

## **ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Regular Meeting  
Thursday September 1st, 2022 5:00pm  
City Hall West Meeting Room 1 – 111 North Main St.

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

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Marvin Goldwasser

**STAFF PRESENT:** Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing and PR Specialist; Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator; David Sgro, Housing & Project Specialist; Andrew Armstrong, Assistant City Planner; Sharon Arsego, Sr. Admin. Assistant

**GUESTS:** None

### **I. Call to Order**

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

### **II. Public Participation**

Mayor Caggiano invited members of the public to address the Board. The Mayor agreed to Justin Malley's request to return to this later in the meeting.

### **III. Minutes – August 4, 2022**

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to accept the Minutes from the meeting of August 4th, 2022. Commissioner Schmelder made the motion which was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All members voted in favor and the minutes were accepted into record.

### **IV. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Communications**

#### **B. Economic Development Grants/Marketing Report**

Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to file the Consent Agenda item A which was seconded by Commissioner Hick. Justin Malley highlighted the successful grant application submitted to AFG by Dawn Leger. Chief Hart partnered with Dawn and was a help as well. Mayor Caggiano noted that the grant is larger than the two previous years and half the overall grant Bristol has been awarded in three years. The timing is good too with the current Bristol Fire Department training underway. All members voted in favor of the Communications item and it was accepted into record.

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to accept the Economic Development Grants/Marketing Report. Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to file and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Mills. All members voted in favor and the report was accepted into record.

## **V. New Business**

**A. Enterprise Zone Discussion: 238 Main St., 222 Main St., and 19 Prospect St.** Justin Malley reviewed these three properties known as the Funck and Eagle building. ECD has been working with Bristol Health to sell these locations as a priority with a sense of urgency. Justin reviewed the basic outline of the Enterprise Zone structure, introducing the Carrier Construction contacts, Gino Carrier and Charlie Talmadge, as interested in developing the property. Carrier's inquiry is to defer paying taxes on the property until they can develop it into 55+ housing. In the meantime they would clean it up and maintain it and this purchase wouldn't impact the Center Square project in any way. The Board discussed the current taxes on the property, current maintenance there, and sale benefits to the City. It was agreed that this might be a more appropriate item for City Council vs. the ECD Board.

### **B. Downtown Update**

A brief update on Center Square construction was provided by Carrier.

Al LaPorta of Bristol, owner of Discount Office Solutions, spoke about looking to relocate the family business from Waterbury to 80 South Street. Mr. LaPorta anticipates growth including job creation.

Justin Malley advised that the NAPA building on 65 Memorial Boulevard has sold. He met with the new owner who is holding it as an investment and has leads on potential tenants.

City Place, Parcel 10 on Center Square, is on the market with one investor looking for an investment partner and talks are in process.

The former Dodge Village property at 234 Riverside Avenue has been purchased for a potential energy related/data center project with potential for up to ten new jobs created. This is a significant project with Bristol as one of thirty towns eligible.

Dawn Nielsen advised of the Wheeler Health groundbreaking on September 29<sup>th</sup> with their RSVP needed.

Commissioner Mills asked for an update on the Better Half Brewing site. The Mayor and Justin Malley advised the brewery equipment may be sold or stay in place to welcome a new brewery.

Commissioner Hick about the new City Hall parking garage. Justin Malley advised bids are going out for the project with estimates on construction. This is a high priority for Public Works.

### **C. Business Grant Contract Language**

Current grant contract language doesn't cover situations when a business needs to relocate due to no fault of their own, such as a landlord's change for the property. Alternately what if they are unable to find a new location in the City after needing to relocate through no fault of their own. Another item would be if the business relocated within the City out of their own choice. Commissioner Schmelder expressed the need for clear language and due diligence. Justin Malley asked for the Board's feedback as he continues with Counsel's advisement on the wording and process.

### **D. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update**

Commissioner Schmelder advised that the Not for Profit ARPA Sub-Committee unanimously voted against awarding the Hospital's \$1M request for a generator. Mayor Caggiano added that the request hadn't been filed by the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, and there were too many unanswered questions to approve the request.

Justin Malley advised that the Business Sub-Committee meeting included Movia and Firefly with some changes made to their requests. The Building Bristol Program has been announced for both not-for-profits and profit businesses with the ECD making calls this week to interested parties. Mayor Caggiano advised that there may be \$900K to reallocate to the City once requests are met.

### **E. J. H. Sessions Building Update**

Justin Malley advised of the progress with the \$2M clean up grant coming from the State and the Land Bank's partnership with the City. The State requires a guarantee from the developer or the City that the project will be completed as planned in order to release the grant money. This is going before City Council this month. The building tenants are out with the exception of the R&B Engine who the City wants there. Commissioner Hick asked about moving this out of the City's stewardship before heating season which is the plan behind the Land Bank taking stewardship.

### **F. Residential Rehab Report**

David Sgro, Housing & Project Specialist for the City of Bristol presented an end of fiscal year update on the Residential Rehab program he manages for ECD.

In summary, 32 single family projects for \$232,272 grant funds and of those, 22 were low or extremely low households which meets grant targets, 26 were fully grant funded due to the extremely low income level.

Multi-family grant requests slowed down due in part to new, young families purchasing and maintaining the homes. Nine were done this year with 20 units serviced at \$46,911.

Total units serviced between single and multi-family: 52

Total grant funding spent: \$279,183

Homeowner's share: \$91,000

Lead abatements are picking up with two in the previous year. CT Children's Medical Center was given the lead on a daycare project which included lead abatement along

with their Healthy Homes Project. The Hospital's partnership brought the City's share from the original \$41,000 estimate to \$6,000 as the City's final cost.

#### **G. BOF Requests**

Commissioner Schmelder read the Motion to transfer funds to close out fiscal year end negative balance accounts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mills and the motion was approved by all.

#### **VI. New Business by Commissioners**

Commissioner Mills asked for an update on the Doubletree Hotel. Justin Malley advised that there is a delay that may be supply chain related.

Commissioner Schmelder suggested a review of when the Executive Sessions are held. Of concern is the wait time for Grant applicants who attend and sufficient time for consideration and discussion of the grants.

#### **VII. Old Business by Commissioners**

Commissioner Schmelder asked about the Nuchie's property. Justin Malley assured the Board that the Wireless Shop is committed to opening there.

Commissioner Mills asked about the Summer and Main Street property. Justin Malley brought this up at the Site Plan Meeting this past month. Permits are being pulled with slow progress on the site.

Commissioner Hick asked about the 17 acre site on Middle Street. Justin Malley updated the Board on recent readings with a second quarter update pending. Marketing for the site is ready to be released once the readings are favorable.

#### **VIII. Any Other Business**

##### **A. City Council Member Report**

Council Member Panioto reported on proposals for North Main Street and Riverside Avenue streetscape work including crosswalks and ADA access to parking. Ability to work with the DOT for Riverside Avenue is an important positive item. Justin Malley advised the City is funded for most of the North Main Street construction though not yet on the Riverside Avenue portion with grant funding for it being requested. All the proposals included community involvement.

#### **X. Adjournment**

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:17pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sharon Arsego  
Recording Secretary