



Chair

Justin Nadeau

Vice Chair

Rich Nolan

Executive Director

Steven Strichman

Board Members

Josh Chiappone

Susan Farrell

Elbert Watson

Hon. Anasha Cummings

Hon. Jim Gulli

Stephanie Fitch

Latasha Gardner

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Link to Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 942 9011 5223

Passcode: 257509

A G E N D A

- I. Approval of Minutes from the June 19, 2020 board meetings.
- II. Executive Directors Report
- III. Financials
- IV. New Business
- V. Old Business
- VI. Adjournment



June 19, 2020
11:00 AM

Board Meeting
This meeting was held via GoToMeeting

Present: Steve Strichman, Rich Nolan, Susan Farrell, Tina Urzan, Anasha Cummings, Stephanie Fitch, Elbert Watson and Hon. Jim Gulli.

Absent:

Also in attendance: Justin Miller Esq., Mary Ellen Flores, Deanna Dal Pos, Tom Rossi, Donald LaRosa, Glen Lunde, Bernie Doyle and Cheryl Kennedy.

The board meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. Mr. Strichman noted that this meeting is being held via conference call and online due to the Governor's Executive Order No. 202.1.

I. Minutes

The board reviewed the January 17, 2020 meeting. There is a quorum of members present at that meeting.

Susan Farrell made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2020 regular board meeting.
Tina Urzan seconded the motion, motion carried.

The board reviewed the March 20, 2020 meeting. There is a quorum of members present at that meeting.

Tina Urzan made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2020 regular board meeting.
Hon. Anasha Cummings seconded the motion, motion carried.

II. Neighborhood Improvement Program- City Council

Mr. Strichman explained that each year we receive a request from the city council for funding of the Neighborhood Improvement Program which allows each neighborhood to do small community projects. He advised that this year, we received a request to contribute \$10,000 with the city council matching. Mr. Strichman advised due to COVID-19, the city council is not able to contribute the match and asked that we amend our resolution to reflect the change. They also asked that we do not limit the projects to bricks and mortar. Mr. Cummings

advised it is up to \$1,000 material cost per neighborhood project; all volunteer projects. He explained that the program has grown over the last few years so the city council was matching the funds given to them by the CRC. Mr. Cummings explained with the revenue shortages they are not able to contribute the match this year, but want to see the program move forward. Mr. Nolan asked for some background on the projects that have taken place in the past. Mr. Cummings explained that past submissions have included signage, flowers, welcome areas, etc. Mr. Nolan asked if it is mainly beautification. Mr. Cummings advised yes and some projects were also done to recognize military and historical figures in the neighborhoods. He added this year they were hoping to expand to include materials to assist with the Ally's Program that Jim Gulli has been working on to help residents with alley cleanups Lansingburgh. Mr. Gulli explained that these projects are very important to engaging the community. He added that once the groups of people come together to work they are able to take ownership and pride in their community which helps to create bonds. Mr. Gulli appreciates the board considering the funding. Mr. Strichman noted that this is not a change in the commitment, but just a change in the match.

**Tina Urzan made a motion to approve the amendments to the previously approved NIP resolution.
Hon. Jim Gulli seconded the motion, motion carried.**

III. Grant Requests

Mr. Strichman advised that we have three grants in front of us this month.

Powers Park – Mr. Strichman noted that we have request from the Friends of 112th Street for a funding request for the Powers Park concert series in the amount of \$5,000. He noted that the season will be shortened to August, if they are able to do it at all, but it is important to have the funding in place ahead of time. Mr. Strichman noted that this may tie in to one of the other grants we will be discussing. Mr. Gulli thanked the board for the support we have had over the years and again stressed the importance of these community events. He explained the concerts do take a lot of work, but people from all areas of Troy come to these events. Mr. Cummings asked if there is specific language relating to the governor's Phase 4 plan and whether they can hold the concerts. Mr. Strichman noted that there is specific language to state invoices are needed in order to issue payment. Mr. Cummings asked how the progress is going. Mr. Gulli noted there are some issues with booking the bands, but having the funding ready to go will help they secure one. He added that they are looking into regulations as to what is needed to keep to social distancing. (See attached Resolution 03/20 #1)

**Tina Urzan made a motion to approve the \$5,000 grant request to Friends of 112th Street for the Powers Park concert series.
Susan Farrell seconded the motion, motion carried.**

Tech Valley Center of Gravity – Mr. Strichman introduced Cheryl Kennedy the current Executive Director of the Tech Valley Center of Gravity and former economic development coordinator for the city of Troy. Ms. Kennedy spoke to the board members about the budgetary gap due to the COVID crisis; she noted that their membership is down about 30%; we would normally have over 200 members. She explained that they also support over 50 businesses and expect there will be more need as businesses are unable to support commercial rents. Ms. Kennedy

spoke about the expenses of TVCOG such as rent and utilities for the 15,000 sqft space - an anchor of the downtown located on the corner of Broadway and Third – and the 2.5 employees. She advised that they were closed in March and April, but able to open in May as an essential business and were able to support PPE for the region. Ms. Kennedy noted they are currently making other supplies for local businesses so they can continue to safely serve their patrons. Ms. Kennedy discussed the many roles of TVCOG; makerspace, prototyping center, manufacture incubator and a children’s STEAM educator. Mr. Kennedy explained that the funding request would specifically be used to support our community access fund for the people that have been economically disenfranchised or members who have had significant economic issues, we will be able to continue their memberships. She advised that we have taken some steps to not loose members. We are an ‘at will’ facility meaning no leases are required. Mr. Strichman noted that this is an important downtown business that supports the development of other businesses. Mr. Watson noted their proposal that showed outstanding debt and asked if this money would be used for that. Ms. Kennedy stated no, it will not be used for any outstanding debts only the community access fund.

Rich Nolan made a motion to approve the \$20,000 grant request to The Tech Valley Center of Gravity to be used for operating expenses.

Tina Urzan seconded the motion, motion carried.

COVID – Response for Businesses – Mr. Strichman explained the request in front of them has been a collaborative effort of the TLDC, the city, the Downtown BID and the Rensselaer County Chamber to help downtown businesses as the COVID restrictions begin to be lifted. Mr. Turek spoke to the board members about the request in front of them and explained they have been working with the above mentioned groups along with other regional partners to active a series of public spaces for people to be able to use while social distancing. He explained that it will be a combination of streets being closed down Thursday to Sunday and activating park space at Russell Sage College. Mr. Turek added that we will also be able to hold public events in these spaces. He advised that TAP is putting together a safety plan to address seating, pedestrian walkways and egress for the buildings. Mr. Turek explained that an ambassador program similar to what has been used in Schenectady will be utilized to help keep the monument square take out zone is sanitized and ensure people are keeping social distancing. He added that a portion will be held on to be used in other areas throughout the city. Mr. Turek spoke about the challenges of the governor’s guidelines to use only 50% of the space in a historical building and their response of using space in the streets. Mr. Strichman noted that in the proposal is a list of how funds will be used. He suggested that we add in an additional \$10,000 to be used for businesses outside of the downtown area using the previously approved Powers Park concert series as an example. He explained that events such as that may require additional sanitizing stations or equipment to keep to the social distancing guidelines. Mr. Strichman noted that this board has had several requests today for funding, but reminded the board we recently had an RPI closing that will allow us to help businesses through these tough times. Mr. Gulli thanked the board for thinking outside of the downtown and Lansingburgh specifically. Ms. Fitch asked about who will be overseeing this on a day to day basis and who will monitor its success. Mr. Turek explained that the exit strategy is based on time and the governor’s office. He noted that the city will oversee the closing of the street, the Downtown BID will make sure that things are put away and the Arts Center will oversee the painting of the murals. Mr. Turek

noted that there are many groups involved, which makes it seem complicated, but they will all use their expertise to make it work. Ms. Urzan asked how parking issues will be affected by this; will it cause people to go to a neighboring city? Mr. Turek advised that he understands the parking issues, but noted that people wanting to visit the restaurants will have to park about a block or two away. Since parking meter restrictions have been lifted, they have noticed cars are being left in one spot for longer periods of time. Mr. Turek noted that some business owners have asked us to reinstate the parking meters to fix this situation. Mr. Cummings noted that at the city council meeting last night, State Street was approved to be made into a two way street in order to help alleviate some of the road issues that could come up when streets are closed. He asked if there was any concept of striping the bottom of State Street and the former city hall site to be used as temporary parking. Mr. Strichman noted that five spots will be lost along State Street, but access to the parking garage and the downtown businesses will be gained. Ms. Farrell asked if the State Street changes are temporary. Mr. Strichman advised they are permanent. Mr. Turek addressed the question about parking in the former city hall site by explaining there is an agreement currently in place with a potential project in that area. Creating a public use for the site could cause issues. Ms. Urzan asked about the operating times for the restaurants. Mr. Turek explained that the take away zone at Monument Sq. will be 7 days a week for lunch and dinner. The Broadway and Second Street closures will start Thursday at lunchtime and continue through Sunday mid-morning. Mr. Turek advised that any business that wants to use the space will have to apply for the special events permit with the city clerk; fees have been waived. Mr. Gulli asked about the expenses showing for labor and BID Director. Mr. Turek explained that the costs are for activation and management of the Sage park area are broken down into labor and materials. He added that basically they will be contractor of the LDC because they have the capabilities to set up and monitor a space such as this. Mr. Strichman wanted to note that the Downtown BID has lost all income from the events normally held downtown. Mr. Cummings asked who was going to manage the funds. Mr. Strichman advised the LDC will manage. Mr. Cummings asked if a bulk mask option should be purchased as a part of this. Mr. Turek advised Kate Manley from the Rensselaer County Chamber is able to make bulk purchases and it has been factored in. Mr. Cummings asked who will own the tables. Mr. Strichman advised that originally he was going to purchase tables, but the order got cancelled and the Arts Center stepped up to let us use their tables. If we purchase or construct tables, they will become property of the LDC and most likely gifted to the city for event use. Ms. Urzan asked who will be doing the setting up and blocking traffic. Mr. Strichman advised that the Downtown BID will be setting up the Russell Sage area. Mr. Turek advised that the ambassadors will be handling the Monument Sq area.

Hon. Jim Gulli Made a motion to approve an amendment to the COVID relief funding in the amount of a \$10,000 for areas outside the downtown.

Susan Farrell seconded the motion.

Ms. Urzan voted no, motion carried 7-1.

Stephanie Fitch Made a motion to approve COVID relief funding in the amount of \$50,000 for downtown Troy area.

Hon. Jim Gulli seconded the motion.

Ms. Urzan voted no, motion carried 7-1.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Franklin Alley - Mr. Strichman talked about the bids received for the project. He advised they are currently being reviewed and there will be more on this next month.

V. Financials

Ms. Flores presented the statement of financial position. As of May 31, 2020 the total assets stand at \$277,000; all of which is in cash. The fund balance is \$277,000. She advised the statement of activity for May shows \$207 deficit. She noted the revenue was from interest income and the expenses were from accounting fees. Mr. Strichman noted that the RPI closing will be on the June financial statements.

**Susan Farrell made a motion to approve financials as presented.
Tina Urzan seconded the motion, motion carried.**

VI. New Business

No New Business to discuss.

VII. Old Business

No old business to discuss.

VIII. Adjournment

With no other items to discuss, the regular board meeting of the CRC was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

**Hon. Jim Gulli made a motion to adjourn the CRC regular board meeting
at 11:50 a.m.
Tina Urzan Fitch seconded the motion, motion carried.**