



CITY OF LITHONIA

MINUTES–SPECIAL CALLED Small Business Grant/Proposal and Procedures for LDDA VIRTUAL MEETING

Monday, November 30, 2020 @ 4:00 PM

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The City Council Special Called Small Business Grant/Proposal and Procedures for LDDA Virtual Meeting was called to order at 4:47 pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken, and the following City Council Members were present: Diane Howard, Amelia Inman, Vanneriah Wynn, and Ric Dodd. Darold Honore joined the call later. City Attorney Valorri Jones and City Accountant Keshaa McGurn were present on the call.

II. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

III. Discussion

a. Small Business Grant/Proposal and Procedures for LDDA

Councilwoman Inman stated that it was proposed the application process start on December 1 until December 31, 2020 with the grant amount at \$500.00 to administer through the LDDA/LBA. Ms. Keshaa McGurn the new City Accountant was invited on the call to get her opinion on how to best handle the funds; used for rent, leases, equipment rental, utilities, marketing PPE supplies, maintaining and hiring employees. City Administrator Sands indicated the city is responsible for the funds, how they are allocated, and we need clarity on the process in the best way to move forward with the application process getting started. Would like to centralize one person as the administrator of funds and have LDDA/LBA manage the application process.

Councilwoman Howard feels that the attorney's interpretation of the guidelines of the COVID funds is required.

Councilman Honore is in favor and if the city is responsible wants to ensure that we are covered legally.

Councilwoman Wynn would like to hear what the attorney has to say as well to ensure that it is done right.

Councilman Dodd is in agreement with the grant and that the attorney draft the requirements and weigh in with an opinion, and if the LDDA administers the grant will they receive the fees in doing so.

Major Ferguson stated that he is a grant writer and wrote several grants for his previous agency. Once the grant is approved, it is approved for the municipality. It cannot go to a division; it would go to the finance department or overseer (City Administrator Sands) and the officer of the finance department interfaces with the City Administrator. The money is disbursed and there is no separate bank account. It is vital that one person handle the funds.

City Accountant Keshaa had not read through the entirety of the documents received by Councilwoman Inman, however, does understand the application process and needs clarity on informing the city how the funds would be spent for the businesses.

Mr. Green (LDDA/LBA) feels that the attorney's input is needed, and that the accountant is involved, emphasizing that LDDA is an infrastructure that was created as an authority of the city as a volunteer organ to support the city's businesses.

Mayor Reynolds provided a summary and asked for input from City Attorney Valorri Jones. Mayor is proposing that LDDA/LBA involvement is to administer the application to businesses and the City would administer the funds to each identified business. Recommendation that Mayor, Council, City Attorney, and City Accountant come together in conclusion on what will be done to move forward.

City Attorney Valorri Jones stated the actual requirements under the cares act, that the city must provide documentation justifying a loss for its Lithonia businesses due to closures. The attorney's interpretation expressed is necessary expenses that were incurred due to the public health pandemic that were not in the budget (LDDA budget from the City) from March 1 thru December 2020, or it could be in the form of a utility bill or fees that were due to the city during this time-period referenced. The city must be the direct conduit and create standard guidelines to justify who will receive grant funding.

Mr. Kaz researched what other municipalities were doing in terms of the application process which is uniform across the board as compared to other city municipalities such as Tucker. LDDA was brought in as having the manpower as the business financial arm and as a suggestion to manage the administration of administering the funds.

Councilman Dodd stated that it would be a benefit to know how other cities are accounting for the monies to meet the qualifications and the Cares Act has not been out long enough to consider the accountability part.

Councilman Honore proposed that another meeting take place on Thursday, December 3. Mayor Reynolds confirmed with Council and City Attorney their availability for a Special Called meeting on Thursday, December 3 at 5:00 PM. City Attorney Jones will contact Tucker and Brookhaven attorneys to inquire as to how they did it, and to provide City of Lithonia additional guidance.

IV. Executive Session (None)

V. Adjournment

Councilwoman Wynn motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore; the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:01 pm.