



Anne Arundel County Community Reinvestment & Repair Commission (CRRC)

Monday, September 8, 2025

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Chesapeake Room

2664 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD

[Recording](#)

- I. Call to Order & Introductions
Dr. Ashworth, Chair, CRRC

In Attendance:

Commission Members

Dr. Shawn Ashworth (Chair), Laurie Benner, Joshua Freeman, Laurietta Jones, Randall Stites, Donald Whitehead, Michael Woldemariam.

Ex. Officio Members

Kathy Aytch, Beth Brush, Tonii Gedin.

County/ACDS Staff

Elisha Harig-Blaine (ACDS), Maggie Staudenmaier (ACDS).

Community Members

Kaya Smith, Dan Bennett, Lynda Davis, Jane Lawrence, Dr. Barbara Palmer.

- II. Review of Meeting Norms & Approval of July Minutes and September Agenda (1:02)
Dr. Ashworth, Chair, CRRC

- Unable to approve minutes and agenda due to lack of quorum.
- Quorum reached (5:17)
- Motion to approve July minutes: Randal Stites (5:45)
 - Seconded: Michael Woldemariam.
 - Approved: Unanimously.
- Motion to approve September Agenda: Joshua Freeman (6:16)
 - Seconded: Randal Stites.
 - Approved: Unanimously.

III. [Public Comment](#) Period (2:20)

Dr. Ashworth, Chair, CRRRC

Community Members

- Kaya Smith, Meade High School.

IV. Presentation of Funding Recommendations (7:43)

Dr. Ashworth, Chair, CRRRC

- Donald Whitehead: Question about total allocation amount from each review committee.
 - Dr. Ashworth: Each review committee allocated about the same amount, around \$440,000.
- Donald Whitehead: Housing and Homelessness Prevention Services (10:13):
 - Received more applications than could be funded.
 - Committee decided to allocate lower amounts than requested in order to fund as many of the top scoring applicants as possible.
 - Recommendations:
 - Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency - \$70,000.
 - The Church At Severn Run - \$50,000.
 - Arundel House of Hope - \$70,000.
 - Chase Home - \$70,000.
 - Community Legal Services - \$70,000.
 - Blessed in Tech Ministries – \$60,000.
 - Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services - \$60,000.
 - Recommending \$450,000 in funding.
 - Applicants selected based on reviewer scores.
 - Unanimous agreement in the review committee about funding the top scored applications.
- Joshua Freeman: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (14:00):
 - Committee closely aligned on the best use of funds.
 - Organizations selected based on which programs would have the greatest reach.
 - Wanted to ensure that the funding was relatively evenly distributed to the seven selected organizations.
 - Recommendation:
 - Shelly's House - \$64,500.
 - My Life Foundation - \$63,500.
 - Opportunity Ministries - \$63,500.
 - Leading by Feeding - \$62,500.
 - YWCA of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County - \$62,500.
 - Anne Arundel Conflict Resolution Center - \$62,000.
 - Anne Arundel County Food Bank + Love Wins Movement - \$61,500.
 - Recommending \$440,000 in funding.
 - Randal Stites: Mental Health committee had similar challenges to Housing committee.

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- Michael Woldemariam: Workforce Development and Employment Training (16:20):
 - Committee adhered closely to the established criteria.
 - Recommended organizations had a clear vision for the impact on the harmed community, and had a plan and capacity to execute it.
 - Recommended fewer organizations as some of the recommendations were for multi-year grants.
 - Organizations selected based on top scored applications.
 - Recommendations:
 - Uplift Alliance - \$60,000 per year for three years - \$180,000 total.
 - OIC of Anne Arundel County - \$50,000.
 - Rise and Shine - \$50,000.
 - City of Refuge Baltimore - \$28,250 per year for three years - \$84,750 total.
 - Gaudenzia - \$28,250 per year for three years - \$84,750 total.
 - Recommending \$449,500 in funding.
 - Dr. Shawn Ashworth: Education, Youth Enrichment, and After-School Activities (18:56).
 - Focus on ensuring that funding is spread across all areas of the county, and avoiding duplication of services in the same area.
 - Considered the number of beneficiaries relative to the amount of funding requested when selecting organizations for funding.
 - Despite requests for multi-year funding, all allocations were for single-year grants.
 - Recommendations:
 - Meade High PTSA - \$40,000
 - Kingdom Kare - \$32,500
 - Sisters In Sync - \$32,500
 - World Class Grads - \$32,500
 - Brothers Giving – \$40,000
 - Chase Your Dreams Initiative - \$31,500
 - Equip to Excel - \$31,500
 - New Kingdom Faith Christian Church - \$30,500
 - Together WE Rise - \$30,500
 - Laila's Love Initiative - \$30,500
 - Ballet Theatre of Maryland - \$25,000
 - Chesapeake Arts Center - \$27,500
 - Sapphire Rise - \$27,500
 - Monarch MAGB - \$24,000
 - Recommending \$436,000 in funding
 - Motion to accept all funding recommendations made by each review committee: Donald Whitehead (36:11).
 - Seconded: Joshua Freeman.

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- Elisha Harig-Blaine: Request a modification amendment added to motion to allow ACDS to make adjustments of 1-2% of approved award amount in order to make the total awarded amount align with the total amount of funding allocated.
 - Donald Whitehead: Amendment accepted.
 - Approved: Unanimously (38:40).
 - Beth Brush: Reminder that these are recommendations that will need to be approved by the County Executive.

V. Discussion of Multi-Year Grants for FY26 and future grant structures (24:34).

Dr. Ashworth

- Michael Woldemariam: Question about contingency for organizations funded at a lower amount than requested.
 - Michael: Can these projects be executed with the amount that they were awarded?
- Dr. Ashworth: Consideration of future administrations and County Councils, as well as the future revenue from cannabis sales tax, when considering the future of allowing multi-year funding requests.
- Randal Stites: If we grant a multi-year award, can the organization come back in the second or third year and ask for additional funds?
- Donald Whitehead: The Housing and Homelessness committee determined that if we funded multi-year requests, we could fund fewer organizations.
 - Donald: It may be better to hold off on multi-year grants due to uncertainty around federal funding in future years and the potential loss in federal funding for housing and homelessness agencies.
- Dr. Ashworth: How will we be monitoring and ensuring that these organizations are having the impact proposed in their application, when considering funding in future cycles.
 - Elisha Harig-Blaine: Each grantee will be required to submit bi-annual reports, including unduplicated data on their program progress, and ACDS maintains the provision to be able to monitor an organization.
 - Dr. Ashworth: Suggestion for commissioners to do pop-in visits on grantees.

VI. Discussion of Fiscal Year 2027 Cycle (39:11).

ACDS Staff

- Elisha Harig-Blaine: Funding remaining in the CRRF following the FY26 grant allocation is \$4,318,100.
- Elisha: ACDS recommendation is that the CRRC application open on Wednesday, January 21.
- Elisha: Items for consideration by the commission:
 - Allow multi-year grants again?
 - Maintain the funding parameters for Tier 2 (i.e. grants between \$20,000 and \$75,000)?

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- Decrease the maximum amount due to limited resources?
Increase the maximum amount if multi-year grants are not allowed?
 - Questions raised by Laticia Hicks, via email, regarding the equity vs. equality of allocating the same amount of funding to each review committee.
 - Maintain existing DIAs?
 - Standardize application review process?
 - Laurie Benner: Opposed to having grant application open during the holidays.
 - Dr. Ashworth: If the application opens in January, what would the timing be for returning the application?
 - Elisha Harig-Blaine: The application would be open for six weeks.
 - Laurie Benner: Desire to simplify the application process, particularly for organizations seeking smaller grants.
 - Laurie Benner: Desire to increase the amount of funding allocated for FY27.
 - Elisha Harog-Blaine: Suggestion to identify specific questions that will be answered during the October CRRC meeting.
 - Dr. Ashworth: Distribute Laticia's email to the full commission.
 - Michael: Suggestion to develop a ranking of priorities for the commission.
 - Laurie Benner: Do we have a sense of what the annual revenue from cannabis sales tax will be?
 - Elisha Harig-Blaine: We do not have enough information at this point, but it is reasonable to anticipate that the revenue could be between \$1.1 and \$1.5 million.
 - Elisha Harig-Blaine: Suggestion to develop a spreadsheet to be sent out with the minutes to include all of the questions for consideration to aid commissioners in developing thoughts and facilitate the discussion at the October meeting.

VII. Review of Housekeeping Items & Next Meeting Date

Dr. Ashworth, Chair, CRRC

- Next Meeting Date: Monday, October 13, 2025

VIII. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn: Michael Woldemariam (1:15:58)
 - Seconded: Laurietta Jones.
 - Meeting adjourned (1:16:08)