

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MINUTES – Regular Meeting  
Thursday, October 1, 2020, 5:00 P.M.  
City Hall Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Council Member Preleski, Commissioner Mills, Hick, Schmelder, Goldwasser, Cyr, Rasmussen-Tuller, Zammett

ABSENT: - - -

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing & Public Relations  
Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator

I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

II. Public Participation

There was no public participation

III. **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to accept the minutes of September 3, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. The commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were accepted.**

IV. Consent Agenda

**Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to file the Consent Agenda seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

V. New Business

A. 273 Riverside Ave. and Downtown Updates

**273 Riverside Ave.**

Justin provided an update on the activities of the New Colony Land Bank. They are currently doing an assessment. The land bank is working with the Sessions family on a transfer and there is a Letter of Intent. We will apply for a grant to clean it for approximately 1.5 million. Justin has reached out to the tenants for what it will look like next year for them.

Justin is also working with UConn students who will be working on a program to apply for grant funding for this project.

**Downtown**

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu spoke about the businesses making investments in the downtown area and the issues that Bristol has had with the cleanliness and the image on Riverside Ave. and Main St. She has asked Justin Malley and Ray Rogozinski to look into how a cleanup program would work. We need to take the lead on how we want it to look.

B. SEBBP Update

Justin reported that Lot 2 (BHF Logistics) and Lot 6 (EcoSmart) are both being handled by the respective attorneys along with our Tom Conlin. BHF is about to go into site review. There might be a small issue with the regulations but it should not be a problem. There are two additional possible projects for the park: One is an electrical contractor and the other is a manufacturer. More to come next month.

C. Site Plan/Land Use Update

This will be a standard item each month. A new assistant planner will start work in the next couple of weeks and will also assist Justin Malley part-time. Justin already has projects ready to give to this person.

D. Marketing Videos Update

Dawn Nielsen has been developing a marketing plan for the videos. We will be doing three different events at the three locations with a small group of people. Then we will work with two ad agencies to do Google search words along with YouTube and Facebook where we would buy ad space. This will all be targeted by subject, location, and so on. They will be rolled out one a month from October through December. The three events will also be live on Facebook with posts beforehand to garner interest.

E. Board of Finance Transfer Request

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve a request to transfer \$150,000 from the Economic Development expense account to the Development Grants/Centre Square account and to refer to the Board of Finance for action. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

VI. New Business by Commissioners – There was no new business by Commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Mills spoke about the new hotel addition and asked about the Carrier project. This project has been receiving a lot of phone calls and are advertising on their website. There are 32 units and they have on-site parking.

Commissioner Hick spoke about the Sports Armory. He took out of State friends to Better Half Brewing after they attended a game. He was pleased the downtown had options for them.

Justin added that Foodies had a grand opening today and it is a quite different place than when they started.

VIII. Any Other Business

D. City Council Liaison Report – Council Member Preleski

- The bids for the major portion for the Memorial Boulevard school project have been calculated. It came in much lower than originally thought. Some funds can be redirected to other focus points such as sound, light, and windows. They still have a good unreserved contingency. The project is on schedule for 2022.
- The Pension fund is going out to bid for administrative fees.
- A number of individuals who work from home are relocating to Bristol from New York City due to our social media posts and the impression of Bristol that they provide.

A. StartUP Bristol Task Force Report – Commissioner Zammett

- Bakery on Maple came to the meeting. They are opening in the same building as Parkside. They had plans for operating under the COVID situation as well as revenue streams which will help them to survive and thrive in these times. A downtown grant was approved for them in the amount of \$62,000 (\$2,000 for new job creation). Our funding is tied to the fixed assets. Justin provided some background on the business history and plans.

**Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to accept the report seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All voted in favor. Motion passed.**

B. Economic Development Policy Committee Report

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion that when a grant award is contested, the Grantee may elect to wait until the project completion when the project value has been determined by the Assessor. At that time the grant award would be based on the actual project value with no award rising more than 10% of the Assessor's original estimate. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion.**

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu reported that this motion is a recommendation of the ECD Policy Committee to address the current issue and to apply it to any future disputes. Justin reviewed and clarified. Additionally, if the assessed value is less, the grant award could go lower. The economic development grants are also capped at \$150,000. The estimates are done at a point in time, another factor which affects the estimate. The assessments are done by Bristol's Assessor. **All commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to apply the policy for contested grants to Family Eye Care, LLC. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to create a pilot Façade Improvement Grant Program per recommendations of the ECD Policy Committee. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion.**

Justin explained the new pilot program. Guidelines will be made and more information will be forthcoming. The new Planning Assistant will help with this program. This will also allow a building owner to apply for funds. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller added that this would be a 50/50 match. **All commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to request a transfer of \$50,000 from the Economic Development expense account and \$50,000 from the StartUP Bristol account to the new Façade Improvement Program account for a total of \$100,000 and to refer to the Board of Finance for action. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

C. CDBG Policy Committee Report

Commissioner Schmelder reported that the Committee met and a new Policy Manual would incorporate all past policy approvals so they are written down in one place. Dawn Leger added that they would be reviewing all our policies and be sure they are clear.

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to revoke the \$28,000 grant awarded in CDBG Year 45 to Neighborhood Housing Services of New Britain/Greater Realty Corporation, with the understanding that they may reapply for a grant when the project is shovel-ready.**

**Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion.** Commissioner Schmelder clarified that there were regulations which were the reason for this. Dawn explained that the grants are for a period of one year. We have a good record with HUD but if we do not spend the funds in a timely fashion, the grant has to be taken back. The application forms will be revised to make this clear. **The Commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to request a transfer of \$28,000 from the CDBG Public Facilities grant for Year 45 (2019-20) to the CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program for Year 46 (2020-21). Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, all commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**
- **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve a Substantial Amendment to the CDBG Annual Action Plan to accept additional CDBG-CV funding from the CARES Act in the amount of \$382,741.00, and to announce the opening of a Request for Proposals in the coming week for organizations to address any needs related to preparing for, preventing, and responding to the coronavirus in the low/mod-income population of Bristol. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion.** Mayor Zoppo-Sassu reviewed this topic. This is the second round of COVID-19 funding. The first was allocated to St. Vincent DePaul. This will be open for applications. Dawn Leger explained that the expenditures can cover anything from March onwards. **All commissioners voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu asked that the commission members go on their social media if they have them to advertise the Food to Family program which is continuing. This round will have more variety plus meat and milk. It will be taking place at the Lake Compounce parking lot starting on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and then again on October 16<sup>th</sup> and October 30<sup>th</sup>. She provided more information on the distribution. If people do not have transportation the food will be delivered and there are partners also who will assist. Please share the Facebook event. Two United Way employees will be in the downtown lot for those who did not get the new information.

IX. Adjournment

**Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cyr, all present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Cooper, Recording Secretary