

**Town of Mentone First Public Hearing Minutes**  
**OCRA HELP CDBG-CV Application “Mentzer Park Improvements”**

November 9, 2023 – 6 PM

Mentone Town Hall

Present Town Council Members: Jill Gross, Timothy Croy, and Shelly Krueger. Town Clerk, Amanda Yaprak, was also present.

Council President Jill Gross opened the public meeting and gave the floor to Zach Dripps, Grant Administrator with the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG) to discuss the Town’s application for grant funding with the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA).

Zach began by explaining the Town’s participation in the OCRA HELP initiative.

In 2021, Kosciusko County was selected to participate in a new program, Hoosiers Enduring Legacy Program (HELP), with the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA). The Towns of Milford, Mentone, and Pierceton signed on to participate in a year-long process to create Strategic Investment Plans (SIP) which would outline strategic investments to create a lasting legacy in their community.

The SIP was adopted earlier this year. Since then, each community has been working with OCRA and the Michiana Area Council of Governments to move forward eligible projects to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for implementation.

The Town of Mentone has selected their Mentzer Park Improvement project to apply for CDBG funds. This is the first public hearing to learn about this project. The application must be submitted by January 21, 2024.

1. Goals and Objectives of the CDBG Program
  - a. The goals and objectives of the HELP CDBG-CV program is to help communities address needs in their community relating to responding to the Coronavirus Pandemic and creating a lasting impact on the community.
2. Community Development and Housing Needs of the Applicant
  - a. The construction grant will enhance the quality of life of current and future residents. The enhancements to the park will provide a community gathering space, outdoor recreation opportunities, and a place for children and families to play.
3. Proposed Activities for the Project and the Amount to be Requested
  - a. The construction grant will assist the Town with procuring, installing, and constructing improvements to Mentzer Park. The improvements include a new public pavilion, upgraded playground equipment, improved basketball courts, new disc golf course, improved walking path, and parking lot improvements.
  - b. The total cost for this project is nearly \$700,000.
4. Total Amount of CDBG funds available

- a. Kosciusko County was awarded, as a participant in the HELP program, up to \$1 million in CDBG-CV funds to use for projects from the SIP. The County agreed the funds would be split between the three participating communities for their top projects. The Town of Mentone is planning on submitting a request for \$267,919 of CDBG-CV funds.
5. Amount and Source of Local Funds to be Expended on the Project
  - a. This program required the participating Towns to provide at least 30% of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recover Funds (CLFRF) from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) amount for the projects from their SIP. For the Town of Mentone, that is approximately \$65,564. The project requires additional local funds beyond the available CDBG-CV funds for a total of \$210,131 all from the Town's CLFRF.
  - b. The Town of Mentone will also be utilizing two other grants. One from the K21 Health Foundation for \$200,000. The other is from the Kosciusko County Community Foundation \$18,750.
6. Proposed Amount of Funds to be Used to Benefit Low- and Moderate-Income People (LMI)
  - a. In 2021, MACOG conducted an income survey in order to be eligible for this grant program. OCRA grants are required to meet one of three National Objectives, in this case it is to benefit 51% or more of Low-to-Moderate Income persons.
  - b. Approximately 56.5% of the grant funds, \$151,374 will be used to benefit low-to-moderate income individuals.
7. Notification of any Displacement Resulting from the Proposed Activities or Notification of No Displacement
  - a. This project will not result in the displacement of individuals or businesses.

Zach concluded the presentation with a request for questions or clarifications. There were no questions or clarifications. Council President, Jill Gross, closed the public hearing and transitioned the remaining of the evening to a public forum to discuss the particulars of the proposed Mentzer Park designs with members of the public.

Council President: \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_