

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MINUTES – Regular Meeting  
Thursday, March 5, 2020, 5:00 P.M.  
Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Commissioners Cyr, Rasmussen-Tuller, Mills, Hick, Schmelder, Goldwasser

ABSENT: Council Member Preleski, Commissioners Passamano

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing & P.R. Specialist, Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator; David Sgro, Housing & Project Specialist

I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Participation – None

III. **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to accept the minutes of February 6, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Cyr. The commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were accepted. Commissioner Mills abstained.**

IV. Consent Agenda

There was no Chamber of Commerce report.

**A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda, all voted in favor, motion passed.**

V. New Business

A. 12-65b Application – 871 Farmington Avenue

Justin provided information on the site and the challenges there. An incentive package was put together for this business. This would free up capital as there are some improvements that need to be made.

This would be a 4-year tax abatement schedule. (80% years 1 and 2, then changes for years 3 and 4). He reviewed the potential savings to the business and what taxes would be received to the City.

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve a real property tax assessment fixing agreement for Harbor Freight Tools or its assigns contingent on the execution of a 10-year lease for 871 Farmington Ave. in which Harbor Freight Tools, or its assigns, as tenant be responsible for all property taxes associated with 871 Farmington Ave. Said property tax assessment fixing agreement shall be subject to conditions identified in Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-65b and shall take the following form:**

**Tax Year 1 – 80% real property tax abatement**

**Tax Year 2 – 80% real property tax abatement**

**Tax Year 3 – 70% real property tax abatement**

**Tax Year 4 – 60% real property tax abatement**

**In the event Harbor Freight Tools – or its assigns –ceases operations at 871 Farmington Ave., any tax abatement agreement associated with the property will cease. This motion to be forwarded to City Council.**

**Commissioner Mills seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

B. StartUP Bristol Report

The StartUP Task Force met recently. Justin provided background on the two businesses that they met with.

1. Bakery on Maple:

This business is ready to move into a permanent location on Maple St. They came to StartUP Bristol for guidance. Justin later heard that they had received their financing through a credit union. They will come back to StartUP to request a Downtown grant.

2. Family Roots:

They will be leasing space at Northside Square. This is a fruit and vegetable business (retail). Justin described the business. They will be coming back to us. Currently we are waiting on a business plan and specifics on their lease and buildout for the space.

3. Pure Foods:

Pure Foods LLC came with their business plan and a grant request. Justin described the business that they will be opening at 457 North Main St. which they are renovating. They were approved for a grant of up to \$60,000 for their renovations.

The Mayor answered questions regarding the progress on Parcel 10 of Centre Square.

C. Long-Term Planning: Riverside Ave.

Justin discussed the old Dodge Village and other projects in the area with regard to elimination of blight. Public Works will be collaborating with the State. There will be a meeting next week with the State discussing various items such as bridge replacement and it is expected to also discuss some streetscape work.

D. Grant Extension: BBU

Justin reported on BBU (Barter Business Unlimited). They have started the roof. The job creation portion is up for expiration so we would like a one-year extension for this grant.

**Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to grant a one-year grant deadline extension for Barter Business Unlimited to February 2021. Andrew Rasmussen-Tuller seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

E. City Employee Recognition – Spanish Translation

Justin spoke about the help received from the following employees with Spanish translation:

- Genesis Ojeda, Corporation Counsel office
- Patricia Ochoa, Town and City Clerk office
- Cindy Oliveras-Cyr, Purchasing office

Genesis assisted Dave Sgro with a client who would have been very difficult to help without her assistance.

Dawn Nielsen spoke about the Spanish translation done on the census flyers which will be inserted in the Bristol Observer and the bookmarks which will be disseminated in the community with the same message. These were done by employees Cindy Oliveras-Cyr and Patricia Ochoa at a great savings to the City in time as well as financially. The Mayor commented that the value of bilingual staff at City Hall is critical and we are very thankful. The minutes for this meeting will be sent to HR for their files.

F. Small Business Grant Report

- New England Barber

Justin has approved a Small Business Grant to help out this company with their flooring and to purchase two new barber chairs. Amount of the grant is \$4,950.

- Tobacco & Son Builders Inc.

They have relocated from Stafford Avenue to Burlington Avenue and a company from Farmington, KW Construction Services and KDM Services, is looking to lease the old space and Justin is working with them.

- State Farm

They have two offices in Bristol. Matthew Bub owns the office in the Bristol Plaza and Zach Ibanez owns the office on Broad Street. They are working on some small projects. More information will be supplied next month.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

There was no new business by Commissioners.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

There was no old business by Commissioners.

VIII. Any Other Business

- A. City Council Liaison Report – There was no City Council Liaison Report. Councilman Preleski will supply a report next month on Memorial Boulevard.

IX. Executive Session (meeting moves to the Economic and Community Development Conference Room)

The Mayor gave recognition to Lindsey Rivers from Public Works who was in the audience.

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to move to Executive Session, seconded by Andrew Rasmussen-Tuller. The meeting went into Executive Session.

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder, to return from Executive Session. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

A. Downtown Grant Application

**Commissioner Goldwasser made the following motion:**

**To award a 50% matching Downtown Grant up to \$35,698 which includes up to \$7,000 for the addition of seven (7) full-time jobs to downtown Bristol, \$1,000 per job up to \$7,000, to Miller Foods, Inc., dba Oma's Pride, contingent on its continued tenancy of approximately 12,500 square feet at 95 Valley Street for purposes of operating a pet food and related products distribution operation and the addition of new full-time positions to Bristol, and to forward to the Board of Finance for their information. Commissioner Cyr seconded the motion (as amended), all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

B. Manufacturing Equipment Grant Application

**Commissioner Goldwasser made the following motion:**

**To award a Manufacturing Equipment Grant up to \$21,578, which includes up to \$7,000 for the addition of seven (7) full-time jobs to Bristol, \$1,000 per employee to Bristol, to Axis Turning, LLC, for the purchase of equipment and the addition of new full-time positions to its payroll, and to forward to the Board of Finance for their information. Commissioner Cyr seconded the motion, all present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu advised that they have the printout for 301 Main Street and asked the committee to acquaint themselves with this information. She provided details. They are now permitted for this project. She also answered inquiries about blighted downtown and other properties.

X. Adjournment

**Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hick, all present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Cooper, Recording Secretary