ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MINUTES – Regular Meeting
Thursday, March 3, 2022, 5:00 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers, City Hall

ATTENDEES: Mayor Caggiano, Council Member Panioto, Commissioners Schmelder, Cyr, Goldwasser, Rasmussen-Tuller, Zammett

ABSENT: Commissioners Hick, Mills

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing and PR Specialist; Andrew Armstrong, Assistant City Planner; Ray Rogozinski, Public Works Director

I. Mayor Caggiano called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Public Participation – There was no public participation.

III. **Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to accept the minutes of February 3, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All commissioners present voted in favor and the minutes were accepted.**

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to file the Communications seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

B. Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to file the Economic Development/Grants/Marketing Report seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

V. New Business

A. Downtown Update

Justin spoke about the downtown parking challenges and solutions. Ray Rogozinski spoke about plans for downtown parking due to the upcoming construction projects. Justin advised that due to the need for staging areas the Farmers Market will need to be relocated. Mayor Caggiano said that they would like to keep it downtown. A portion of Riverside from Hope St. to North Main along with part of the Patch is planned to be the temporary location.

On the draft map distributed, there are some commitments from local businesses to share their parking space – People's United Bank, Barnes, and Wheeler Health. People's will have access to their drive-through. This is not park of Route 72 but the bus company has been contacted regarding any change that may be needed for their route.

Justin said that we have been looking at how other towns are running their markets. Dawn Nielsen said that most other towns are run by non-profits, either existing or created specifically to run the market. These groups can also fund-raise. There have been discussions on how to partner with another non-profit in the area. We have discussed this with the Rotary who has agreed to take it on this year. This will be a pilot program. Commissioner Goldwasser inquired should you put it out to see if there are any other organizations that may be interested. Dawn advised that it will not be the Rotary Club exclusively but will utilize other organizations they partner with to assist each week and liaise with the City.

Justin advised that Parcel 3 is the final parcel available for development. It will be used for the meantime for staging, and Justin has had three entities expressing interest in the parcel. Discussion on the timing for their potential plans. We may obtain some input from Mike Goman. This parcel may be available sooner rather than later as Wheeler is shovel ready. Shared parking can also be a positive for this location.

Commissioner Goldwasser asked about Mafale's Plaza which was recently destroyed by fire. Justin said we were looking to connect with all the tenants. He was not sure what will happen to that site.

B. Rating Agencies

The city met with two credit rating agencies recently. Justin attended the presentation. This helps us to obtain better rates on our debt by having a higher rating.

C. Conflict of Interest Declaration

Justin explained the process. Commissioner Mike Zammett read the one Conflict of Interest into the record (see attached).

D. Sessions Building Update

Justin provided a financial update on the expenses we are covering. From our $50,000, we should be at $11,500 by the end of April. There is only one tenant there and they are on their way out.

E. Project Status Updates – No additional updates this month,

F. ARPA Update

Commissioner Schmelder advised that all the information needed has been received and they are ready to go to ARPA. The ARPA sub-committees have been working very hard to review the large number of applications which have been received and based on various criteria have narrowed them down to the most viable along with adjustments to the dollar amounts being requested. Commissioner Goldwasser added that there were about 75 business applications but these have been whittled down to under a dozen projects. They are looking for what is best for the Bristol community: what was transformational, what can be done now, how many people are effected, and is it sustainable. Funds have to be allocated and projects completed by a specified date.

Mayor Caggiano excused himself from the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Commissioner Schmelder contained as Chair.

VI. New Business by Commissioners

Commissioner Zammett advised that the Bristol Armory has a strong interest in creating a sports facility on Parcel 3. They have funding. He provided an overview. They are one of the three companies which have expressed interest. Justin advised that the other two are mixed use.

VII. Old Business by Commissioners

Commissioners inquired about some vacant lots in Bristol. For the former Dodge Village Justin advised that they are looking at a development which would not detract from the area and would entail demolition of the building.

VIII. Any Other Business

A. City Council Member Report

Quick Auto put in an application to expand and it triggered a land use issue regarding wetlands. They are working with wetlands to create drainage where they had paved. This is quite costly and the city is working with the owner to assist them in some way.

B. StartUP Bristol Task Force

Commissioner Zammett reported that the Task Force had a grant applicant – Tafika Arts. The task force had questions for this company and they will be returning to the committee with additional information. The other applicant was Family Roots. They are looking at complimentary space for their other business.

C. Industrial Committee

Commissioner Goldwasser summarized today's meeting. The hotel in the 229 Technology Park is planning on a sign that is a bit larger than the Guidelines allow.

Commissioner Cyr made a motion to approve the following amendment to the 229 Technology Park Guidelines: to add Section 3.18 as follows:

3.18 Alternative Signage Program for Large Developments
Due to the complexities of site design and occupancy associated with large developments, including the hotel/conference center campus and similar properties, the owner of a development containing more than 50,000 square feet of gross floor area and/or more than 10 acres of property may submit to the Economic and Community Development Board for approval an "alternative signage program" differing from the standards contained in the *229 Technology Park Design Guidelines and Regulations.*

In issuing an "alternative signage program" approval, the Economic and Community Development Board shall find that:

(a.) Such signage program would be consistent with the purpose of the *229 Technology Park Design Guidelines and Regulations* and

(b.) Such signage program would result in a more comprehensive, effective, and attractive arrangements of signs than could otherwise be accomplished under the standards of the *229 Technology Park Design Guidelines and Regulations.*

Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion.

The ECD had given them an exception in the past. However, we would like to make this change for "alternative signage program" as the Zoning Guidelines has. We will have to send this to the Park owners for approval. Commissioner Goldwasser and Justin Malley explained how this would work as it would mirror what the zoning regulations already have. The park owners have 60 days to reply. **All present voted in favor and the motion passed.**

Dawn Nielsen advised that public meetings that are held in Council Chambers will be held in City Hall in April then as of May we will meet in the Courthouse second floor. The ECD staff will be in the former Webster Bank after next week.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Cyr. All present voted in favor – meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Cooper,
Recording Secretary

Conflict of Interest Declaration for CDBG Year 48 March 3, 2022

In accordance with HUD regulations concerning Conflicts of Interest, there is one individual who has submitted a statement concerning a Conflict of Interest with an applicant for CDBG funding.

Councilwoman Susan Tyler presently serves on the Board of Directors of St. Vincent De Paul Mission, and she has been advised to recuse herself from any votes taken by the City Council that directly involve the approval of awards to that agency.

With this public notice of a Conflict of Interest, the ECD has satisfied the requirements of HUD Regulations 24 CFR Ch. V, 570.611.