

**Vermont Housing & Conservation Board  
Organizational Grant Committee**

**MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 16, 2021**

**Zoom Meeting**

**Organizational Grant Board Committee Members:** Neil Mickenberg, Emily Wadhams, Maura Collins, Diane Bothfeld (designee of Anson Tebbetts; Secretary of VAAF), Ann Fielder

**VHCB Staff:** Gus Seelig, Jenny Hyslop, Anne Duffy, Marcy Christian, Larry Mires, Jennifer Hollar, Emily Phillips

Neil Mickenberg called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Jenny did a quick overview of the organizational grant process for new committee members. She explained that VHCB supports the housing network in several different ways including: technical assistance, stewardship and monitoring, and organizational support. She reviewed with the committee that at its July meeting, the Board set aside \$1,000,000 in state funds for supplemental grants to expand the capacity of the housing network. In setting aside the funds, the Board authorized this Committee to make awards, as appropriate, to those of our partners who require funding to enhance their capacity to deliver housing.

Jenny explained that our nonprofit housing network has risen to the challenges of the last few years - first in meeting and exceeding the requirements of an executive order asking that they provide 15% of their housing to households experiencing homelessness, and then implementing both the Housing Revenue Bond and CRF programs. As a result they are experiencing strain as they quickly transitioned to the fast pace of development for CRF funding and now continue to ramp up their development pipelines in response to additional increased funding opportunities. This summer VHCB staff reached out to our housing partners and invited them to advise us about the barriers to moving their pipelines forward, what kind of resources would help address those barriers, and what type of results we could expect as an outcome of a one-time supplemental investment. We received ten proposals, totaling just under \$1.7 million.

Jenny described recommendations totaling \$795,000 to support the requests of 9 organizations, with action on the Shires proposal being deferred until November as a result of a family tragedy that has impacted a member of the senior leadership in that organization. Jenny explained that the maximum award being recommended was \$100,000 per year, and that with the exception of Evernorth all recommendations were for one year of funding. In the case of Evernorth, staff recommended a two year award, with \$100,000 per year in funding. Gus pointed out that Evernorth will be providing development support to many of these other organizations, further enhancing their capacity. There was a discussion about Evernorth role in the housing network's system. They work closely with local housing partners around the state and with the large amount of funding available right now, as well as, leadership changes at the nonprofit level in central Vermont and Rutland, their importance to the overall network continues to be great. The committee also discussed the need for development consultants as well. There is technical assistance money that could be used to provide additional

training in the development process, as well as, trainings in the ever more technical world of maintenance. The committee strongly supported training support for our housing network in these areas.

Emily Wadhams asked about the VHCBC housing staffing levels. Jenny reported with new additions of Emily Phillips; Associate Housing Director, Bonnie Woodford, Housing Program Assistant, and most recently returning Kathleen Kanz; Senior Housing Analyst, that they were now fully staffed.

Jenny then reviewed each of the organizations recommendations with the committee. She explained that once the initial round of awards are made, staff anticipate taking a few months to work with partners to understand other pressing needs, and may come back to the committee with additional recommendations. Neil asked about the conditions and Jenny explained that these organizations also would have conditions with their annual organizational grant award which would be more in depth. There are additional conditions for Evernorth since they do not participate in that process. Neil recommended adding a condition requiring the organizations to be in compliance with their organizational grant conditions. The committee concurred.

#### **Project Requests:**

At this time, staff recommend the following supplemental capacity awards:

#### **2021-143-008 Evernorth**

*Recommendation: To award Evernorth up to \$100,000 per year over two years to support expenses associated with the salary and benefits of a Developer and Project Manager.*

#### **2021-143-002 Downstreet Housing & Community Development**

*Recommendation: To award DHCD up to \$100,000 to support expenses associated with the salary and benefits of a Project Manager and Development Associate in the Real Estate Development department, as well as to support expenses associated with retaining Connie Snow as a real estate development consultant.*

#### **2021-143-003 Housing Trust of Rutland County**

*Recommendation: To award up to \$60,000 to support expenses associated with the salary and benefits of a Development Assistant, and to support the costs associated with additional development consulting.*

#### **2021-143-001 Addison County Community Trust**

*Recommendation: To award up to \$60,000 to support expenses associated with the salary and benefits of a Development Coordinator as well as expanded real estate development consulting. Up to \$40,000 of the award would be for reimbursement of expenses associated with the Development Coordinator position, and up to \$20,000 of the award would be designated for expenses incurred as a result of increased development consulting.*

#### **2021-143-004 Lamoille Housing Partnership**

*Recommendation: To award up to \$35,000 to support expenses associated with real estate development consulting.*

**2021-143-005 GHT dba RuralEdge**

Recommendation: *To award RuralEdge up to \$100,000 to support costs associated with Real Estate Development Assistant and Construction manager salaries and benefits, as well as expenses associated with a regional market study.*

**2021-143-007 Windham Windsor Housing Trust**

Recommendation: *To award Windham Windsor Housing Trust up to \$100,000 to support costs associated with a Real Estate Development Assistant position as well as expanded development consulting.*

**2021-143-009 Cathedral Square**

Recommendation: *To award Cathedral Square up to \$50,000 for expenses associated with real estate development consulting.*

**2021-143-010 Twin Pines Housing**

Recommendation: *To award up to \$90,000 to support expenses associated with two real estate development consultants.*

**2021-143-006 Shires Housing**

Recommendation: *To defer consideration of this request until the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Organizational Grants Committee.*

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OUTLINED BELOW:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Grant #</b>	<b>Requested</b>	<b>Recommended</b>
Downstreet	2021-143-002	\$ 315,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Evernorth	2021-143-008	\$ 208,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
HTRC	2021-143-003	\$ 71,285.00	\$ 60,000.00
ACCT	2021-143-001	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
LHP	2021-143-004	\$ 47,500.00	\$ 35,000.00
RuralEdge	2021-143-005	\$ 104,170.00	\$ 100,000.00
WWHT	2021-143-007	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Cathedral Square	2021-143-009	\$ 180,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Twin Pines	2021-143-010	\$ 423,200.00	\$ 90,000.00
Shires	2021-143-006	\$ 85,000.00	
		<b>\$ 1,694,155.00</b>	<b>\$ 795,000.00</b>

**VHCB Grant Conditions**

1. Prior to first disbursement, Grantee shall submit a revised budget to VHCB showing how the VHCB award will be used.

2. Prior to all disbursements grantee shall provide a narrative update on programmatic and pipeline activities, including the progress made toward meeting the goals outlined in the grant application.
3. These funds shall be drawn down within 60 days of the end of the grant period. If necessary, Grantee may make a written request for a three-month extension to be approved by VHCB staff.
4. VHCB may request additional reports as deemed appropriate. Within 15 days of a request from VHCB, the Grantee shall demonstrate compliance with any particular term or condition of this Agreement.
5. Grantee must be in compliance with all organizational grant conditions from any open awards.

**Additional Twin Pines Housing Trust & Evernorth Condition:**

1. The VHCB funding provided shall be used only to support activities in Vermont. Grantee shall address this condition prior to each disbursement.

**Additional Evernorth Conditions:**

1. Prior to all disbursements grantee shall provide:
  - a) year-to-date revenue and expense statement with variance and balance sheet;
  - b) cash flow projects if organization is borrowing internally, has outstanding draws on line (s) of credit, or when requested by VHCB staff.
  - c) report on any properties operating at a deficit including those having difficulty funding reserves, paying management fees, or meeting future capital needs, and provide information on the financial and physical condition of such properties;
2. Grantee will provide to VHCB an annual audit of the organization's financial statements and (if applicable) federal funds, within six months of the grantee's fiscal year end. Grantee will provide all audit reports to VHCB staff for review, including all auditor written communications in regards to internal controls and/or compliance such as SAS 114 and 115 letters, and management letter.
3. During the term of the grant, and within sixty days of a change, Grantee shall provide VHCB:
  - a) bylaws if amended;

**Board Committee Resolution:**

To award up to \$795,000 in FFY2022 VHCB funds for 9 organizations (ACCT, CSC, Downstreet, LHP, RURALEDGE, HTRC, TPHT, W&WHT and Evernorth) in the amounts recommended and with the conditions recommended to the Organizational Grants Committee.

Ann made the motion to accept staff recommendations for funding with the additional condition. Diane seconded the amended motion. There was a roll call vote.

**Roll Call**

Ann - Yes

Diane - Yes

Emily - Yes

Maura - Yes

Neil - Yes

All voted in favor of the motion.

There was no other business.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Christian