



**City Middletown, CT  
Economic Development Committee  
Minutes from the Economic Development Committee Special Meeting  
August 27, 2020**

**Meeting was conducted via video conference call**

Present: V. Loffredo, T. Gennaro, P. Pessina, E. McKeon, J. Blackwell Absent: Executive: Mayor Florsheim, Bobbye Knoll-Peterson Staff: J. Samolis, T. Marano, L. MacPherson
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**Minutes**

1. Call to Order: Chairman V. Loffredo called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.
2. Minutes: P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by E. McKeon to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of July 23, 2020.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. Public Session: There were no comments from the public.
4. Communications: There were no communications from the public.

**5. Old Business:**

**a. RFQ Response Review**

J. Samolis reviewed the requests for additional financial information. Mayor Florsheim asked the committee to give the input on their responses. The members discussed the how the responders would finance the project. Vallone looking for investors with Middletown connections. Fox – using capital raising firms which seeks impact Investors looking for impact on the community. Committee will arrange for a preference vote at its next meeting.

Vote: No vote was taken

**b. Middletown Applications for Economic Incentives**

Committee agreed to not award loans to any applicants who are in arrears on tax or fees. Jeff Pugliese, Vice President of the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce

reviewed the applications on behalf of the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission.

Abyssinian – Menasie Weldeyohannes: Staff to meet with Mr. Menasie to get update on the lease. No motion made to approve the loan

Vote: No vote taken

Discount Beauty Supplies – Bobsie Perry: J. Pugliese would follow-up with Ms. Perry to answer questions. P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell, to table a vote on the application until September’s meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

The Main Switch - Sonia Santavenere: Need to clarify if she knew she had to pay the w/s bill. P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell, to table a vote on the application until September’s meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

Pro Tech Automotive – Tim Callinan: J. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by P. Pessina to approve to approve the loan.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

## **6. New Business:**

### **a. CDBG 5-Year Consolidated Plan and Business Grants**

J. Samolis and L. MacPherson reviewed the highlights of the new 5-year plan for using CDBG funds. Five goals – economic development, public infrastructure, public parks, residential improvements, public services. Members discussed the process for developing the document, getting input from the public and agencies, and the process for City Council approval. P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell to forward the plan to the Common Council at its September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

### **Business Grants**

L. MacPherson reviewed the grants. Eligibility is by total household income. HUD released guidance CDBG Cares Act funds changed to allow grants to wage earners making the LMI income. Members discussed the need to do more

marketing and outreach. L. MacPherson reviewed two grant recipients: First Chance Inc. which distributes food, mostly tofu; and 0 Degrees Ice Cream.

P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell to move the two grants to the Common Council at its meeting of September 8, 2020.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

**b. Public Referendum**

J. Samolis reviewed the *Middletown 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure Development Bond Program* ordinance. It is a \$55 million bond authorization which includes DPW doing a \$15MM road bond. The rest is for downtown redevelopment, public buildings, riverfront, recreation center and downtown parking lot. The members discussed moving City Hall to 211 Main Street.

Mayor Florsheim discussed the investments and his vision for them. It is a mix of short to long term projects and needs a comprehensive spend down plan.

Members discussed the presentations and scheduling the public referendum.

V. Loffredo made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell, to move the referendum to the Common Council at its Special Council meeting on September 2, 2020.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.

**c. DRAFT RFQ for Riverfront**

J. Samolis reviewed the DRAFT RFQ for the riverfront. Plan should be truly comprehensive and public driven, and include downtown as part of the greater context.

Vote: No vote was taken

**Adjournment**

P. Pessina made a motion, seconded by J. Blackwell to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 PM