

The ethics policy review for Community Development Advisory Committee was completed shortly before the scheduled February 14 CDAC meeting intended to review 10 Public Service applications requesting funding. As a result of the review three CDAC members, including two new appointees, were unable to attend the meeting.

Two members were neighborhood representatives of low-mod neighborhoods requesting funding, Brook Creek and Schwegeler. As a result of the ethics review it was determined the neighborhood representatives could not participate in funding decisions, nor be present during the public service meeting. The third member works for the United Way and has participated in the Social Service Funding Advisory Board as their designated representative. She was asked to step down from the CDAC because the United Way funds or works with many of the current public service applicants.

Some boards explicitly call for professional knowledge of the subject area and many probably, interact with most, if not all, applicants. The Social Service Board, lists the United Way rep as board liaison because of their knowledge of the social service needs and those who may provide them. The Public Incentives Review Committee specifically lists designated professional members such as the Chair of Economic Development of Douglas County Board and a professional financial analyst appointed by the city. If the ethics qualifications for the CDAC were as strictly applied to other boards would it not disqualify or at least strategically recuse many business professionals who are appointed to just the cited boards as well as several other city boards?

There has been healthy attendance at CDAC meetings this year until the Feb. 14 meeting. With 3 members disqualified from attending, 5 of the 6 remaining members needed to be present in order to have a quorum. Only four were present, though a fifth member notified Development Services staff that he was unable to attend due to out of town work. Without a quorum, apologies and explanations were offered, the meeting was postponed, and representatives of public service applicants in attendance were asked to attend the Feb. 28 meeting.

This is the first fallout of ethics determination for the CDAC. The second possible fallout may be in discussions of regular agenda item 5 at the Feb. 1 City Commission meeting, which will possibly determine the fate of the current CDAC board. It would be a shame if the lack of a quorum for the recent meeting was part of the justification for the proposed change. If target neighborhood board members could have simply recused themselves from the appropriate funding request instead of being asked not to be present, the CDAC would have had a quorum and the meeting would occurred.