



MEETING OF THE WESTLAND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
City of Westland
Minutes
WESTLAND CITY HALL- 36300 Warren Rd.
Council Conference Room
Thursday September 24th, 2020

Members Present: Kelly, Cabildo, Freese, Murray, Scott, Thrower (via phone), Saab (via phone)
Members Excused: Wild, Rea

Also Present: Aubrey Berman, Economic Development Director
Nicole Jones, Economic Development Administration
Christine Ross, Economic Development Intern
James Goudbout, Westland City Council

Chairman Kelly called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

A motion was made by Kelly and supported by Cabildo to approve minutes from the regular meeting on August 27th, 2020.

Motion carried unanimously

A motion was made by Freese and supported by Scott to approve the payments of the vouchers in the amount of \$77,102.88.

Bryan L. Amann \$2500.00
First National Bank \$197.50
Highland Landscape and Snow Removal \$648.00
Highland Landscape and Snow Removal \$325.00
Highland Landscape and Snow Removal \$2428.00
Trugreen Processing Center \$330.00
Upbeat, Inc. \$16,684.00
Upbeat, Inc. \$33,096.00
Irrigation Repair \$360.00
Irrigation Repair \$950.00
Westland MI LTGO DNTN \$22,584.38

Cabildo inquired if irrigation to the soccer field was yearly.

Goudbout explained he recently witnessed several broken sprinkler head repairs. Making the point that maintenance is regular and ongoing.

Cabildo inquired as to what the Westland MI LTGO DNTN voucher in the amount of \$22,584.38 was for.

Berman explained it was regarding the Farmer's Market.

Motion carried unanimously.

Berman gave a summary of the Buxton Software Proposal.

She explained how it works and how it will help business. Also, how utilizing this software can help revitalize vacant property and help existing business. This software will provide the information needed to make strategic decisions to get business here, and keep business here. It will help make the case of why Westland, and not other cities. If approved the software package costs will be split between the DDA and TIFA boards.

Freese inquired if the software license would be for the city as a whole.

Berman explained the software would primarily be for the economic development department. However it would touch/help every department, and serve the entire community.

A motion was made by Scott and supported by Cabildo to approve

Motion carried unanimously.

Director Comments: Berman updated the board that she is working with a developing broker to partner on the Master Agreement of the Ford Road property. She is providing all the studies and analysis, and working with the County to figure out how to handle the parcels. The legal team is crafting together the Master Development Agreement.

Berman informed the board that there is a new business in the works for the currently closed Grindstone Smoke House, located at 1609 N Wayne Rd, which will revitalize and transform the vacant business into a sports bar.

Berman informed the board that she recently met with the owner of the vacant Leright's property. They had a conversation about the property, and she let him know about the DDA facade funding, which can help him with the property appearance. He indicated he is interested. Berman will keep the board updated.

Berman updated the board that she has put in a RFP (request for proposal) for a broker, specifically for Hawthorne Valley.

Berman informed the board that there is an additional 400k in CBGD funding under the Cares Act. They are having preliminary discussions about what to use the funds for.

Berman updated the board on Recast, a company who supports communities and brings small scale manufacturing. Recast can look at these spaces to see what kind of uses and possibilities are available for these vacant buildings. Berman thinks this is something good to consider as we have a lot of commercial properties. Berman should have that memo this week and will share with the board at the next meeting.

Citizen Comments:

Goudbout shared that City Council turned down the proposal for the former Rite-Aid business at the corner of Ford and Wayne Rd, to be renovated into a Plasma Center. He went on to give a brief explanation as to why.

Board Members Comments:

Freese inquired about the Hawthorne Valley Plan.

Berman explained it is a difficult site as only 5.5 acres is buildable. They are looking to make the site a brownfield to help with development. Berman will keep the board updated.

Cabildo requested a list of DDA properties.

Chairman Kelly wanted to touch on the blight issue, and inquire about any positive results.

Berman explained she has compiled a list of vacant properties (properties must be vacant) and she is currently in the process of meeting with each of those property owners to see if there are any resources available to help them.

A motion was made by Freese and supported by Murray to adjourn at 9:06 a.m.

Motion carried unanimously.