

Economic Development Incentive Committee
September 12, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order:

Prior to the beginning of the meeting Mrs. Gilson distributed an amended Financial Report.

Chair Nickles called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. The following members were present constituting a quorum: Marcus Harris, Paul Koch, Sarah Chiappone, and Al Nickles. Also present were Director of Community Development, Colleen Gilson, and Administrative Assistant for the Community Development Department Quinn Rambo. Ms. Abbey Bemis notified Staff, in advance, that she was unable to attend the meeting.

Approval of minutes from July 11, 2023, meeting:

Chair Nickles asked for a motion on the minutes. Mr. Harris made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Vice Chair Koch seconded the motion. All members voted to approve the minutes, as presented.

Financial Report and Project Updates

Chair Nickles asked for Mrs. Gilson to present the financials. Mrs. Gilson stated an updated financial report was being circulated to reflect a correction to the report included in your packet. An error was made in calculating the funds available. The figure for funds encumbered for 2023 was incorrectly reported. She continued that the total 2023 Funding Available was \$986,397, the encumbered balance was \$691,400, total funds available as of the meeting were \$294,997. Vice Chair Koch asked about the Pipe Creek project. Mrs. Gilson explained it was a bar/ restaurant on Pipe Street along the water and was approved by the Commission last November. She updated the Committee of the following projects: (1) Brown Robinson Funeral Homes – project scope was completed, all necessary permits were closed and grant has been disbursed. The business was open and operating, (2) Explorer Motel – project scope was completed, all necessary permits have been closed, and the grant has been disbursed- business was open and operating. (3) Thirsty Pony Expansion – project scope was completed, all necessary permits have been closed, and the owner was working on gathering required documentation for grant disbursement. Business was open and operating. (4) Pipe Creek Wharf – owner/developer requested extension of time until December 31, 2023, an extension was granted by City Manager. (5) Small City Taphouse (Cattien LLC) – the façade improvements (tuck pointing) were planned to begin the week of September 18 and continue for approximately 8 weeks. This was the final phase of improvements supported by the Economic Development grant made a few years ago, (6) Family Health Services, El Grand Patron, Sandusky Book Bar – were all in different stages of development or build out and updates would be provided at future meetings.

Chair Nickles asked for a motion on the updated financial report. Vice Chair Koch made a motion to accept the updated program financial report. The motion was seconded by Ms.

Chiappone. A vote was called, and all members approved of the program's financial report, unanimously.

Review of Applications and Staff Recommendations

Ethel's Quilt Shoppe- 279 E. Market Street

Chair Nickles introduced the first application and asked for Staff report. Ms. Gilson stated she had one application with Staff recommendation for consideration. She explained Ethel's Quilt Shoppe, owned by Jackie Sennish, located at 279 East Market Street was seeking a grant for building renovations. The business formerly operated as M&E Quilt Shoppe. Ms. Sennish's partner retired, and she had decided to continue operating the shop as the sole proprietor, with the strategy of marketing the business as the choice for quilters who loved the primitive/reproduction quilts of yesteryear. The renovation and improvements were approximately \$20,000 and were to update and make changes to the building which would support business expansion plans. The renovation included painting, refinishing the original hard wood floors, installing slat display walls, new ceiling fans and reconfiguring the kitchen to increase workspace, this would allow the business to offer hand dyed woolens for wool applique and rug hooking. Ms. Sennish also planned to improve the exterior of the building with floral window boxes and new signage to reflect the new name of the shop. Ms. Sennish planned to employ 2-3 part-time employees, to increase store hours in the next year, and increase sales from \$180,000 to \$210,000. Mrs. Gilson stated that the predecessor business to Ethel's Quilt Shoppe, M & E Quilt Shoppe, received a small business grant from the City in 2018 to purchase equipment. Staff recommended a \$7,500 grant from the 2023 program funds to support the continued growth of the quilt shop. Vice Chair Koch asked who owned the building and if the applicant had a new lease in place because the current lease was about to expire. Mrs. Gilson stated she didn't have that information but had confirmation that Ms. Sennish had renegotiated her lease.

Vice Chair Koch made a motion to approve the grant request for \$7500 subject to proof of a signed lease agreement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris. A vote was called, and all members approved the recommendation of a \$7500 grant with signed lease agreement, unanimously.

Public Participation/ Comments

Chair Nickles added that per a discussion with Mrs. Gilson prior to the meeting about having a special meeting in October to hear (3) applications that were not quite ready for today's meeting. Chair Nickles asked how the Committee felt about additional meetings. Vice Chair Koch and Mr. Harris agreed that they were okay with meeting when available to better serve the community. Chair Nickles announced there would be a special meeting on October 10, 2023 at 2:00 pm.

There was no public present for public participation.

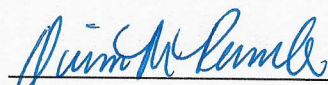
Mr. Harris shared information about Jobs Ohio Inclusion Grants. He continued that distressed zip codes qualified for this grant and 44870 was considered a distressed zip code. There were

restrictions on the grant but very good opportunities for local businesses. Mrs. Gilson stated that she has referred an EDIC grant applicant to this program for assistance and there was great synergy between the City and ECEDC.

Meeting Adjournment:

Chair Nickles called for a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Koch moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Harris seconded the motion. All members were in favor of the motion and the meeting ended at 2:28 pm.

APPROVED:



Secretary



Chair/ Vice Chair