex. Family Scholar House is a 40 to 48 two and three bedroom unit apartment complex that provides residential living to persons with children who are, or wish to attend higher education. The facility and program would provide the necessary support elements to assist the family through graduation such as off-site day care, transportation, tutoring/mentoring and other services to enhance educational success. Not considered "student housing" the Family Scholar House model boasts a 90% graduation rate and near 100% job placement. Compared to the typical university graduation rate of 40%, Family Scholar House has been honored as one of the best models in higher education in the country. The program has graduated many attorneys and medical professionals. About 40% of graduates enter the health care industry. The estimated cost of the scholar house project is approximately \$3.5 to \$4 million dollars.

The placement of both retirement village and Family Scholar House on the proposed site will create a unique but growing market of inter-generational housing. Intergenerational living is an innovative concept based upon the idea that the blending of families, students, and seniors in social living activities builds a community that enhances our understanding of one another. Intergenerational communities provide a congenial environment for those who wish to connect and share with other generations on a daily basis and seniors remain integrated into society and are able to continue to contribute in meaningful ways. By maintaining independence and their own decision-making, seniors enjoy improved physical and mental health. The benefits of this model is that loneliness among seniors is prevented, families can draw on different generations for child support, people without relatives living in the same city or country can draw on the support of surrogate grandparents, aunts, uncles etc., the children of

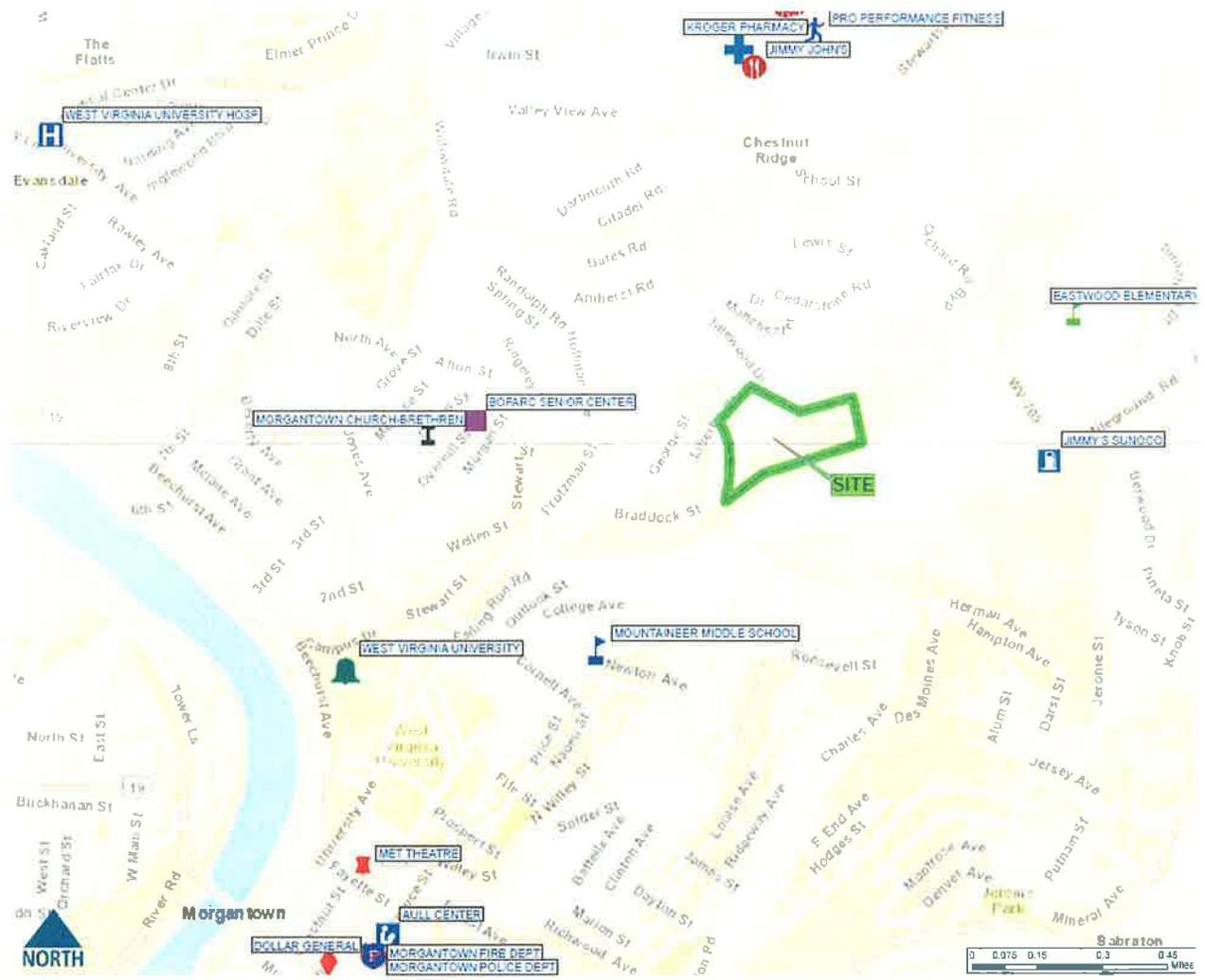
solo parents or one-child families can benefit from a wider sense of family and the willingness to cooperate means that people choose to live alongside those who share the values of caring, support and respect for others.



Proximity to WVU organic farm property.



Topographical of site



Project location



Possible project concept.

## **Recruiting for Board Members**

Process? What Process?

*by Hildy Gottlieb*

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If your organization is like most, you spend more time, money and energy recruiting for clerical and janitorial positions than for the position of board member.

When we recruit board members, we forget that we are "hiring" folks to do a job - one of the most critical jobs in the whole organization: leadership and governance.

So how can we improve the recruitment process? The first step would be to make sure you actually have a process!

### **Step One:**

#### **What are you looking for?**

Whenever we do board development work, we start by asking the group what they are looking for in a board member. And without fail and only half in jest, each time we get the same response: Warm blood and a pulse.

I say only half in jest because one look at some of their board members will tell you that this has indeed been their selection criteria!

You can't find the right people to lead your organization if you don't know what you're looking for. Step One, therefore, is to establish criteria for selecting board members, so you'll know when you've found the right people!

Look for qualities that will help the board function better, do its job better.

In general, things to look for in a prospective board member are:

- Understanding of our community and its needs
- Passion for our cause
- Willingness to commit time for board meetings, committee meetings, planning sessions, special events
- Team player - works well in a group
- Someone who listens well, is thoughtful in considering issues

The list will differ for each organization, and will change as the organization changes.

In cases where specific talents are needed, those talents should be considered in addition to the qualifications you create for all board members. For example, the Finance Committee may be looking for someone who is financially savvy. If you find someone who knows a ton about financial matters but is a bear to be around, they are probably a

poor choice. So look first for the overall qualities, and second for those specific talents.

**Step Two:**

**Recruit a Pool of Candidates for Each Seat You Have Open.**

You may have 6 seats open, but each one is its own seat. Recruit for them one at a time, seeking a pool of good candidates for EACH SEAT - just as you would for a paid position.

Traditionally, we seek board members by having someone suggest a prospect, who we then pursue. We would never think to do that for our paid positions. We would use a competitive process in an attempt to find the very best choice.

Imagine having 10 great applicants for each of those positions! Imagine being able to pick and choose. Imagine saying, "We had 10 applicants and found 3 great candidates. Lets fill 3 of the seats, and then recruit for some of the others."

The change of mindset that occurs through this approach will help guide you when you face obstacles in this recruiting process.

**Step Three:**

**How to Recruit Prospects**

***Scenario A: Individuals suggested by the board are asked to apply***

Most boards recruit by having existing board members propose names. The prospect is invited to fill out an application and attend a meeting or two, at which point they are asked to join the board. Truly, there is little decision-making as to whether or not they will fit. If they are willing (warm blood, pulse...), they are in.

Part of the reason for this is a perceived desperation on the part of boards to find members who are willing to serve. Another reason, though, is that once you have invited someone to join the board, even if you find out they would be a horrible board member, how do you un-invite them? Again, it comes down to lack of process.

And so when a board member is suggesting a prospect for membership, that referring Board Member should first be able to articulate why they think the prospect will fit the organization's qualifications criteria.

Then, when the prospect is approached, the person recruiting him/her should make it clear that the organization will be interviewing more than one prospect for the open board seat, and that you'd like them to apply.

**Here's the difference:**

*a) George, I'm on the XYZ Agency Board. Will you consider being on our board?*

**vs.**

*b) George, I'm on the XYZ Agency Board. We are talking to a number of prospects for the board seat we have open, and you've been mentioned as a great prospect. Our recruitment process includes a number of steps, including an interview with the Board Development Committee. Would you consider putting in an application?*

This approach brings a degree of control back to the board. Nothing is assumed. Prospects compete just as they would for any job. The decision of whether or not they are eventually invited to join the board is entirely up to the Board.

***Scenario B: Individuals Come to You, Asking to Serve*** It is the rare board that never has to resort to Scenario A. But having potential board members approach the organization is certainly the preferable approach! What a pleasure to know they are interested, that their arm doesn't need twisting.

There are ways of seeking out these potential board members - ways we don't generally associate with recruiting for a board:

- Make it known you are looking! It seems obvious, but get the word out! XYZ Agency is recruiting for board members. Isn't that what you would do if you had a paid position open?
- In public speeches on behalf of the organization, let the crowd know that you are always on the lookout for good people who want to serve as volunteers or board members.
- In breakfast clubs, networking groups, etc., when you have the opportunity to make announcements, ask for folks interested in helping the agency by sitting on the board.
- Advertise in your organization's newsletter, on your website - wherever you are asking for assistance.

Yes, people are pressed for time. They are overcommitted. They are trying to pare down.

But they also see sitting on a board as something one must be invited to do - something that happens only to those who are in the loop. You would be surprised at the number of organizations who have trouble recruiting good board members because people don't think it's a position they can aspire to. And the higher visibility the organization, the more people think you have to be well-connected to sit on their board.

So let the public know it's just not so. Your board is looking for qualified members. Get out and tell the world.

#### **Step Four:**

##### **The Application Process - Get To Know Them as They Get to Know You**

Again, think of this application process as you would if you were hiring an employee. You want to get to know the applicant just as they want to get to know you, all to determine if there is a fit.

#### ***Application***

Lets start with the basics. Many organizations don't even have an application for board members. If that is your organization, create one. The application should ask about things

you want to know. "Board meetings and committee meetings take up approximately 6 hours per month. Are you be willing to commit that amount of time to the board's work?"

### ***Orientation***

Most board members know very little about the organization they are being asked to govern. So while they are still in this application process, they should be given a good sense of what they are getting themselves into!

Create an introductory orientation program for BEFORE someone is appointed to the Board, to help them determine if they even want to be on the board! This program could be as comprehensive as having them attend a board meeting, tour the facility with a senior staff person and participate in a one-on-one interview with a board member just to answer questions. Or it could simply be a 20 minute video. However you do it, let this person know what's behind the organization they may be leading.

### ***Interview***

I hate to keep making the employee analogy, but would you hire a key employee for a leadership position without interviewing them first?

The Board Development Committee should use their list of desired qualifications to interview prospective board members. This is an excellent way to find out where they might fit into the organization, so they can hit the ground running if and when they are appointed. It is also an excellent way to find out if this is really not a great fit.

### **Step Five:**

#### **Now That They're On the Board**

They've gone through the process and you've voted them in. Here are some steps that can make their transition to Board Member a smooth one, allowing them to hit the ground running.

#### **Contract**

Many boards require that Board Members sign a contract, formally taking on the responsibility of governing this non-profit.

The contract can be as broad-brushed as a single page "I have read the board manual and know what's expected of me."

It can be as specific as "I understand that there will be one 2-hour board meeting per month, and 2 committee meetings per month (2 hours each), for a total of 6 hours per month. I further understand that there may be planning sessions or other board events that will require my time. I therefore commit to providing XYZ Agency with at least 100 hours in the year, to participate in these board-related activities."

In addition to providing the Board Member with a message that you are asking for a serious commitment, the contract can be used to directly prescribe board member behavior. If they sign the contract and then can't / won't abide the rules to which they've lent their signature, the board then has grounds for their removal.

**Disclosure of Conflict of Interest**

This has to be mandatory. It should be updated annually or whenever there is a change.

**Orientation**

Now is the time for the full-blown orientation. The purpose of this orientation is to provide new board members with enough knowledge about the organization and their role that they can immediately begin to govern.

What should be included in an orientation program is the subject matter for a whole other article. But the best place to start (if you don't already have a program in place) is to ask existing board members:

What do you wish you had known before coming onto the board?

What information would have enabled you to get up and running faster?

Is there anything information you still would like to know more about, to be a more effective board member?

**Put Them to Work**

Once your board members have gone through orientation and are ready to participate, put them to work! Provide them with an array of activities and committees, and let them start helping the board and the organization!

*[http://www.help4nonprofits.com/NP\\_Bd\\_Recruit\\_Article.htm](http://www.help4nonprofits.com/NP_Bd_Recruit_Article.htm)*

## **What to Ask Every Prospective Board Member**

Excerpt from the second edition of *Over Goal! What You Must Know to Excel at Fundraising Today*

Often, in our haste to meet a deadline for recruiting board members, we whisk through the interview process or skip it entirely, relying on what we know about individuals through other connections or information about them.

Even when we do a proper interview, we tend to focus only on the obvious—expertise, experience, interest in serving on the board. We don't dig deep enough into areas that in the long run are far better indicators of successful board service.

Here are some questions you may not have thought to ask. They will reveal things that can be important to your organization as you build a relationship that you hope will be durable, motivating, and productive.

### **How passionate are you about our cause?**

Passion is the driver when it comes to asking others for money, being an ambassador in the community, or being an effective advocate. In attempting to fill out a recruitment matrix (banker, corporate vice president, community volunteer) we shouldn't overlook the passion dimension.

One arts organization, in its quest to form a more "corporate board," recruited a number of corporate superstars but failed to test for passion. Little money was raised other than what came almost by courtesy from the member's corporations. There was little participation at concerts and events. And ultimately some decisions were made that were harmful to the organization. Why? Because the passion factor was lacking.

### **How much time can you give to us?**

This is critical. To slide over this question, hoping the individual, when confirmed, will make time when we need it is unrealistic. One university, when enlisting volunteers for a capital campaign, was savvy enough to put the time requirement at the bottom of every volunteer job description. When volunteers committed to the job, they knew it would take (e.g.) two hours a week.

While some board members may be enlisted because they offer a connection or a presence that could be more important than time, most board members are enlisted to serve. And serving requires time.

Setting time standards is one of the ways we convey the importance of our organization to volunteers.

## **What motivates you as a volunteer?**

This is an important question to ask in initial conversations. You want to know what will keep this person engaged over the years of his or her board service.

The best answer will come when you query the candidate about his or her previous board or volunteer service. Which organizations provided the environment in which the volunteer flourished, and which ones did not?

A direct question about what motivates a candidate can also work, but not as effectively.

You're trying to match board nominees to the culture and practices of your organization—be sure yours is an environment in which the candidate will be motivated.

## **What expectations do you have from the management of organizations on whose boards you serve?**

This, too, is important to know. We evaluate each other and organizations on expectations we sometimes fail to communicate. These expectations can be as granular as wanting to receive board materials at least a week before meetings or as global as only serving on boards of financially stable organizations.

If the person's expectations are unrealistic or don't align with where your organization is at present (e.g., you are dragging around a \$700,000 accumulated deficit), then it's better to find that out in the recruitment process.

In your enlistment conversation, you can, for instance, be candid with the candidate about the deficit, why it exists, and your plans to eliminate it, and let the prospective board member decide whether he or she wants to serve.

## **What are your personal dreams or aspirations that could be enhanced by service on our board?**

Younger board members often view board service as a way not only to serve but to gain connections and experience that will advance their careers. Similarly, there are individuals seeking board positions who are looking to make career changes, learn new skills, or learn more about the nonprofit sector.

To meet these needs, you must first learn what they are. But, as importantly, you must keep them at the front of your mind during the board member's term of service. In this way, you'll encourage people's growth and participation in our sector or give the board members experiences (marketing, writing, speaking) that will advance their careers.

You set up a win/win situation and deepen the board member's commitment to and appreciation for the organization.

## **What professional or personal constraints on your time or service might you anticipate?**

The people we want are often the same people everyone else wants to recruit. They may already serve on other boards or have demanding, high-profile jobs. In addition to the time constraints, this situation creates attention constraints.

In one organization, the co-chair of the development committee was asked by another organization on whose board he served to chair their endowment campaign. Although he had plenty of time to give, it was soon apparent that the endowment campaign was getting much more of his attention and energy. The other organization found itself without his previously significant involvement.

An in-demand board candidate should be candid about where your organization fits among his or her philanthropic priorities and whether being chair of another organization's board or project will be too distracting.

Your choice, then, is to enlist anyway, in the hope you will gain the prospective member's attention, or to delay enlisting until a future time in which the candidate will have your organization as a higher priority.

## **Are you willing to make a financial commitment that is a stretch?**

We are getting better at putting this question on the table, but still we falter. We have to be up front about our expectations of a board member's financial commitment. As with time, financial support is an expectation we need to communicate clearly.

While I'm not an advocate of a "minimum board gift" (believing we not only drive off people who can't give the minimum but allow those who could give more to give less because the "floor" becomes the "ceiling"), I am a firm advocate of 100 percent board giving at a level that is a stretch.

What is a stretch? It is a gift that is larger than the gift a person might otherwise give. Let people know at the outset that you expect them to give at this level. If they use the "time is money" response, reconsider their appropriateness as a board member.

## **Of what importance to you is social interaction with other board members?**

Some boards have a culture that encourages frequent opportunities for social interaction; other boards feel this is unimportant. This is another aspect of the "match."

A board recruit may barely have time to come to meetings and serve on a committee or two, let alone feel obligated to socialize. When a person doesn't want to mix philanthropic service with his or her social life, it can create an awkward situation with other board members.

A person who fails to attend board social events may never be fully embraced by the other board members. Likewise, if a person is seeking not only a volunteer experience but a social experience and your board's culture is not social, there may be a problem.

### **How do you feel about performance evaluations of individual board members and boards as a group?**

Board member (and full board) performance evaluations have become more routine. Experienced board members may expect evaluation or they may feel that it's useless, a waste of time, or inappropriate.

Explore their knowledge of the process and listen for potential objections if it's your practice to evaluate formally on an annual or biannual basis. Some organizations have adopted the practice (which I encourage) of having the CEO and the board chair meet annually with each board member to thank them for their service, review their concerns, find out their committee or project preferences, and to ask for their gift.

If this is something you're doing, let each board recruit know during the enlistment process about that annual meeting. That way, he or she won't be surprised when the board chair calls for an appointment.

### **As you think about the three primary board roles—ambassador, advocate, and asker—in which role(s) do you think you will want to be most active?**

This is the "capstone" question—it allows potential board members to see how you have organized board involvement and where they fit in. It opens their imagination to ways they can serve that fit their own goals and motivations and best utilize their experience and community contacts.

With this delineation, you offer many ways to get involved, though of course it's always good to say that the goal is for board members to fulfill all three roles!

### **Conclusion**

These questions should give you a much more detailed profile of your board recruit and provide better information on which to build a productive and mutually fulfilling relationship.

Like hiring an employee, we need to get beyond the obvious information and find out what really motivates a potential board member. Then our job—the even more important one—is to make sure we remember these motivations as we assign, coach, engage, and reward board members.

Kay Sprinkel Grace

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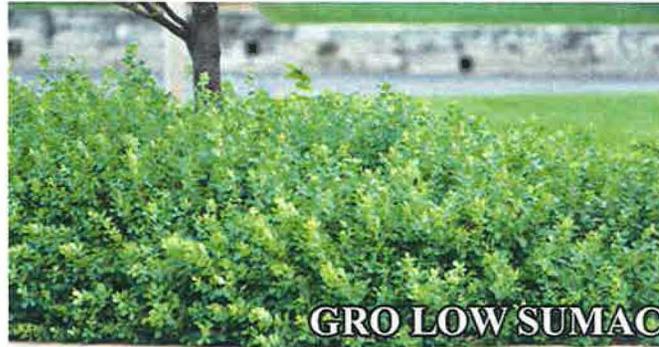
***Kay Sprinkel Grace is the author of Over Goal! What You Must Know to Excel at Fundraising Today, from which this article is excerpted. Her other books include The Ultimate Board Member's Book and Fundraising Mistakes That Bedevil All Boards (and Staff Too).***

***<http://www.guidestar.org/DisplayArticle.do?articleId=1149>***





**BEARBERRY**



**GRO LOW SUMAC**



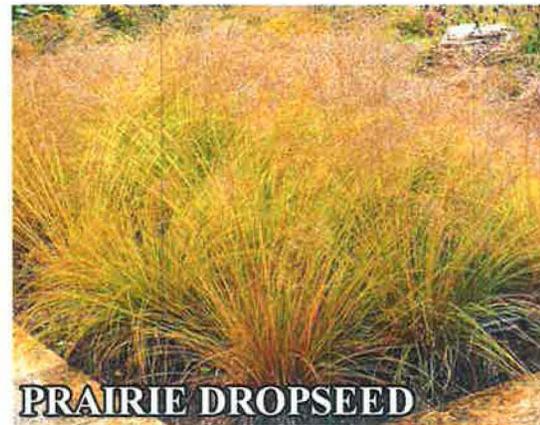
**LITTLE SPIRE  
RUSSIAN SAGE**



**MOOR DENSE  
JUNIPER**



**KARL FOERSTER  
GRASS**



**PRAIRIE DROPSEED**

- SITE CONDITIONS**
- POOR COMPACTED SOILS
  - FULL SUN
  - URBAN CONDITIONS
  - ROCK SALT
  - HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS



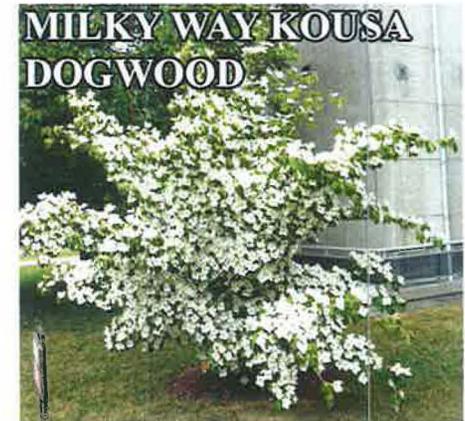
**RUSSIAN ARB/ CYPRESS**



**CATMINT**



**BLUE OAT  
GRASS**



**MILKY WAY KOUSA  
DOGWOOD**

**UNIVERSITY & STEWART  
STREET GREENSPACE**

