

Economic Development Retail Sales Tax Board
Minutes
July 9, 2019
6:00 p.m.

The Economic Development Retail Sales Tax Board (EDRSTB) held meeting at University City City Hall, 5th Floor, located at 6801 Delmar Boulevard, University City, Missouri on July 9, 2019. The meeting commenced at 6:05 pm.

Voting Members Present

Traci Moore
Kathleen Sorkin
Robyn Williams
Byron Price (Arrived at 6:15)
Matthew Erker
George Lenard

Voting Members Absent

Brendan O'Brien
Matt Bellows (new member)
Robert Kuhlman

Council Liaison

Mayor Terry Crow

Staff Present

Gregory Rose, City Manager
John Mulligan, City Attorney
Libbey Tucker, Director of Economic Development
Adam Brown, Planner

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Moore moved to approve minutes from June 18, 2019. Mr. Erker seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Ms. Sorkin said she would like to move the Public Comments section earlier in the meeting, before discussion on the applications. There were no objections.

Old Business

Ms. Tucker presented the current financials of the EDRST funds. The funds available to the board for FY 20 are \$367,018, with funds in reserve totaling \$1,195,474. Mr. Rose asked Ms. Tucker to provide a list at the next meeting of projects that have been funded and where they stand financially. Mr. Lenard clarified that the fund balance would increase with any unused funding such as the 20% that must be spent on infrastructure.

There was discussion about whether applicants could make changes to applications at this stage of the process. Mr. Lenard moved to vote on applications as submitted. Mr. Erker seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

Ms. Angie Sadl spoke representing Classic Coin Laundry, 7200 Balson Ave. She spoke in support of the façade improvement program, stating that her father had invested about \$70,000 in upgrades to his business in the last five years. She was hoping to get Wash U students involved in design elements to further upgrade the exterior of the building. Mr. Rose stated that Ms. Tucker could provide information on the Façade Improvement Program if it were approved by Council.

Old Business (continued)

The board began discussion on all projects. Ms. Sorkin explained she would entertain motions to approve projects, and if no motion were entertained, a project would not be approved. There was discussion about the process of funding applications for less than they requested. Mr. Rose suggested that applications could be voted on to move to a second round if they were projects worthy of funding, regardless of funding amounts. For clarification, Ms. Sorkin said there could be a second meeting on this round of applications, and the board could eliminate applications that would not be moved forward. Mr. Rose stated that the City was removing the application for tree wells to be revisited once U City in Bloom had been consulted with to determine what trees should be used in the Loop. The Board then began going through the applications.

-iNeighborhoods - Smart Cities/STEAM: Ms. Sorkin felt there was not enough information in the proposal, which was from a for-profit entity, to determine if this was an appropriate cost. She felt it was beyond the expertise of board and staff to determine this. She also noted the Loop Business District had concerns about the project. Mr. Erker felt that the application should be given consideration due to the potential transformative nature of the project. Ms. Sorkin also noted that the upcoming Economic Development Strategic Plan might offer guidance as to whether this strategy was appropriate, then perhaps proposals could be reviewed. Mr. Lenard suggested that the proposal be given to the consultant performing the ED Strategic Plan for consideration. Mr. Lenard made a motion to deny the application without prejudice to future applications, and that the City notifying the consultant hired for the ED Strategic Plan of the proposal. Ms. Moore seconded. The motion carried with Mr. Erker as the only opposing vote.

-LED Craft-Loop Lighting: Ms. Sorkin noted that a lighting study was to be conducted in the Loop which might inform what kinds of lighting would be appropriate. Ms. Moore made a motion to deny the application without prejudice and with the City keeping the application for consideration after the lighting study. Mr. Lenard seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

-Loop Special Business District: Mr. Rose explained that the City is in the process of reconciling the Loop's accounts to find out exactly how much of the prior award has been used, and stated that the board may defer all the Loop proposals for a future round to be determined once the City has reconciled those accounts. Mayor Crow stated that the Loop

Special Business District was also considering which applications were the highest priority, and that they may sort some of this out on their own. Ms. Moore moved that all requests by the LSBDD be deferred to give the City time to reconcile accounts. Mr. Lenard seconded. The motion passed with Ms. Williams the only opposing vote.

-U City Farmer's Market: There was discussion about supporting the market and the best ways to promote the market. Mr. Price moved to approve the Market's application. Ms. Moore seconded. The motion carried with Ms. Williams the only opposing vote.

-St. Louis Artworks-Mural Project at Barbara Jordan Elementary: Mr. Lenard abstained from the discussion and vote because of his affiliation with the School Board. Ms. Moore moved to approve the application. Mr. Price seconded. The motion carried with Ms. Williams the only opposing vote.

-U City School District - EMT Training Program: Mr. Price asked if the proposal was a collaboration between the School Board and the City. Mr. Rose said it was, and clarified that the goal was to create career pathways for U City students to living wage jobs, either in U City or elsewhere. Ms. Moore moved to approve the application, and Mr. Price seconded. The motion carried with Mr. Lenard abstaining and Mr. Erker the only opposing vote.

U City School District - U Can Center: Mayor Crow said that Council would have a hard time funding the purchase of a building. Ms. Sorokin said that based on her experience in construction, undertaking a major renovation such as the one proposed could be costly and that without knowing if the program would succeed, this could be a risky investment for the City. Ms. Moore motioned to deny the application. Mr. Erker seconded. The motion carried with Mr. Lenard abstaining.

-U City in Bloom: Mr. Price moved to approve, Ms. Moore seconded, the motion carried with Mr. Lenard the only opposing vote.

-Urban Sprouts Child Development Center: There was discussion again about funding a major renovation, and although board members support the program, they could not fund this project, as requested. Mr. Lenard moved to deny the application without prejudice for future applications. Mr. Price seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

-Yan Chen Restaurant: Ms. Moore moved to deny this application. Mr. Lenard seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

-City of University City Façade Improvement Program: Mr. Rose clarified that the request would be for one year of funding at \$150,000. There was discussion about supporting this program due to its leveraging of private investment and visibility. Ms. Moore moved to approve the application. Mr. Lenard seconded the motion. Following a question about allocations to certain areas of the City, and Mr. Rose explained that Council members could give input as to where the money was spent, but he was hesitant to set precise limits. The motion was approved unanimously.

-City of University City-Delmar Street Trees: As per earlier discussion, this application was withdrawn by the City Manager.

New Business

Ms. Moore asked for a list from staff with the remaining projects from FY 2019.

Ms. Tucker reviewed the approved projects:

- Farmers market for \$28,500
- St. Louis Artworks for \$11,100
- U City School District, EMT Training for \$68,300
- U City in Bloom for \$50,573
- U City Façade Improvement Program for \$150,000

The total of these projects is \$308,473.

The Board discussed whether another meeting would be needed for this round of applications, and it was decided that only if the Loop finances were reconciled before the August round of applications would another meeting be needed. Those projects approved at this meeting would be brought before City Council at their August 12 meeting.

Mr. Rose discussed the status of ex-officio members of the EDRST Board. There are currently representatives from the Loop Business District and the Olive Boulevard Corridor stated in the bylaws. However, he is having the City Attorney look into whether having these members is in keeping with the state statute which governs the Board. He anticipates that these members will no longer be a part of the board, and will update the board once he has an opinion from Mr. Mulligan.

The next meeting is set for July 23 at 6 pm in City Council Chambers, and will be a discussion of the proposals received for conducting an Economic Development Strategic Plan. Ms. Tucker explained that the Board would receive copies of all the submittals for review prior to the meeting.

Ms. Moore motioned to adjourn, Mr. Lenard seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm

Prepared by Adam Brown, Planner