

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 4, 2023 5:00pm
City Hall West Meeting Room #1

ATTENDEES: Mayor Caggiano, Council Member Panioto, Commissioners Schmelder, Mills, Hick, Massarelli, Verikas, Goldwasser, and Rasmussen-Tuller.

ABSENT: Andrew Armstrong, Assistant City Planner

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dr. Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator, Dawn Nielsen, Marketing and PR Specialist, Sharon Arsego, Sr. Admin. Assistant

GUESTS: Dave Preleski, Treasurer - City of Bristol

Commissioner Schmelder expressed his apologies and advised the Board that he would need to leave at 6:00pm.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Caggiano began the meeting at 5:00PM and led the room in The Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

Mayor Caggiano entertained a motion to bring item **VIII. Committee Reports B. Incentives Update** up on the agenda. Commissioner Schmelder brought the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

VIII. Committee Reports

B. CDBG Policy Committee

Mayor Caggiano asked Commissioner Schmelder to read the motion for this item. Commissioner Schmelder prefaced the reading of the motion by saying the CDBG Policy Committee had met and made their allocation recommendations which are included in the following motion. The list of grant recipients and the allocation amounts was provided to the Board in their monthly meeting packets and in lieu of reading each line item, the Board referred to the information ahead of their vote.

The motion was read as follows:

Motion to approve the recommendations of the CDBG Policy Committee for the award of subrecipient grant funding for Program Year 49 as follows, and to forward these recommendations to the City Council and Board of Finance for action.

2023-24 Bristol Proposed CDBG Allocation

Project/Category	Amount
Housing Rehabilitation	
Residential Rehabilitation*	\$305,000
Support Staff (for Rehab program & projects)	\$115,340
Sub-Total	\$420,340
Public Service (up to 15% of new funding maximum= \$88,231)	
Boys and Girls Club - Cambridge Park Outreach	\$16,000
St. Vincent DePaul Homeless Shelter	\$21,000
United Way of West Central CT – Walsh Summer Work	\$3,000
YWCA – Sexual Assault Crisis Services	\$5,000
Prudence Crandall – Emergency Shelter	\$10,000
Shepard Meadows - Scholarships	\$7,000
Human Resources Agency - Case Management	\$10,000
Salvation Army Bristol Corps	\$10,000
Family Resource Centers – FAST program	\$1,000
BristolWorks!	\$5,231
Sub-Total	\$88,231
Public Facilities	
Bristol Housing Authority – Upgrades to Komanetsky Estates	\$35,199
Sub-Total	\$35,199
Planning & Administration (up to 20% of new funding maximum= \$117,642) plus \$3,000 for fair housing activities**	
Sub-Total	\$99,440
GRAND TOTAL	\$643,210

*\$275,000 for Single Family Residential Rehab Program, \$30,000 for Multi-Family Program.

**Fair Housing may be listed separately.

Commissioner Hick seconded the motion. Mayor Caggiano thanked Dr. Dawn Leger for the notification ahead of the meeting showing what each organization is using their grant funds for. No questions or additional comments were made. Dr. Leger reminded the Board that shortly after this is filed, she will be starting the next five-year comprehensive plan.

A vote was then taken to approve the motion. All were in favor and the motion was entered into the record.

Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to move to item **V. New Business F. Neighborhood Assistance Act Approval**. The motion was approved by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller with all in favor to move the agenda item as proposed.

V. New Business

F. Neighborhood Assistance Act Approval

Dr. Dawn Leger advised that Bristol is a pass through for the State of Connecticut where a public hearing for the Neighborhood Assistance (NAA). This year's public hearing was held before tonight's ECD Board meeting. The NAA allows nonprofit organizations to submit applications that are forwarded to the Department of Revenue Services. If the nonprofits are approved by that Department in September 2023, they're allowed to approach businesses and ask the businesses to give them their tax credits. Those credits are mostly used for energy and conservation projects though some other types of projects are also acceptable. Dr. Leger referred the Board to the list included in their meeting packets and confirmed 11 applicants for this year. She was tasked with confirming the applicants are eligible.

Commissioner Schmelder read the following motion to approve the NAA applications, requesting the Board to refer to the applicant list provided in their meeting packet in lieu of reading the list:

To approve the organizations that applied for the 2023 Neighborhood Assistance Program and refer to the City Council for approval at its May 9, 2023 meeting.

The 2023 NAA Applicants for Bristol are:

1. Boys & Girls Club of Bristol (Energy Conservation - \$150,000)
2. Bristol Historical Society (Energy efficiency repointing - \$150,000)
3. The Family Center, Inc./ dba ImagineNation, A Museum Early Learning Center (Inspiring Imagine Nation One Child at A Time - \$126,000)
4. Greater Bristol Realty Corporation (Bristol Homes Phase 2 - \$150,000)
5. Liberty Baptist Church (Energy Efficient Lighting - \$24,890)
6. Nutmeg Symphony Orchestra (Concert Series/Educational Children's Concerts - \$64,460)
7. Prudence Crandall Center Inc. (Annual Appeal - \$150,000)
8. Prudence Crandall Center Inc. (Energy Efficiency - \$37,060)
9. Shepard Meadows Equestrian Center (Solar Power - \$75,000)
10. United Way of West Central CT (Neighbors in Need - \$125,000)
11. Wheeler Clinic, Inc. (Bristol Family Health & Wellness Center HVAC System - \$150,000)

Mayor Caggiano asked when the applicants would be notified that they've been approved. Dr. leger advised they would be notified in the summer of 2023. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. All were in favor and the motion was approved into the record.

III. Minutes: April 6, 2023

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to approve the minutes from April 6, 2023. Commissioner Schmelder put the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Hick. No comments or changes were requested. All were in favor and the minutes were approved into the record.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Communications

B. Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Goldwasser put the motion forward and it was seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. No comments or changes were requested. All were in favor and the Consent Agenda was approved into the record.

V. New Business

A. Incentives Update

Justin Malley began his update with gratitude to the ECD and CDBG department members who all have a role in the department's grant programs for the city, for both businesses and residences.

Justin spoke to the current grant programs expense to the city, risks to the city, labor intensity for staff, and the need to streamline the process for everyone involved as some of the factors that led to the current loan program discussion. At the April 6, 2023 ECD Board Meeting, the Board approved designating \$750,000.00 already assigned to ECD to be designated for the Revolving Loan Program. Next step is securing a loan servicing partner through the bidding process. This loan program could be available as early fall 2023. Justin encouraged feedback and input from the Board on this program.

Dave Preleski and Justin have discussed how to move forward if more than one bid response is received. Dave, Justin and Roger Rousseau, Executive Director of Purchasing for the city will be meeting the loan servicing partners, and would like to bring those contacts to the Board for further introduction and discussion.

Discussion about the loan program options included loan forgiveness, the hybrid grant and loan nature of the proposed program, no prepayment penalties, the assistance provided to the business through the loan program vs the grant programs, and penalties for nonpayment. Dave Preleski spoke to the streamlining of the grant program. Commissioner Schmelder expressed concerns about payment waivers and the handling of late payments.

Justin referred the Board to the current Grant Programs chart provided in their meeting packets. This chart references grant types, purposes, recent recipients and current balances in each grant account. Further discussion continued and no decisions or votes were taken.

B. BOF Transfers

Mayor Caggiano requested the motions for the Board of Finance transfer requests be read and they were read by Commissioner Schmelder as follows:

Motion: To transfer \$150,000 from the ECD Economic Development Expenses account 1044109-589300 to the ECD "Downtown Grants" account 1044109-589320.

There were no questions or further discussion, all were in favor and the motion was approved into the record.

Motion: To transfer \$5,000 from the CDBG Professional Fees and Services account 1044102-531000 to the CDBG Residential Rehabilitation account 1044102-587100.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick, there were no questions or further discussion, all were in favor and the motion was approved into the record.

C. Downtown Update

Dawn Nielsen reminded the Board of the Gala Night Saturday, April 8th being held at the Rockwell Theater inside the Bristol Arts and Innovation Magnet School on Veteran's Memorial Drive. Mayor Caggiano advised that a theater manager has been hired and of events already booked. Dawn Nielsen as the ECD Marketing will be receiving event notifications on a timelier basis to communicate them to the city and the Board. Mayor Caggiano encouraged supporting the theater as an important driver to Downtown. Commissioner Mills expressed concern about the advertising lag which the mayor acknowledged.

Dawn Nielsen invited the Board to attend a small tour of West Cemetery on Monday, April 11th. She is leading the tour which will highlight the Civil War Monument that the city is restoring, and noting that many members of the city's founding families are buried in this location. Council Member Panioto spoke to the statue's eagle wings and the care being taken for their restoration.

Mayor Caggiano invited Commissioner Verikas to provide an update on the Bristol Bazaar. Commissioner Verikas spoke of floor, turf and faux tree installations, painting they've been doing themselves, and that the façade work is almost completed. Vendor applications continue to come in and they're holding steady at approximately 75%. They're planning to open early June 2023 and their marketing has been in full force.

Mayor Caggiano advised that the Memorial Boulevard bridge project will be completed by Memorial Day 2023.

D. ARPA Update

Justin Malley provided an update on the ARPA awards and projects including the first round of applicants, Building Bristol, twenty-two City of Bristol awards (nine of which are ECD projects), and the Hope Street garage. Mayor Caggiano advised of programs that have not started and decisions needing to be made to reabsorb the granted, unused funds. The exception to this is the Bristol Adult Resource Center (BARC) which has been granted \$1.5M to match other funding they have for a new center on Lake Avenue. They have new opportunities to help finalize their fundraising including the Community Investment Fund (CIF). Bristol's handling of the ARPA funds as setting an example for transformational projects was emphasized by Commissioner Goldwasser.

Commissioner Schmelder excused himself from the meeting at 6:00pm.

E. CDBG Grant Extension Request

Dr. Dawn Leger spoke about the New England Carousel Museum’s grant from the previous year. The grant is to replace railings, and after three bids, they were either too far over budget or included work not within the scope of the project. The Museum is asking for an extension so they can request and review an abbreviated bid of work only within the scope of the project.

Commissioner Goldwasser read the following motion:

To grant a project period extension to end on December 31, 2023 for the Carousel Museum to complete an approved project under CDBG Year 48 to replace the ADA/main entrance railings at 95 Riverside Avenue.

Commissioner Hick seconded the motion. Mayor Caggiano requested, and Dr. Leger provided clarification on, the amount of the grant which is \$12,000.00. Council Member Panioto noted he would be abstaining from the vote as a museum board member. Mayor Caggiano noted on future votes an abstaining board member would need to leave the room before the vote was taken. Dr. Leger noted that Council Member Panioto had not commented or spoken on the matter, and the mayor declared no concern in this instance. All voting board members were in favor of the motion and it was passed into the record.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

There was no new business from the Commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Hick asked about progress with the Sessions building. Justin Malley provided updates on the Land Bank’s processes which include a walk through and bids coming in. Mayor Caggiano confirmed that the foreclosure is almost finalized.

Commissioner Hick also asked about Middle Street. Justin Malley has spoken with the licensed environmental practitioner for one area that has some high readings. That contact is advising on the next steps to address the site.

There was no other old business presented to the Board.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. City Council Member Report

There was no report to be presented.

IX. Adjournment

Mayor Caggiano entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hick made the motion to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Council Member Panioto. The motion was approved by all and the meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary