

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MINUTES – Regular Meeting
Thursday, June 4, 2020, 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Council Member Preleski;
Commissioners Hick, Schmelder, Goldwasser, Mills, Rasmussen-Tuller (video)
Commissioners Cyr (on phone)

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator
Dawn Nielsen, Marketing & P.R. Specialist (video),

GUESTS: Christine Theborge, Michael Zammet

I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

II. Public Participation

Ernest Petti asked about the Assistant City Planner/Development Coordinator position and The Mayor explained the duties and pay scale. She will forward more information on the salary schedule.

III. **Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to accept the minutes of May 7, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. The commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were accepted.**

IV. Communications

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to file the Communications, seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

V. New Business

A. Farmers Market 2020 Season

Dawn Nielsen provided an update. There will be a planning meeting and dry run on June 12th. The market will open on June 20th. There will be 16 vendors. Guidelines have been developed and there will also be billboards advertising the market this year.

Justin said if any of the board members could come on either June 12 or 20 and also on 6/20 to assist since this is the first market of the year then that would be helpful. Several farmers markets in the area will not be opening so we may have more activity than usual.

Dawn said that the dry run will be across the street in the regular market area. They will obtain feedback from vendors. There is a lot of work to make this COVID safe. We will be advertising in surrounding towns.

Commissioner Goldwasser commented that this coincides with Phase 2 and asked if they have to abide by the 25 person rule. The Mayor replied no but we will control the flow and watch the crowd to keep the people moving along. Volunteers will assist with this. If Phase 2 changes it will not affect us. There will be a lot of signage with instructions. Sanitation stations will be set up at entry and exit. Masks will be available if someone really wants one.

Questions were answered. There will be 2 food trucks. They are working with the health department. No seating is allowed. There will be music each week.

B. COVID-19 Business Update

The Mayor said that the City is working within the State guidelines and that City Council is also working with local businesses such as hair salons. Justin has been working with the restaurants to get their outside dining in place. Justin pointed out that there are special pages on the All Heart website for COVID-19 information.

C. Economic Development Grant(s)

Commissioner Hick inquired about Seery Strings and the Mayor described the business.

Mo's Food Store: Justin provided background information on this company. Their brick-oven pizza business has been sold to Better Half Brewing and they have now opened a full-service deli on Center Street. The business does not qualify for a Downtown Grant as it is not a sit down restaurant. They have invested quite a bit into this business and have applied for a traditional Economic Development Grant. Justin explained how this works along with the taxes the business would bring in. They will also have two new employment positions.

Commissioner Hick made a motion to approve an Economic Development Grant of up to \$9,269 – representing \$7,269 for building improvements and up to \$2,000 for the creation of new jobs as a result of the project – to Mo's Food Store, Inc., 27 Center St., Bristol, CT, and to forward to the Board of Finance for information purposes. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion.

Commissioner Schmelder asked how the ECD office handles the paperwork concerning new jobs and Justin explained.

All members voted in favor and the motion passed and the grant was approved.

D. CDBG and Neighborhood Assistance Act Updates

CDBG: Dawn Leger reported that now that the Public Participation has been approved at the Public Hearing this can now go to HUD. The full board should now approve the amended Citizen Participation Plan. **Council Member Preleski made a motion to approve the Amended Citizen Participation Plan which allows for shorter Public Notification time and the use of Virtual Meetings (utilizing audio-visual tools such as Zoom, Webex, and others) as a substitute for in-person meetings in the event of a quarantine due to a public health emergency, epidemic, or pandemic. Commissioner Mills seconded the motion, all members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Dawn explained that now there is a 5-day comment period instead of 30.

NAA – Department of Revenue Services: The State has now extended the deadline and we have now received one more application from Nutmeg Symphony Orchestra. This is a pass-through process. **Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve and forward the application for Nutmeg Symphony Orchestra. Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller 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

There were a number of questions:

- Harbor Freight: This is still on schedule. Justin reported they are working in the space and are looking to open sometime in July.
- The new deck in the Bristol Plaza: This is being shared by Starbucks, Jersey Mikes, and Moe's. Jersey Mikes will maintain a shared outdoor dining deck for all nearby businesses.
- New businesses in Plaza: Leases have not yet been signed.
- Ruby Tuesday: Will be closing.
- Old Dodge Village location: Justin is in touch with the new owner and will have more information next month. The Mayor commented there will be lots more to come on Riverside.

The Mayor excused herself at 5:47 p.m. Commissioner Schmelder continued as Chair.

VIII. Any Other Business

- A. Committee Reports – Addressed earlier.
- B. Council Liaison Reports

Council Member Preleski reported that Council members have been reaching out to business owners. Justin and the Mayor went to every meeting which was very effective. The City Council has passed the budget and there will be a small mil increase. He also reported on the Senior Citizen benefit.

Justin reported that Michael Zammet will be the newest board member. He has been on the StartUP committee. Mike is replacing Bob Passamano who stepped down a few months ago because of his new job.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hick, all present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Cooper, Recording Secretary