



**Date/Time:** September 15, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

**Place:** VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: +16467415293  
PARTICIPANT CODE:111 004 0443 PW 010914

**Present:** David Bancroft- Regional Economic Development Organization  
John Cotter- Cambridge  
John DePriest- Chelsea  
Jennifer Garcia - MAPC  
Ron Hogan - Malden  
Mayra Negron-Roche - Human Service Provider  
Brad Rawson - Somerville  
Keith Slattery- Everett  
Juliana Catazariti, Encore Boston Harbor  
Joseph Delaney, MGC Community Affairs Division Chief  
Mary Thurlow, Senior Program Manager

### **Call to Order**

Chair Caraviello was unable to attend the meeting so Joe Delaney called the Region A Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee (“Committee”) meeting to order.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Delaney asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Hogan moved to approve the minutes from the Committee meeting of November 16, 2020 subject to correction for typographical errors and other nonmaterial matters. Mr. DePriest seconded the motion. By rollcall vote the minutes were approved. Brad Rawson abstained.

### **Election of Representative to the Subcommittee on Community Mitigation**

Mr. Delaney ask the members if the election for Chair should be postponed until the next meeting in the hope that Mr. Caraviello will be able to attend. Members approved that decision.

Mr. Delaney then asked for volunteers for membership on the Subcommittee on Community Mitigation. Mr. Hogan was last year’s representative. Mr. DePriest nominated Mr. Hogan and it was seconded by Ms. Negron-Rivera. After rollcall vote, Mr. Hogan was unanimously elected to be the representative on the Subcommittee.

### **Discussion of 2021 Community Mitigation Fund Policy Questions**

Mr. Delaney then provided an update on the 2021 Community Mitigation Fund. He explained how last year’s CMF had authorized \$12.5M for Community Mitigation Fund - \$6M in Region A, \$6M Region B and \$500,000 for the Category II. The Commission received 28 applications for \$5.6M. Mr. Delaney expressed concern over lack of applications and low dollar values. He noted that the Commission awarded 25 applications for \$4.8M. Mr. Delaney commented that the

remainder of funds would be carried forward into this coming year. He noted that this year MGC is estimating \$20M available for 2022 CMF. He emphasized the need for good projects to use those funds and that some communities have issues in finding the nexus to the casino. He then asked if members had any questions regarding last year's applications.

**1. Should limitations on grant amounts be increased?** Mr. Delaney highlighted the various grants available. He said that the Workforce Development Grants could easily be increased to \$500,000 per region. Another category for an increase is the Transportation Construction. He suggested raising to \$1.5M as construction costs are always going up. Mr. Knight suggested doubling Public Safety Grants. Mr. Delaney noted that most of what we've been getting are equipment lists of things that do not come under the regular budget. If we were to raise that limit we probably want to put a limit on equipment purchases.

Ms. Negron-Rivera asked which categories of applications were in most demand so that increased funding can be targeted to those categories. Mr. Delaney stated that the largest category was Specific Impact at \$1.5M. There were 11 total awards in that category of which 9 were for public safety. Transportation Construction was second and totaled \$1.4M.

**2. Should target spending caps be raised or eliminated?**

Mr. Delaney provided highlights on the funding available and indicated that the amount could be as much as \$20M for 2022. He felt that given the availability of funds, the caps could be eliminated. Mr. Hogan asked if the limit is the issue preventing CMF applications; he felt that there's got to be some other kinds of approach within the limits of the regulation. Mr. Cotter asked about the regularity of applications. Mr. Delaney responded that they are all due on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Cotter noted that at that point you will know whether the demand exceeds the supply. Caps could be adjusted based on demand.

**3. Should number of grants be limited?**

Mr. Delaney did not recommend changes for the Workforce Development Grants and that one grant per region had been working well. He did recommend allowing more than one Specific Impact Grant with the total value of Specific Impact Grants limited to \$500,000.

**4. Should the Commission pursue an expansion of CMF eligibility via either a statute change or within the current framework?**

Mr. Delaney explained that there is significant reluctance by the legislature to reopening the Gaming Act and that modifying eligibility through a statute change would be very difficult and could possibly have a negative impact on the CMF.

Mr. Delaney described an idea where the Commission could make a determination that an impact is occurring and that certain things would be eligible for funding without having to quantify the connection to the casino. That would relieve the host and surrounding communities from the burden of proving the connection to the casino.

Mr. Cotter asked about expanding beyond host and surrounding communities. Mr. Delaney noted the Legislation says host and surrounding. Another member thought that bike paths are a good example. Mr. Cotter agreed that giving the commission discretion to make that decision was appropriate. Members felt that a legislative fix was not a good idea.

Mr. Hogan noted the potential for an even more aggressive approach to handle whatever funding is not awarded. If there is left over funding, then distribute \$1M pro rata across host

and surrounding communities but it has to be spent in one of the categories with limitations being placed on what can be done with it.

Mr. Delaney recommended for this year to figure out what we can do and try to expand on it later.

**5. Should the Commission authorize the use of funds for large transportation projects or economic development projects? If so, what would be the limit per application and per region? Should such grants require a particular match (waivable by the Commission)?**

Mr. Delaney explained that there appear to be some very large projects in the not too distant future that may be seeking Community Mitigation Funds. In order to determine the extent of these projects as well as gauge interest in using mitigation funds for these projects, he is recommending asking for statements of interest from communities. The intent is not to create a new category of funding for this year, but to identify the potential universe of projects for a potential new category in the future. Ms. Negron -Rivera liked that approach to determine community needs.

Ms. Bancroft spoke about One Stop applications that are now available. Communities submit for up to 5 projects and get input on. Communities get feedback as to if they are eligible or not.

Some concern was expressed with having these Statements of Interest due with the CMF applications. Mr. Delaney thought it might make some sense to extend the deadline beyond February 1 so it doesn't conflict with CMF applications. That would also give staff the ability to do some additional outreach to communities.

Mr. Rawson appreciated being able to comment from the municipal perspective and detailed challenges faced by municipalities such as staffing shortages and federal and state grants valuing match funding.

Mr. Bancroft noted that many of these programs need matches and wondered whether there is the availability of being able to provide an award off-cycle. Communities need matching funds but can't wait until the February date.

Mr. Delaney reminded members that we are limited by the regulation. He noted that MGC could look at this as seed money to get a project started.

**Should a separate category be added for public safety grants, and should any new limits be placed on these grants?**

Mr. Delaney noted Public Safety Grants are a sub-set of the specific impact grants. There is no particular need to create a separate category except that 9 of the 11 Specific Impact Grants were for Public Safety. Mr. Slattery stated he preferred the grant separated, if not increased.

**6. Should local match provisions be reconsidered?**

Mr. Delaney noted that the local match usually consists of in kind services. The only specific match requirement is in the Transportation Construction Grant category where Commission funds can only make up 1/3 of the total project cost. No changes are being proposed for that category.

**7. Should the CMF use a fiscal year rather than a calendar year?** Mr. Delaney asked if all of the communities worked on a July 1-June 30 fiscal year. Most of the communities indicated

that they do. Mr. Delaney recommended to table this idea until the new CMF database is in place.

8. **Reserves – Should any Reserves be allowed to carry over to 2022?** Mr. Delaney explained that last year the Commission voted to rescind reserves if they were not committed by December 31, 2021. The money would then roll back into the CMF. He asked whether any of these reserves should be allowed to carry forward. Members felt that if 6 years not enough, you either put them on notice or rescind the funds. It was noted that the Commission could vote to extend any particular grant if there was good reason to do so.

Mr. Delaney then highlighted a number of items that are addressed in the Guidelines each year, but are generally not controversial. He asked if members had any specific items to raise with respect to these items. There were no comments. He asked members to review these items and they could bring any issues back to the Committee in writing or at the next meeting.

Mr. Delaney noted that there was included in members packets a rough draft of guidelines for next meeting. He asked that the members review these before the next meeting.

**Discussion of Next Steps:** LCMAC meetings are scheduled in October and November with the project solicitation before Thanksgiving. In December we are going to have our workshops again to help identify new applications. The Annual ethics training will be a part of one of the upcoming meetings. Derek Lennon will be attending to go over the CMF budget.

With no further business, Mr. Delaney asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bancroft made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DePriest seconded the motion.

The Chair adjourned the meeting.

#### **List of Documents and Other Items Used**

Notice of meeting and agenda

1. Meeting Minutes from the meeting of November 16, 2021
2. Draft Policy Questions
4. Draft 2021 Community Mitigation Fund DRAFT Guidelines

/s/ Mary S. Thurlow  
Secretary