

JOINT ~ COM DEV & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
from MONDAY, MAY 23rd, 2022 [meeting began at 8:05 P.M.]

FINANCE PRESENT: Chair Stewart, Tollett, Cerra, Davis, Schneider

CD PRESENT: Chair Callahan, Mitchell, Oswald, Schneider, Lipian~(Zoom)

OTHERS PRESENT: Asst Law Dir Breunig, Safety Svc Dir Brubaker, Mayor Whitfield, Finance Dir Pileski, Asst Dir Williams, Asst Dir Calvert, Police Chief Pelko, Engineer McKillips, Parks Dir Reardon, Building Official Farkas, Council Member Simmons

*This is a JOINT Meeting of the Community Development Committee and the Finance Committee of Elyria City Council.
Community Development has already been called to order and Chair Stewart called Finance to order at 8:06 P.M.*

1. Approval of the Joint Meeting Minutes ~ May 9th, 2022.

Moved by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Schneider to approve the above listed Joint Meeting Minutes.

2. The matter of a Financial Match to The Nord Family Foundation Grant of \$100,000 to The Elyria Community Partnership.

Referred By: Assistant Director Calvert

Asst Dir Calvert said they are bringing this matter to the Committee's attention. In October 2021 Council passed a Resolution to support the Nord Family Foundation Grant that would in turn support continued development of the Community Development Corporation that has been named the Elyria Community Partnership. During that process, a budget was outlined and it indicated City support for the continued development of the CDC in the amount of \$100,000 to match the Nord Family Foundation Grant. They are formally asking for those monies to be submitted to the Elyria Community Partnership. They wanted to make sure the committee had an opportunity to hear what's been happening since the last time they have been here. The ECP has grown over the last several months. Mike Griffin, who is the Board Chair is here this evening to give a brief presentation and answer questions.

That presentation is available from the Clerk's Office, upon request.

Mike Griffin, 1085 Gulf Rd., Elyria said he wanted update everyone and follow up on the match that was outlined in the Nord Family Foundation Grant. He got involved in this opportunity in September 2021. There's been a lot of work that's been done on creating this. They had their first Board in September and filled the Board in January 2022 and shortly after that they received the Nord Grant which was transferred from the City to the ECP. Then they engaged the two consultants which the City had previously engaged; Andrea Repko and Joel Ratner. They have a strategic planning process. They received IRS Non-profit designation in April 2022. Third Thursdays are coming back for this summer. They are currently working in get a website up and running. They are also working on a summer market and just confirmed today, they will have space at the Urban League. They are also discussing the Home Beautification Program and they are helping make that a reality. He's been meeting with foundations, banks and other funding organization to make sure the investment that is being made is backed up.

One of the first questions they ask is has the City made a financial commitment. The \$100,000 will be useful and it's important that the City is supporting this activity and the development of the organization. Board member, Stacy Francis led the donations of the flower baskets. They are continuing discussions about the Shane Furniture building and what it's possible future could be. There is a tour of Tremont West Development Corporation coming on June 9th.

Mr. Oswald said the tour was great. He asked if we're still paying consultants and do we really need those? We've been paying Mr. Ratner and we still haven't seen him at a meeting.

Mr. Griffin said the Elyria Community Partnership is now paying the two consultants. They pay Joel Ratner and he's is focused on fund-raising and the strategic plan. And Andrea is doing the events planning and other work for them. When they took over those contracts from the City they made those shorter term commitments so they can terminate those when needed. We do still need them at this time. Joel made those introductions with the board to funders and he brought credibility and made those introductions and gave the opportunity to develop their own relationships.

Mr. Oswald asked about the events, it's events that we've already done. Maybe they can add in some new things?

Mr. Griffin said they've had discussions about other things and will see what they can add to this year's calendar. They are working with Invest Elyria also. Some of the development plan is to activate the square and to get people to recognize there is activity here.

Mrs. Mitchell asked why are we still discussing the Shane Building when this body already voted that the building be condemned and demolished.

Mr. Griffin said as he stepped into this role he looked back at all the studies that have been down of downtown Elyria and it's development and he said the primary thing that comes out of those studies is that the asset that Elyria has is it's historic nature. If we remove those historic buildings we can't bring them back. Before we tear it down he feels like we ought to understand what it could cost to stabilize it and what we're losing if we do take it down. The hazard has to be addressed. What would it cost to get it to a place where it's not a hazard and then from there develop a plan as to what it could be used for.

Mrs. Mitchell reminded Mr. Griffin that this building has been condemned and it's unsafe. She's all for historic buildings, but at what cost.

Chair Stewart added that Mr. Griffin asked him of the status of the Shane Building. It's coming up to a year as to when these discussions began. When Mr. Griffin came on board he wanted to see what the opportunities were there. They know that the building is condemned and there was a tour with the Engineer's Dept and Fire Dept and they were just seeing what opportunities were there and he wanted to give Mr. Griffin that opportunity. We can't hold onto it forever and it was a last ditch effort to see if there is an opportunity or not.

Mrs. Davis asked about the misc \$25,000 and asked what that's for.

Mr. Griffin said he will have more detail of what that misc amount is for and get it itemized. They have a treasurer and it will be spelled out in more detail.

Finance Dir Pileski said the \$100,000 has been appropriated from the 2016 0.5% Income Tax Fund.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Mitchell moved, second by Mr. Schneider to recommend a resolution for the 'said' grant in the amount of \$100,000 to support the ECP and to be paid from 2016 0.5% Income Tax Fund.

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Cerra moved, second by Mr. Tollett to recommend a resolution for the 'said' grant in the amount of \$100,000 to support the ECP to be paid from 2016 0.5% Income Tax Fund.

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

3. The matter of an Extension to the Skill City Program Agreement.

Referred By: Mayor Whitfield

Asst. Dir Williams said this is an extension of the current Skill City Program, which is a partnership with LCCC which provides residents the opportunity to attend LCCC with support and relief from the City. This program ran through last year and this is to continue the program. Cindy Kushner is here this evening to give a brief presentation.

Cindy Kushner, Director of School Community and Workforce Partnership at LCCC. Elyria Skill City is a last dollar funding gap tuition scholarship for those who live in the City of Elyria. It is for those students who have chosen to pursue high demand job skills in our community. The City set aside about \$200,000 for this pilot project in March 2021 and this is to get behind the residents and get them in skilled paths where employers are waiting for them.

Ms. Kushner went over the Skill City Promise Presentation, which is available upon request.

The initial programs are short-term, 16 weeks. And they're aligned with the school's fast-track program which is receiving national recognition along with Elyria Skill City Program.

She went over the list of program that are offered which are in areas that are in high demand. Then she went over the expansion programs which work in partnership with fast-track and funding through Ohio Department of Higher Education.

When this passed, it was at the same time that the college was awarded the Cares Act Funding, which were the Pandemic recovery funds. She said they were having trouble spending those Skill City dollars because everything was covered through the Cares Act Funds. They used some of those monies in Fall of 2021. And they are currently using more of those monies. They did the GEO code to make sure the funds are going to Elyria **residents**. Now they are making sure it's not interfering with people who have other benefits, like veterans **or** employer paid partnerships. They are almost there to award, it's looking like its around 300 individuals. That will deplete a good part of what's left. They are asking for consideration on the next steps. There are some exciting things happening at LCCC. There is a wonderful partnership with local hospital. They are bringing in new STNAs along with their current PCNAs. Paying them full time wages. They are working 20 hours a week and they're going to school the other 20 hours to become LPNs. They need nurses. These are the kind of things that these dollars are helping to propel forward. They will be doing an in-depth impact study and she would like to share information on that once it's completed.

Mrs. Davis asked if there is an age limit for these programs?

No, there is not an age limit but they need to serve people who have a high school diploma or GED.

Mr. Oswald asked if transportation is offered to students who need it? And will tools and other materials be offered to student who need it?

Mr. Oswald also said he was hoping to see more of the Building Trades, such as HVAC, Electrician and Carpenters?

Ms. Kushner said they have what's called the ARC which is the advocacy resource center at LCCC and it's the one stop place that students with any kind of need will go to for assistance; transportation, gas cards, books, tool, laptops, wi-fi, that is where they go for that. Her colleague, Kionna McIntosh-Pharms is there for holistic student services to make those connections for students.

They also have service providers from throughout the community come in to help with mental health needs. Whatever a need may be.

Mr. Oswald said they would like to receive regular updates on this program.

Mr. Kushner said they would like to continue to provide more updates.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

Mr. Oswald moved, second by Mr. Schneider to recommend an ordinance authorizing the extension of the 'said' program with Elyria and LCCC.

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Mr. Cerra moved, second by Mr. Schneider to recommend an ordinance authorizing the extension of the 'said' program with Elyria and LCCC.

MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Mr. Lipian thanked Chair Callahan and IT and the Clerk's office for making this meeting and for him to be present while he's on vacation. His vacation was originally scheduled during recess but had to reschedule if for earlier and it created a conflict with this evening's meeting and thankfully he was able to participate thru zoom.

Mr. Lipian went on to say that there was a 'hot-mic' during recess and he heard a lot of laughing and defying about him being on vacation and how he shouldn't be allowed to be on this meeting, but he is thankful for the ability to be here and participate in this meeting. He thinks that while he's working on City Council while he's on vacation should be praiseworthy, especially since he go approval from Council to do so. Another thing he heard from Councilperson Mitchell is 'I'm going to kill him'. That is not appropriate when speaking about another colleague and he wants to say that he's not going to get into petty mudslinging. It's unfortunate that he's passionate for the City and independent thought and good neighborliness and if it draws the ire of his esteemed colleague, that's unfortunate. He's interested in moving this City forward with robust conversation and he wants to end on a positive note. He wants to recognize Cindy Kushner who just spoke on the Skill City Program. He has the privilege of serving with her on the Lorain County for Ukraine Committee, specifically on the translation and interpretation sub-committee.

Mr. Lipian said his preference is to work together with City Council instead of against each other.

Mr. Oswald moved and second by Mr. Oswald to adjourn this evening's Community Development portion of the Meeting at 8:45 P.M.

MOTION CARRIED

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

*Respectfully submitted by, Colleen M. Rosado
Council Clerk Secretary/Administrative Assistant*

CMR/