

Duty Changes by Staff at the Kansas Department of Commerce Announced

Approximately 115 people gathered on April 17th at Celebration Centre in Lyons, KS to participate in the Kansas Department of Commerce Annual Application Workshop. Kansas Department of Commerce staff member Salih Doughramaji called the workshop to order by announcing the changes of duties for personnel by the Department of Commerce.

I think that cities, rural water districts, counties, engineers and others need to learn about the staff changes because of possible future contact with the agency and work with various programs.

The retirement of Commerce employee Terry Marlin at the end of 2013 and other retirements prior to Terry created a need to revamp the job duties of the remaining staff which includes: Darla Price, Debbie Beck, LeAnn Thurman, Linda Hunsicker, Sandy Votaw and Salih Doughramaji. Job duties will remain the same for Darla Price, Kansas Department of Commerce CDBG Manager and Sandy Votaw, Administrative Assistant. Both Darla and Sandy have been with the Department of Commerce for many years.

Debbie Beck, the former CDBG Grants Coordinator, has become the new CDBG Fiscal Officer with the retirement of Ken Morgan. Her title

will remain as the CDBG Grants Coordinator. She will draw funds from the federal program, process audits and work with program income reports.

Salih Doughramaji is now CDBG Grants Manager. Salih assumes management of the Commercial Rehabilitation program as well as the Annual Competition process for Community Facilities and Water/Sewer. Salih will continue to manage the KAN STEP and Urgent Need programs and will remain the Labor Standards and Acquisition and Relocation Specialist. He will also manage a project case load of current and future projects.

Linda Hunsicker will remain the Housing and Environmental Specialist. She will maintain management of the Housing Certification program, as well as assume the General Administrator Certification duties. She will review all environmental studies for the CDBG Program. Beginning with 2014 awards, Linda will undertake all monitoring activities.

LeAnn Thurman will remain the Civil Rights and Section 3 Specialist. In addition, she will continue to manage the NSP 1 and NSP 3 programs. She will assume program management duties for Housing Rehabilitation and Economic Development while maintaining

caseloads for Water/Sewer and Community Facilities. Finally, she will provide Federal Annual Reports in partnership with the Kansas Housing Resource Corporation.

All 2013 and prior grant awards will remain with and be managed/monitored by the current field representative with the exception of all Economic Development projects (2013 and prior) that will be managed/monitored by LeAnn Thurman.

Something old, something NEW

Most of the workshop at Lyons was a review pertaining to Community Development Block Grants, Housing, KAN STEP, Urgent Need and Community Facilities program.

Proposed Changes for 2015

One of the new procedures that pertains to the Community Development Block Grants is a "Determination of Level of Review". This is another report that must be submitted with the grant application. Commerce staff member Salih Doughramaji stressed that the application should "state the need clearly". He summarizes it in the following statement: "Don't make the reviewers have to look for WHY the entity needs a grant."



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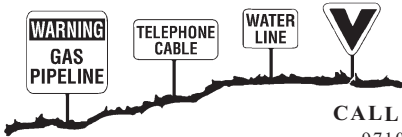
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Here are other points of interest that cities, rural water districts and counties should be aware of:

1. The local contribution of donated labor or services for KAN STEP projects has been reduced from 40 percent to 35 percent of the retail cost. The cost savings will be calculated and based on retail price of proposed building project; waterline projects must demonstrate cost savings based on the amount of the application.

2. Applicants must wait five years to apply for a KAN STEP after the close of a second KAN STEP grant.

3. Commercial Rehabilitation will have one round of funding. The due date for the applications is June 1, 2014.

4. Past Performance points are being removed from the rating system.

5. An applicant may only apply in the same category for the same activity two consecutive years.

If the project is not funded, the grantee must wait three years before applying again in that category for the

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same activity. An applicant may apply for other activities if the applicant decides to pursue other projects.

The threshold water rate has been changed as follows: For the charge for 5,000 gallons – City: \$36.50; Rural

Water Districts: \$50. The rates for wastewater remain at \$26.25 based on 5,000 gallons of usage.

Kansas Department of Commerce awards approximately \$9 million annually for water, wastewater, and community facilities projects. Systems are required to meet a low-to moderate goal and attend a Kansas Inter-Agency Committee (KIAC) meeting. Application must be submitted by October 15 with awards are announced in mid-January. The maximum award is \$400,000 per project or \$2,000 per beneficiary for Community Facilities and \$500,000 per project or \$2,000 per beneficiary for Water/Sewer projects.

Rita has extensive municipal experience with the city of Troy, KS for eleven years. Her focus at KRWA is to provide assistance to cities and rural water districts with applications for funding.



It's a full-house at this training session held in Pittsburg, KS on June 10. The focus of this training session was compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. The presenters were KRWA staff members Monica Wurtz, Pat McCool and Greg Metz. Topics included SDWA regulations and compliance, disinfection, chlorination, maintaining chlorine residuals, bacteriological sampling, water loss and valve exercising. A total of 58 persons attended. KRWA plans to conduct many more of these type of sessions in the coming months.