

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

6:30 pm

Watertown City Hall: Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

MINUTES

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call - Present: David Zimmermann, Chris Ruetten, Matt Zastrow, Bob Wetzel, Nate Salas, Rob Marchant. Present via phone: Brad Kuenzi
3. Determination of Quorum and Call to Order
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – August 19, 2020 There was a motion by Ruetten, seconded by Zimmermann to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried 7-0.
5. Public Comment - There was no public comment.
6. Training Segment – Kristen Fish-Peterson presented a video by Victor Dover about Parks and Greenways, and their importance to the environment and the local economy.

7. Status reports

a. Loan review team – Zastrow

A loan memo was presented by Zastrow. The RDA received applications for five loans. One was withdrawn and will likely be coming back under different ownership. Two others were incomplete, and more information was needed. Two were before the board for review and approval. Salas asked about where we were with loan funds. Fish informed the board there was \$260,000 to lend. Marchant spoke in favor of the project by White Oak Builders at 17 E. Main St. for which the loan review team was recommending a loan of \$116,000, and a grant of \$14,500. Zastrow explained the loan application by Fourth Corner included cost overruns from the first project and recommended a reduction from the request to only cover the amount being used on the second-story apartment. Those amounts are a loan of \$12,000 and a grant of \$1,500. Marchant also spoke in favor of reduction from the original application for Fourth Corner, LLC. Ruetten asked about risk of borrower not being able to complete the project if it is not fully funded by the RDA. Zastrow said the project is nearly complete now (borrowers were allowed to proceed with projects in process due to the RDA not meeting regularly through the early months of the pandemic quarantine). Salas agreed with Zastrow to not fund overruns or second requests to the same project.

There was a motion by Zastrow, which was seconded by Salas to approve loan to White Oak Builders, Inc for the property at 17 E. Main St. of \$116,000 with a matching grant of \$14,500 as recommended by the loan committee. Roll call vote: Aye – Zimmermann, Ruetten, Zastrow, Wetzel, Salas, Kuenzi, Marchant. Motion carried 7-0.

There was a motion by Zastrow which was seconded by Salas to approve a loan of \$12,000 and a grant of \$1,500 for remodeling upper floor of 300 E. Madison St. by Fourth Corner, LLC. Roll call vote: Aye – Zimmermann, Ruetten, Zastrow, Wetzel, Salas, Kuenzi, Marchant. Motion carried 7-0.

RDA STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1) 100 W. Main St. block demolition, Town Square design etc., and publicizing town square project for possible funding from sources other than the City.
- 2) Facilitating quality development in downtown, and
- 3) Creating an approach and working to attract development projects downtown.

b. Design Input Team – Zimmermann

Zimmermann shared a PowerPoint presentation about the work the design input team has been doing. Ruetten asked about shelter on stage. Zimmermann stated it hadn't been considered due to wanting to keep views to the river as open as possible. Melissa Lampe asked about a security system and wants to have access to electricity for Santa House. It was suggested a sail, or temporary shelter could be accommodated over the stage (install poles or spaces for poles to use temporary shade structure). Jim Romlein shared info regarding changing weather patterns and potential for future flooding. The design input team will ask Smithgroup about flood events and planning for any such events.

c. Community Support/Communication - Fish / Mueller

A video Mueller created about Sharp Corner was viewed. The RDA was again encouraged to visit the ever-changing web site. Banners have gone up. Case studies from each borrower of RDA funds will be developed and used to promote improvements being made downtown. Marchant suggested the RDA reach out to Sandy Stuhls (neighbor to Sharp Corner Park) to invite to ribbon cutting/dedication.

d. Common Council update – Ruetten

Ruetten reported that in October, the council will be working on the budget. There will be several meetings open to public in mid-Oct. The pergola is up in Sharp Corner Park. Randy Frank resigned as Street Superintendent. The Plaza where Santa House was located is closed due to structural concerns along the east side of the river at the river walk. There is talk about moving bridge replacement up sooner due to the challenged condition of the bridge. The City has had a few city workers test positive for Corona Virus.

e. Planning task force for programming of town square – Salas reported that he, along with Fish-Peterson, Mueller, Melissa Lampe met to collect best practices, communicate with other communities so we can make formal recommendations to the Mayor what a Programming Committee (or organization) would look like to program the square. We are creating a solid platform of recommendations to move a programming organization forward.

f. Executive Director update – Fish

- i. Update on town square environmental testing progress – Sigma has placed test pits on site to determine the extent of the contamination from the underground storage tanks found at 111 W. Main St. The RDA has not yet received the report from testing at 115 W. Main St.
- ii. DOT review of bridge and change in design related to such – Smithgroup met with the DOT to review the town square design as it relates to the corner near the bridge. Smithgroup is recommending a less permanent wall structure until after the bridge is replaced.
- iii. Report on next steps, community engagement initiatives – Documents are being refined and fundraising will be commencing shortly.
- iv. Update on downtown property improvement efforts – It's been one year since City Staff and RDA representatives met with downtown property owners to introduce the new part-time inspector and heightened inspection efforts downtown. We will be seeking an update from staff and may host another event with property owners.

8. **Review/Approve** – August financial reports Fish-Peterson explained the budget has been exceeded for downtown utilities due to the stormwater and fire protection charges on each of the six separate parcels. There was a motion by Marchant, seconded by Salas to approve the August financial reports. Motion carried 7-0.

9. **Approval for Resolution** for safety barricades at 100 block of W. Main St. Fish-Peterson explained the DOT was concerned about the weight of the barriers which the City acquired from the demolition contractor and requested be left on the sidewalk to keep the public safe from the town square site. The City has asked the RDA to pay for lighter weight barriers which will be installed upon arrival. Wetzel wanted to make sure we were getting a fair price. There are 24 barriers being purchased, along with 24 bases. The pricing was consistent with what he found on the company's web site. There was a motion by Salas, seconded by Wetzel to approve the resolution. Roll call vote: Aye – Zastrow, Ruetten, Zimmermann, Wetzel, Salas, Kuenzi, Marchant. Motion carried 7-0.

10. **Closed Session** pursuant to WI Statutes Chapter 19.85(1)(e) - Deliberating or negotiating the on the investing of public funds, related specifically to conditions of approval for RDA loan application. This item was REMOVED from the agenda.

11. Future possible agenda items - None

12. Next meeting date and time – October 6:30 pm Wednesday October 21

13. Adjournment – There was a motion by Zastrow, seconded by Zimmermann to adjourn. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristen Fish-Peterson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Kristen Fish-Peterson, Secretary