

**JOINT COM DEV & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES from  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>, 2021 [meeting began at 6:10 P.M.]**

**CD PRESENT:** Chair Callahan, Mitchell, Cerra, Oswald, Jessie

**FINANCE PRESENT:** Chair Stewart, Tollett, Jessie, Davis, Baird

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Law Dir Deery, Safety Service Dir Brubaker, Mayor Whitfield, Finance Dir Pileski, Asst Finance Dir Farrell, Asst Dir Williams, Asst Dir Calvert, H.R. Dir Yousefi, CD Manager Lise Day, Engineer Schneider, Police Chief Pelko, Fire Chief Pronesti, Councilperson Simmons

Committee Chair Callahan apologized for late start of the meeting, there were some unforeseen technical issues.

Chair Callahan also said, before they begin with the business of the meeting, he would like to take a moment and recognize a member of the audience, Mr. George Crossan, who recently celebrated a milestone birthday.

We all recognize him, we see him at the Committee Meetings, we see him at the Council Meetings. He takes an active role in our community, which is greatly appreciated. It's always good to see his face.

So we would all like to wish Mr. George Crossan a 'Happy Birthday'! The Committee Members stood up and applauded George as well as everyone in Chambers and everyone wished George 'Happy Birthday'!!

**Since this Meeting is a JOINT Meeting, Chair Callahan called CD to order and Chair Stewart called Finance to order at 6:12 P.M.**

**1. Approval of the NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2021 JOINT Community Development / Finance Meeting Minutes.**

Moved by Mr. Cerra, second by Mrs. Mitchell to approve the above meeting minutes.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**2. The matter of authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Makovich & Pusti Architects.**

**Referred By: Safety Service Director Brubaker**

Mayor Whitfield said this is an architect group that has been working with the City for some time. They've worked with Downtown and most recently with Midway Mall and Oakwood School. The request for 2022 is to enter into a larger contract knowing what some of the plans are for downtown and Midway Mall and they are already familiar with the needs are.

Law Dir Deery said that her office did recommend to the Administration that it was their opinion that appropriations be made for what is being requested and that each individual project have it's own contract to define the scope of service rather than an open ended contract.

Mayor Whitfield said this is similar to the agreements they have with the Labor Attorney as we get billed as we use their services.

Dir Brubaker said there are a lot of projects that are going on. He said he had a conversation with the Law Dept. To come back to Council for every project becomes cumbersome which is why they are requesting it to be a contract as such.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

**Mrs. Mitchell moved, second by Mr. Cerra to authorize the Mayor to enter into the 'said' contract in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**FINANCE:**

**Mr. Baird moved, second by Mr. Tollett to authorize the Mayor to enter into the 'said' contract in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**3. The matter of a donation to the Elyria Community Partnership, Community Development Corporation.**

**Referred By: Asst Director Calvert**

Dir Calvert said the City was awarded a Nord Family Foundation Grant in October in the amount of \$100,000 and to be used in support of the Elyria Community Partnership. That money has been received by the City and they are requesting that it be forwarded over to the ECP, The Community Development Corporation. Representatives from the ECP are in attendance to speak to the committee and give an update on projects and how these funds will be used in 2022.

Mike Griffin, 1085 Gulf Rd., Elyria. Mr. Griffen said that another Board Member is in attendance, Jacqueline Noga and Joel Ratner.

He said they've had several Board Meetings already. Also Committee Meetings. The Governance Committee is working on recruiting new Board Members as they've discussed. They are still interested in recommendations that would be offered.

Currently the Events Committee is putting together a calendar and they are trying to consider how they can be supportive and helpful to the other events going on.

The Housing Committee has been meeting with a group called CHN Housing Partners out of Cleveland to discuss opportunities for development and home repair, weatherization and things like that.

They are also working on scheduling a visit to another Community Development Corporation as requested by Council. They are hoping for that to happen in January and they are working with 2 other CDC's.

They are also continuing to look at downtown redevelopment possibilities. There is a lot going on.

They have their submission for the 501 c3 status and reviewing that and will file this week. It will be retro active from when they were incorporated.

They are looking to put together a strategic plan in 2022. They've got another group putting that together. They've identified a number of consultants they might work with. And they will make sure City Council will be engaged in that process.

They have the \$100,000 from Nord and they are working on budgeting that and to work with the City to how that might be structured.

They are also looking at getting other grants. He and Maggie Rivera, who is on the board, are working with banks to get other funding.

Also Mr. Ratner is looking at other funding in the community.

Chair Stewart said that with new Council Members coming in at the first of the year maybe those visits can be organized with those new members. He's encouraged by the year 2022 that's going to be happening and the opportunities that are present and also in the downtown.

Mr. Tollett wanted to say thank you to Mr. Ratner and Mr. Griffin. Council had asked for communication and updates and he thanked them for the information they provided this evening.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

**Mr. Cerra moved, second by Mrs. Mitchell to authorize an ordinance for a transfer/donation of Grant Funds to the Elyria CIC Partnership Program.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**FINANCE:**

**Mr. Baird moved, second by Mr. Tollett to authorize an ordinance for a transfer/donation of Grant Funds to the Elyria CIC Partnership Program.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**4. The matter of a Capital Needs request from Neighborhood Alliance to provide basic needed support to low income and vulnerable populations.**

**Referred By: Community Development Manager Day**

Community Development Manager Lise Day said that her department received a proposal from Neighborhood Alliance. They are consolidating their headquarters into the old YMCA on Washington Ave in Elyria, which was donated to Neighborhood Alliance. They will use the kitchen in that location to service all their programs across the county, home delivered meals to seniors and also to the Haven Homeless Shelter and to their Child Card Centers. The program is currently at capacity. They have support to pay for the food, but they just don't have the capacity in the kitchen. Their request is for \$150,000 to help build the kitchen and consolidate their operations. They've also secured \$500,000 from Lorain County Commissioners and ARP Funds. Mayor Whitfield said they would utilize ARP Funds for this initiative.

Mr. Oswald said this is good to help this organization out. If they can enlarge and improve their kitchen so they can help more people, that's great. He's all for it.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

**Mr. Cerra moved, second by Mrs. Mitchell to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to use the 'said' funds as requested.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**FINANCE:**

**Mr. Baird moved, second by Mr. Tollett to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to use the 'said' funds as requested.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

Law Dir Deery asked the Finance Dir if there will need to be a companion ordinance to appropriate these funds?

Finance Dir Pileski said this will come out of ARP Essential Services, after tonight if the amendment passes, there will be a million dollars in that line item.

## **5. The matter of increasing the ARP Allocation for Small Business Program Funding and Essential Service Program Funding.**

**Referred By: Mayor Whitfield**

*\* Discussion Only*

Mayor Whitfield said that with Council's support they were able to allocate \$500,000 for a Small Business Program and for an Essential Service Program earlier this year. They had deadlines for those programs the first week of December and there was much more need than what was expected. There were over 1.3 million dollars in requests from various small businesses.

And requests for over 1.3 million dollars for essential services requests.

Mayor Whitfield said that what they are requesting from this committee is to increase each of those programs to a million dollars so they can support as many of the small business as we can in a meaningful way and to ensure that essential services are provided in the City.

The essential services side is to handle more operationally. They are notifying every applicant that they should not expect to receive full funding for what they requested. They are making sure the funds requested is going towards services and needs and not just overhead. The Community Development Staff is leading that effort and support. The City is getting support from the Small Business Program through the Elyria Economic Development Committee which several Council members sit on. They just finished a long round of interviewing some small businesses.

Mr. Tollett asked about the Essential Service Program funding, he said one of the things that Community Development is overseeing. Are they making sure that we are not offering a redundant service?

Mayor Whitfield said that is one of the questions always asked, is there some other organization already doing this work? And another piece is the Emergency Financial Assistance for folks that are struggling to pay their bills and need that emergency funding. The Salvation Army is a part of that. They can look at all the resources that are available before they deploy our resources. But if there's a gap where there is no funding for those folks, that's where these resources can be used.

Mrs. Mitchell asked what is the criteria that these businesses have to meet?

Mayor Whitfield said the regulations in the bill specifically speak to being able to demonstrate revenue losses as a result of the pandemic. So that is the baseline of the program. Another is similar to the CARES Act, that if there are things that they needed to modify and demonstrate the cost to do that. What they say at the interviews that were held today is the increase in cost that businesses are facing whether it's food cost, oil cost, staff cost, just increase costs of everything and their struggling with that.

Mr. Stewart asked if the Neighborhood Alliance senior nutrition program is under the same umbrella Essential Services?

Mayor Whitfield said the Neighborhood Alliance nutrition program is the 'Meals On Wheels' program.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

**Mr. Cerra moved, second by Mrs. Mitchell to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to increase the ‘said’ funds to be used as requested.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**FINANCE:**

**Mr. Baird moved, second by Mr. Tollett to authorize an ordinance authorizing the Mayor to increase the ‘said’ funds to be used as requested.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**6. The matter of Oakwood School Emergency Repairs.**

Referred By: Mayor Whitfield

\* Discussion Only

Mayor Whitfield said this is in regards to the Oakwood Elementary School Building that the City acquired from the schools. There will be some repair work that will need to be done in early 2022 to keep the building from deteriorating. Save Our Children spoke to council a while back about fully operating the building.

Mayor Whitfield said part of what he’s hoping the City can do is to get a handle on the infrastructure things, such as the roof, the windows.

Mr. Oswald asked if anyone has gone over to check out and assessed what kind of repairs are needed?

Mayor Whitfield said the Safety Director engaged the staff in bringing someone out there and what they found was it’s not worth doing ‘patch-work’.

Director Brubaker said that Mr. Williams is working closely with what will need to be done. But he was asked by the City’s Maintenance Director, Mr. Schneider to take the contractors that the City uses to assess the situation. They assessed that patching it will get us through the winter but there’s going to have to be significant work done on the roof. It is a flat roof so you have to drain the water off through drains. They believe the contractor who will do that will give us our normal City pricing. We don’t have that cost as yet. As far as the windows, they are the old style and probably haven’t ever been replaced. They are single pane windows. They will look into getting energy efficient grants the windows.

Mr. Oswald clarified that they aren’t asking for anything until they get those costs for those repairs? And he feels this will be a good partnership, he said that he’s already had a couple of conversations with Mr. Yost.

Mrs. Mitchell said that she is a big proponent of this and the Mayor was kind enough to let her tour the school and it really is in bad shape. This will be good for the community. Save Our Children can use the facility and we can partner with them and have our senior center which her and Mrs. Davis have been advocating for. It will be good all around.

Mrs. Davis asked that we are giving the building to Save Our Children and we’re going to partner with them?

Mayor Whitfield said it’s similar as to what the City does with the Arts Council. Where the City owns the building but the organizations operate out of the facility. That is how it will work with the Oakwood Building, we own it and we take care of major repairs but they’d be the day to day people operating there.

The City would assess things happening and goings on. And when the City asked Save Our Children if they'd be open to the idea of partnering with senior programs and they said yes. They could have some inter-generational programming with seniors mentoring the young people. They would also want to continue with fitness programming. They plan to present their ideas to council sometime in January.

Mrs. Davis thanked Mayor Whitfield, but they don't want this to get away from the seniors. She said she sees the direction it's heading and she's not happy. She feels this is the senior citizen's building.

Chair Callahan said this will be on-going and some folks will be here in January to discuss with us. Mr. Callahan asked the Mayor if there is a potential time-line to have this all completed?

Mayor Whitfield said Save Our Children would like to move into the building by the next school year.

Mr. Stewart said that part of the agreement is they're going to remove a lot of building materials, tables, chairs, books..? Is that what the plan is?

Dir Williams said the City has worked with the schools to modify expectations of the agreement. They took Save Our Children through the building and identified and marked items that they wished to be left there. Some items were usable. And the schools removed everything else.

The only items left in the building were those things that were desirable for use for Save Our Children. The City crews have been on the roof and have cleaned off the debris and are working on gutter issues. It's pretty much in motion. The City needs to make decisions about how will treat it in the winter with heat and those pieces. Mr. Williams addressed the council and asked if at anytime they would like to visit the facility he would be more than happy to walk them through it. It's not so depleted that it's a money pit. It's a great opportunity and will work out very well.

Chair Callahan said this was a good discussion and he thanked the Mayor for bring this to the committee's attention.

**Mr. Cerra moved and second by Mrs. Mitchell to adjourn this evening's Community Development portion of the Meeting at 7:42 P.M.  
MOTION CARRIED**

***[The evening's meetings continued with the Finance Committee Meeting].***

*Respectfully submitted by,  
Colleen Rosado, Council Clerk Secretary*

*CMR/*