

City Council

Special Meeting Minutes

**August 11, 2020
Electronic Meeting
6:00 PM**

Call to Order – Mayor Stolzmann called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Roll Call** was taken and the following members were present:

City Council: ***Mayor Ashley Stolzmann***
 Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Maloney
 Councilmember Kyle Brown
 Councilmember Deborah Fahey
 Councilmember Chris Leh
 Councilmember Jeff Lipton

Absent: ***Councilmember J. Caleb Dickinson***

Staff Present: ***Heather Balsler, City Manager***
 Megan Davis, Deputy City Manager
 Kurt Kowar, Public Works Director
 Rob Zuccaro, Planning & Building Safety Director
 Lisa Ritchie, Senior Planner
 Meredyth Muth, City Clerk

Mayor Stolzmann noted that because of the COVID-19 emergency the meeting is being held electronically. She gave information on how the meeting process will work and directions for those dialing in on how to participate when it is time for public comments.

RESOLUTION NO. 60, SERIES 2020, A RESOLUTION APPROVING A RECOVERY AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND A FORM OF GRANT AGREEMENT

Director Pierce stated this proposed program was developed with the Economic Vitality Committee (EVC) in conjunction with Louisville Revitalization Commission (LRC) to help those businesses trying to recover from COVID. The focus is to make investments in the local business community as they attempt to recover and stabilize. The proposal includes the following components: Eligibility and Program Criteria; Process; and Proposed Funding.

The EVC recommends the program be available to actively licensed, brick-and-mortar businesses within the City that were in operation as of March 10, 2020 and are current on

all City accounts. To be limited to one approved program project per business and only future projects may be submitted for consideration.

Other criteria include:

- Project provides for restructuring, retooling, or implementing best practices in a business operation, consistent with public health guidance for physical distancing or sanitation.
- Project enhances the exterior appearance of the building façade with improvements such as painting, awnings, and permanent signage.
- Project allows business to purchase new interior or exterior furniture and fixtures to accommodate appropriate physical distancing.
- Project improves the physical tenant or building space to accommodate operational, service, or infrastructure changes.
- Project supports a collaboration between two or more Louisville businesses seeking to offer a unique product or community service.

The group recommends the following process:

- A complete application, including any submittals on project costs, designs, or bids
- Rolling application period, beginning in early September after several weeks of promotion
- Administrative review and approval
- Required agreement between City and applicant
- Verification and expense accounting at project close-out

Director Pierce stated the EVC recommends initial program funding of \$150,000 for grants, with awards up to \$10,000. The applicant must pledge a 50% match and the program would run through December 31, 2020, but could expire sooner if all funding is allocated. Staff anticipates the program would be reimbursable under the City's CARES Act funding.

Director Pierce stated the LRC is interested in participating in this program for businesses in the Urban Renewal Area. They will be evaluating their participation depending on what Council decides.

Staff recommends approval of the project.

Public Comments – None.

Mayor Pro Tem Maloney stated the EVC wants this to be the next step to help businesses in the near future. It is a matching program and is targeted to keep businesses viable both right now and in the long term.

Councilmember Leh noted his concern this would take up a large amount of staff time. He asked about criterion one and if it must meet public health guidance. Director Pierce stated the end goal is to tie any upgrades to public health regulations or guidance.

Mayor Pro Tem Maloney agreed the first criterion is broad but it there are many expenses businesses have for long-term solutions. He noted this program will be more subjective than the previous program and staff will need to make a judgement call and the Council will need to support staff's decisions on this.

Mayor Stolzmann moved to approve the resolution; Councilmember Brown seconded the motion.

Councilmember Lipton asked if there is any goal as to what types of businesses we are targeting. Director Pierce stated the EVC proposal is to leave it as broad as possible so everyone can apply.

Councilmember Lipton stated he prefers to have limits on the size of the businesses that can apply. He doesn't want to fund large profitable businesses with this.

Councilmember Lipton asked if the CARES Act money is used to reimburse this would it be taking away from other City expenses. City Manager Balsler stated staff believes this program would be eligible as would any LRC funding. It would be one way we could refill general fund resources. The City can seek eligible expenses for about \$950,000 and we are looking at all of our costs to seek the full amount for reimbursement.

Councilmember Lipton noted it would not be free money, it would be money that we would spend elsewhere if we don't spend it here.

Mayor Stolzmann noted the EVC felt there should not be a limit on the business size as the grant size is so small it would not have a big impact for large businesses but might have a big impact on smaller businesses.

Mayor Pro Tem Maloney noted these are not large grants but they could be a big help to a business that needs it. The goal is help those that can show they have sustained economic injury and they will have to prove that injury to get the grant.

Councilmember Leh made a friendly amendment that the first criterion includes a requirement that the changes meet public health regulations. Mayor Stolzmann agreed to the amendment as did Councilmember Brown.

Roll Call Vote: Passed by unanimous roll call vote.

DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC SAFETY UPDATE

Director Kowar noted tonight's conversation is a more detailed look at neighborhood traffic safety than in previous years. He added this is a balance of a wide variety of requests and many factors.

He noted pedestrian fatalities are on the rise nationally; there are more distractions for drivers; and we all have more awareness about this.

In Louisville, if there is room on a street we will put in a bike lane if possible. We have also added sharrows to note where cars should be watching for bikes. Since 2015, there has been a big focus in town on neighborhood traffic safety with many improvements in the last five years. He reviewed some of the major projects.

He reviewed some of the challenges there are with traffic calming. He noted bicycles are vehicles and need to act as such on the road. Louisville does not have an excessive speeding problem but some people do speed. He added pedestrians also need to look out for themselves and take proper precautions.

Director Kowar reviewed various factors that affect decisions including complaints, trail crossings, pedestrian volumes, bike lanes, road configuration, and others. He noted some cities are lowering speed limits for many streets. Our staff prioritizes bikes and pedestrians but we also need to keep vehicle safety in mind.

He reviewed the average daily traffic numbers of collector streets and the current projects planned for 2020 upgrades.

Councilmember Leh asked if making collector streets “no through traffic” is recommended. Director Kowar stated he wouldn't recommend it as collector streets are designed to take through traffic across the City. That would be a major policy and design change.

Public Comments

Mark Cathcart, 1763 Sweet Clover Lane, asked if given the pandemic is there a way for pedestrian signals to be triggered without having to push the button. Also, he noted that any help on East Hecla Drive would be appreciated as there is a lot of cut through traffic.

Ryan Conrad, 253 South Madison, stated the Polk Dahlia corridor needs safe ways to walk through the neighborhood; especially crosswalks. We have more traffic than Main and Front Street per day and the road configuration gives inadequate site distances. There is a need to invest in this area of town with additional crosswalks.

Sandy Neville, 2110 East Hecla, stated she has seen an increase volume over the years and the street design does not slow down traffic at the roundabouts. If traffic is slowed down that may keep people from cutting through. She asked for a traffic study on Hecla.

Patricia Lucy 527 Front Street, asked for some speed mitigation on Front Street/County Road. The street gets lots of pedestrians and traffic is not adhering to the speed limit. We would like a refuge or crosswalk sign in the middle of the road to cue people they are still in a residential neighborhood. She asked why the street has no yellow line on the road.

Don Parcher, 378 Grouse Court, noted many crosswalks are dark and perhaps they need lights that are motion activated. He noted many kids cross the street not using the crosswalks and some education is needed.

Dave Hooley, 117 West Madison Avenue, stated he likes the pedestrian islands on Pine Street. He does not like the curbs that cut into the street; he doesn't think it helps pedestrians and they can be dangerous for bicycles. He prefers the red bump outs as a bike rider can ride through those safely if there are no pedestrians present.

Mayor Stolzmann noted the double yellow line is often not used on streets if people have to turn left to access driveways. She stated not all streets have bike lanes if there is not enough width in the travel lane. In those cases, bikes and cars have to share the space. She noted the curbs extensions don't come out further than a parked car and bikes and cars need to know how to use them properly. As to lights, she noted that is not an easy conversation as some people want more and some want lights removed.

Members discussed a variety of projects and issues on specific streets.

Director Kowar asked if Council would like speed limits reduced on Cherry Street/Bella Vista. Mayor Pro Tem Maloney and Councilmember Brown both agreed it should be lowered here.

For Polk/Dahlia Director Kowar stated a crosswalk at all the intersections isn't a good idea but staff plans to meet with residents and start a conversation about what makes sense. Councilmember Brown would like to see traffic slowed down for safety. Mayor Stolzmann noted residents are asking for crosswalks and we should prioritize those. Councilmember Brown agreed.

Members discussed mitigation options including crosswalks or redesign for Tyler/Washington/Hickory and crosswalks and additional options for Front Street. There will be a future discussion about additional speed radars.

Public Comments

Jim Bolt, 664 West Sagebrush Drive, stated this area needs to be addressed, we have lots of kids in the area who are crossing the streets. Repainting the crosswalks would be helpful as would tree trimming to see the signage better.

Jeff Meier, 470 County Road, stated he supports a crosswalk on Front Street and a yellow yield pylon in the center of the street.

Mayor Stolzmann noted it was helpful to have the petition from one neighborhood and perhaps the City needs a formal process on how a neighborhood can submit these types of requests. Staff will look into that.

Director Kowar stated staff is looking at the cost of stamped concrete medians. This is one option but there are other options that could be much more attractive. Staff is conducting outreach right now to ask residents what they would like to see for roughly 65 areas and make them unique and attractive. Staff is also working on pricing.

ADJOURN

Members adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Ashley Stolzmann, Mayor

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk