

# Montgomery County Board

## Energy Grant Ad Hoc Committee Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 pm - County Board Room

**Members Present:** Patty Whitworth, Mark Hughes, Lyn Fugate, Dan Hough, Michelle Pulce-Flynn, Andy Ritchie, Nancy Slepicka and Doug Donaldson

**Members Absent:** None.

**Others Present:** Daniel Robbins, Sandy Leitheiser, Cody Greenwood, Sarah McConnell, Tonya Flannery, Steve Dougherty, Carol Naylor, Linda Liebscher, Laura Lee Huber and Dan Rogers (via telephone)

The committee met to discuss the following:

- Phase II of the Montgomery County Application for the DCEO Energy Transition Community Grant Update/Approval:** Whitworth reported grant writer Dan Rogers may not be able to attend the meeting. Hughes stated he is currently working on a power outage at work. Whitworth stated the goal of tonight's meeting was to begin working on writing Phase II of the Energy Transition Community Grant application. She said the County still needs to decide what to spend their portion of the money on. She said we did receive notification of how much money we are eligible for since the last meeting. County Board Assistant Administrator David Jenkins stated the Illinois DCEO said the county's application is eligible for \$2,267,334, and the deadline to complete Phase II has been pushed back to May 31. He also stated the committee needs to decide how to split the money up. He stated one potential option would be to divide the money by each of the bodies based on the tax rate of the Vistra bill that was used to create the ad hoc committee. He said another option would be to give each of the bodies \$50,000 and then divide the remaining balance between the entities based on the tax rate. Donaldson stated the committee could also choose to bring the entities who were below the \$50,000 mark in the first table up to that figure. Hughes asked if the board needs to decide how the money is divided. Jenkins said they ultimately will, but the committee can work on writing Phase II before presenting it to the board. Litchfield Mayor Dougherty stated they have a project they would like to be considered under the county's portion. He said they are in need of approximately \$4.5 million to provide high pressure gas and electrical distribution to the City's I-55 Commerce Center. He said they have a separate DCEO grant that will provide \$2 million, but they still need to pay for the remaining \$2.5 million. He said the City is looking for a partnership and they would be happy with whatever amount the County would be willing to contribute. Dougherty stated the Center will be beneficial to the County for many years to come. Whitworth asked other entity representatives for their potential projects. LLCC rep Pulce-Flynn stated they have come up with four proposed projects. She said the initial plan was to establish another truck driver training site at the Litchfield SCI center. She said the cost of this project is estimated at \$2.74 million, and exceeds more than what is available in the grant. She said the second project, which they would like to make the priority after learning of the eligible amount, would be to renovate the science lab at the Litchfield outreach center. She stated this cost would be an estimated \$500,000. The third proposed project would be to implement the RISE Smart Classroom Technology at their main campus in Springfield as well as at the Litchfield outreach center. The estimated cost of this project would be \$150,000. Pulce-Flynn stated the fourth proposed project would be to establish a college now scholarship fund, which would help students in Montgomery County pay for classes at LLCC while still in high school. The cost of this project is an estimated \$50,000. Community Mental Health representative Hough stated they don't have a proposed project yet, but they will discuss it as part of the newly formed Mental Health Crisis Ad Hoc Committee that meets Tuesday, March 28. Hillsboro Area Public Library representative Slepicka stated the library recently moved into a new building, and they would like to use their portion of the money to pay for the completion of the basement. She said they need a large area for programs, as well as two ADA accessible restrooms in the basement. This would

cost approximately \$100,000. She said they also have a drainage issue around the back door of the new building they could address, as well as pay off some of the remaining \$375,000 loan. County Senior Social Services representative Fugate stated they have some major building issues that will need to be addressed, as well as problems with the driveway at the seniors center. Huber, who was representing the East Fork Township, East Fork Road District and Multi-township Assessment of Grisham-Walshville-East Fork, stated there are a couple road projects they could address, as well as connecting services for seniors and students. Slepicka asked about the issue of stakeholder involvement. Jenkins reported there will be a webinar on March 28 at 11 a.m. to discuss that very issue. He said he plans on setting up the projector and screen for that webinar for anyone who would like to attend. Further questions could be asked during that session. Hough called Rogers and put him on speaker phone. Rogers stated he would need all projects to be submitted by no later than May 1 in order to have enough time to complete Phase II of the grant. Whitworth stated the County Board would need to discuss their projects before then. Whitworth asked if the committee could meet again soon to begin working on Phase II. Hughes suggested meeting March 29. Slepicka said they would possibly have more information by then since it falls the day after the webinar. The committee agreed and the next meeting is scheduled for March 29, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Other Business:** None.
3. **Public Comments:** None.

Motion to Adjourn by Hughes and second by Ritchie. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Christine Daniels, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder, Sandy Leitheiser.c

# Montgomery County Board

## Energy Grant Ad Hoc Committee Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 pm - County Board Room

**Members Present:** Patty Whitworth, Mark Hughes, Dan Hough (arrived at 6:18 p.m.), Michelle Pulce-Flynn, Andy Ritchie and Nancy Slepicka

**Members Absent:** Lyn Fugate

**Others Present:** Dan Rogers, Sandy Leitheiser, Daniel Robbins, Gene Knisley, Tonya Flannery, Don Downs, Steve Dougherty, Sarah McConnell, Carol Naylor and Laura Lee Huber

The committee met to discuss the following:

- Phase II of the Montgomery County Application for the DCEO Energy Transition Community Grant Update/Approval:** Whitworth reported there was a good turnout for the Energy Grant webinar that was held Tuesday, March 28. She said a lot of the information presented seemed to come directly from the Notice of Funding Opportunity that was released prior to the completion of Phase I. She stated she believes funding from the grant should be used for economic development purposes in the County. She stated not every project will have to be directly related to economic development, but she believes that should be the driving force when it comes to choosing what projects to fund. Grant writer Rogers said a couple of applications have been submitted already that are well-thought out and detailed. The two submissions are from Lincoln Land Community College and the City of Litchfield. Committee members discussed the webinar that was hosted Tuesday. Hough stated it's possible the Kincaid power plant may close in the near future and they may be eligible for funding through that when it happens. Assistant County Board Administrator David Jenkins reported the county will be eligible for the grant for multiple years, and may apply up to six years passed the date of the Coffeen Power Plant closure. The plant closed in 2019, which would make the county eligible up to 2025. He said the amount the county is eligible for may change and they would have to reapply every year. County Clerk Leitheiser asked if the application has to go through the County Board before it is submitted to DCEO. Hughes said he will ask the State's Attorney. Rogers said he would like projects to be submitted by the next meeting so they can work on completing Phase II of the grant. He said meeting on Wednesday evenings works best for him, and he could meet next Wednesday if the committee so chooses. Hough stated it will be hard to come up with potential project from a Community Mental Health perspective in such a limited amount of time, but he will work on submitting one. Whitworth stated the desire is for the funding of the grant to meet as many needs as it can. Litchfield Mayor Steve Dougherty stated he is grateful the city of Litchfield's application is being considered. The committee agreed to next meet on Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.
- Other Business:** None.
- Public Comments:** None.

Motion to Adjourn by Hughes and second by Hough. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Christine Daniels, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder, Sandy Leitheiser.

# Montgomery County Board

## Energy Grant Ad Hoc Committee Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Time:** 6:00 pm - County Board Room

**Members Present:** Patty Whitworth, Mark Hughes, Lyn Fugate, Dan Hough, Michelle Pulce-Flynn, Andy Ritchie, Nancy Slepicka

**Members Absent:** Doug Donaldson

**Others Present:** Sarah McConnell, Don Downs, Tonya Flannery, Steve Dougherty, Linda Liebscher, Jodi Reynolds and Erica Petcher

The committee met to discuss the following:

1. **Phase II of the Montgomery County Application for the DCEO Energy Transition**

**Community Grant Update/Approval:** Mark Hughes requested each of the grant applicants explain their requests to the committee. Sarah McConnell from the city of Hillsboro began the meeting by presenting a project that would involve building three bridges to connect a network of multi-use trails. McConnell stated trails have been a part of the economic development community for decades, and they are part of the city's economic development plan. She said the city received their own DCEO Energy grant in the amount of \$53,154, which they would also utilize to fund the project. McConnell said the trail would be a safe place for walks and would also be a tourism attraction. She stated people list walking trails on websites, which attracts interest from a variety of people. The City is requesting \$250,000 from the County grant. Hughes asked if the city was only given \$150,000, would they still do the project. Hillsboro Mayor Downs said they absolutely would. McConnell said the bridges are the missing piece to the trail. Downs said they tried to get the project going back in 2014 but failed to do so. He said they currently have the Lincoln Trail at Beckemeyer School, which is popular; however, it is not able to be used during school hours. Slepicka said attracting people to Hillsboro would also bring people to other communities like Litchfield as well.

Tonya Flannery spoke next to present the project for the City of Litchfield. She stated they have broken down their request into four options, all of which would benefit the city's Interstate 55 Commerce Center. The first request would be in the amount of \$2,103,000, which would fund a high pressure natural gas regulating station for the city's third commercial/industrial complex. She stated they realize seeking over \$2 million when the entire grant is \$2.2 million is not really feasible, which is why they proposed the other options. The second request is in the amount of \$183,000 and would be for natural gas distribution service. The third request is in the amount of \$225,000 and is for electrical distribution service. The fourth request is for \$408,000, which is the combined total of options two and three. Litchfield Mayor Dougherty stated this plan has been worked on since before his time as mayor and the City has lost opportunities by not being able to complete it.

Michelle Pulce-Flynn presented the requests for Lincoln Land Community College. She reported the school would like to renovate the science lab at the Litchfield outreach center, which would cost an estimated \$600,000. She said many of the students that come out of Litchfield are health care majors, and this renovated science lab would be a benefit to them. Their second request is for \$25,000 for the school's College NOW scholarship program. She stated the program allows students to take college courses while still enrolled in high school. She said students at Litchfield currently have a means to pay for these courses through the Kilton Foundation; however, other schools in the county currently do not share that benefit.

Dan Hough spoke about the Mental Health projects for the grant. The first, Hough said, would be a request for \$32,800 to develop a National Alliance of Mental Illness Program in Montgomery County. The program would provide support groups, education classes, and advocacy to people living with a mental illness. \$28,800 per year would be used for a full-time staff position, with \$2,000 per year being used for literature and \$2,000 for travel. The second

request is for \$25,000 to host a series of Drug Endangered Children programs, which would be a week-long course for community leaders that include health care, educators, law enforcement, social service providers and others. The third request is for \$40,000 for Project Third Day Panhandle, which would help feed children under sixth grade in the Panhandle School district. Project Third Day packs food in take-home bags for students. The food is designed to be easy to prepare while parents are away. \$20,000 would be used to purchase a building and \$20,000 would be used for upgrades to it. Hough said they would take less than the amount requested.

Lyn Fugate presented a couple projects for Senior Social Services. She reported they need to resurface their driveway and have bids for asphalt and oil and chip, but she forgot to bring them to the meeting. She said the cost to resurface the driveway with asphalt would be approximately \$106,000, and oil and chip would be cheaper. Ritchie asked if they considered using both kinds of surface – asphalt for the transition from the highway to the drive, and then oil and chip for the remainder of the parking lot. Fugate said she would look into that. She stated another project they would like considered would be solar panels for their building.

Nancy Slepicka presented the project requests for the Hillsboro Library. She reported they would like to finish the basement of the new building they purchased. The approximate cost would be \$100,000, which would include epoxy flooring, dry wall, construction and plumbing. She said, if needed, the library could phase this project out.

Hughes said the committee will meet again and take a vote on recommended projects, as well as allocate funds for each project considered. Whitworth stated projects would need to be submitted before the meeting date. She said April 19<sup>th</sup> would be the deadline to submit applications. **Motion by Hough and second by Ritchie to schedule the next Energy Grant Ad Hoc Committee Meeting date for Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. All in favor, motion carried.**

2. **Other Business:** None.

3. **Public Comments:** Linda Liebscher, Jodi Reynolds and Erica Petcher from Crossover Ministries addressed the committee about possibly funding a project with funds from the grant. Liebscher stated they are proposing a recovery home, which they have planned for five phases. Phase I would include moving from their current location on the second floor of the farm bureau building to a home. They are requesting \$175,000 – \$150,000 would be used to purchase a house, and \$25,000 would be used for recovery programs. Liebscher stated the facility would be open five days a week. They would be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Mondays, and from 3:00 to 11:00 p.m. the other days, which she said would cover hours when the Montgomery County Health Department and St. Francis Way Clinic are closed. Reynolds stated Crossover Ministries tries to utilize people who have lived experiences. She said they do their best to acquire money through fundraising. Petcher stated she is a person with a lived experience, as she has struggled with addiction. She said she has already buried five of her friends this year due to either drug overdose or suicide. She said while she was struggling, sometimes she just needed a place to go to take a shower, eat or sleep. She stated recovery is important. Liebscher said there have been six overdoses already this year to go along with 5 suicides. She stated they will be using funds from other grants to pay for salaries and other expenses. Hughes asked what will happen as far as funding when the grant runs out. Liebscher said they will return next year when the County applies for the grant again. As far as labor for the cost to renovate a building, Liebscher stated they have volunteers set up to help. Petcher said the property would ideally not be located inside a municipality.

Motion to Adjourn by Hough and second by Ritchie. All in favor, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m. The summaries of minutes were respectfully submitted by acting secretary Christine Daniels, as Deputized by Montgomery County Clerk/Recorder, Sandy Leitheiser.