

Monday, April 27, 2020

Economic Development Retail Sales Tax (EDRST) Board Meeting, Special Called Emergency Meeting, April 27, 2020

Dear Members of the Economic Development Retail Sales Tax Board and Director of Planning & Development, City of University City,

I am very concern about a new business assistance forgivable loan program being proposed that would be funded out of the EDRST in an estimate amount of up to \$1 million dollars. I understand that we are facing unparallel times, but decisions need to made in a prudent manner.

Our city government does not have the same level of capacity as the federal and state government in providing funds to local small businesses. A new forgivable loan program proposed now before we have more information about potential repeating outbreaks the COVID-19 virus seems premature. With the staff reductions, how will the loan program be given adequate oversight? What if the COVID -19 has a second more serious wave in the fall and again in the spring of 2021? Would the forgivable loan program be sustainable? Why are multi-rounds (2) proposed even with a projected reduction in retail sales taxes coming in and the reduction in oversight staffing?

Last question, in complying with the Sunshine Law, will any decision from the EDRST Board have to presented to the next May 11<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting for discussion and vote?

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia McQueen

3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Resident

1132 George St.

University City, MO 63130

## Clifford Cross

---

**From:** Kevin T <kevintaylor\_kt@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2020 11:21 AM  
**To:** Clifford Cross; Terry Crow  
**Cc:** Bwayne Smotherson; Stacy Clay  
**Subject:** EDRST Meeting Citizen Questions/Comments

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

**Name:** Kevin Taylor  
**Address:** 7022 Canton Avenue

Please read the questions listed below during the Citizen Comment section of the April 27th EDRST Meeting, I believe they will fall within the three (3) minute allotted time for comments.

1. Will there be a Public Hearing BEFORE a recommendation is made to City Council in compliance with the EDRST Statues? If not, please explain why, as this program is using taxpayer monies?
2. Please explain or show where the justification or "Loop Hole" giving businesses access to these funds? Is it the section under Rule 3, does the term "Shall Not" give it unlimited use?
3. What is the "Oversight" process, where is it in writing or documented as a policy or process?
4. Will individual businesses applying for Business Assistance funds be permitted or allowed to make oral support or presentations? If so, when, where, and how will this happen?
5. How will validation of the use of funds be performed?
6. What protection or process is provided for the collection of a defaulted loan/grant, especially if a business goes under and shutters/closes?
7. Is there a published detailed formula developed and provided to businesses to determine a "cap" on the amount a business my request?
8. How will the request be "means-tested" to the Business Assistance awarding process is fair and equitable to all business and particularity minority businesses?
9. How will the Business Assistance information be provided or delivered to ALL of the eligible businesses throughout U City? Mail? Hand Delivered? Phone calls? Virtual Meeting? Special Call-in number?
10. Will Business Assistance information be translated into ALL necessary languages? Will the City provide ANY/ALL necessary translators to communicate this program? If not, please explain why, as this program is using taxpayer monies?
11. Will the City provide a recap of all of the businesses that have received the Business Assistance awards and the amounts? If not, please explain why, as this program is using taxpayer monies? Where will this information be posted?
12. Is there ANY "Loop Hole" (same rationale as Business Assistance Program)that would allow the City of U City to use these funds to address the \$3.7 million shortfall in the City budget?

Kevin Taylor

kevintaylor\_kt@yahoo.com

314.276.2790

## Clifford Cross

---

**From:** Diane Davenport <dianedavenport046@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2020 11:20 AM  
**To:** Clifford Cross  
**Subject:** EDRST Mtg.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Please share my comments this evening at the meeting.

Dear EDRST Board,

I had a chance to read the Guidelines of the COVID19 Business Assistance Program Draft.  
Here are some of my concerns:

1. Have you gotten any feedback from a cross-representation of small businesses re: the conditions of the program? I saw the Ellen Bern recommended that the conditions be translated for some of our Chinese vendors. I concur with that.
2. How are ALL businesses being contacted about the Assistance Program? There needs to be transparency on all of this.
3. In looking at the second bullet under 4. "Assistance would be in the form of a loan, forgivable under the following conditions."

.....Full-time employment and salary levels as of Feb. 15, 2020 are attained by June 30, 2020.

How could that happen so soon?

Thank you for looking at my concerns.

Sincerely,

Diane Davenport  
784 Yale 63130  
Resident of University City for 55 years.

## Clifford Cross

---

**From:** Ellen Bern <ellendebbiebern@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 27, 2020 7:43 AM  
**To:** Clifford Cross  
**Cc:** kathysorkin@sbcglobal.net  
**Subject:** Comments for EDRST Board

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Please share my comments with the Board this evening at the meeting.

Dear EDRST Board,

I have lived in U. City for over 40 years and served for a couple of years as executive director of the now defunct U. City Chamber of Commerce. I live at 7001 Washington Ave, and have some concerns with the proposed grant/loan plan for COVID relief for our business community.

- 1. Dissemination of information:** Every business needs to be mailed the program outline and application. This is the only way to insure all are aware of the program. It would be helpful if a Chinese translation, at least of the summary, was also prepared. The program could also be advertised in the Chinese newspaper.
- 2. Timeframe:** We still don't know exactly when our businesses will be permitted to open, nor what constraints might be imposed. Restaurants might need to decrease indoor seating, and customers may or may not flock back quickly to pre-COVID rates. We also don't know if there will be a second wave of lockdowns within a month of reopening. Therefore I am concerned that requiring full employment by June 30 is too much to ask. Frankly, even if the Council approves this program on or before

May 11, it takes time to get the information out, prepare and submit applications, review applications, and approve and issue checks. I suggest you extend the deadline of meeting the grant requirements by at least several months.

3. **Specifics:** What do you anticipate the average size business will receive through this program? Because allocations are based on business license fees which are based on retail sales, our smallest and most vulnerable businesses will get the least amount of money. It might be a fair way to divide the pie, but not really the most equitable. Additionally, this is a lot of paperwork and a significant requirement to insist on full employment, especially if the amount of money being offered isn't very much. That is why I ask what a typical business might receive. Also, I understand not wanting to give Ronald McDonald a hand-out, but typically franchisees don't get much, or any, financial support from the parent company. Has anyone checked with Whitch Witch, Tutti Frutti, Jimmy Johns, or Dominos to ask them this? It is my understanding that many of our franchises are locally owned and by folks who do not have deep pockets. I suggest this situation be further studied.

I look forward to some form of support being made available to our business community as quickly and equitably as possible. It will be a challenge to implement a program with some oversight but not so much as to be unworkable for many of our smallest and least sophisticated merchants, who provide a significant addition to the flavor and appeal of our business community. Good luck, and I am available to help in any way if so desired.

Sincerely,  
Ellen Bern

--  
Ellen Bern  
7001 Washington Ave.

U. City, Mo. 63130  
314-721-1841 cell# 314-546-5467

## Clifford Cross

---

**From:** STL Kidera <kiderastl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2020 9:41 PM  
**To:** Clifford Cross  
**Cc:** Gregory Rose; Noboru Kidera; kiderataeko@gmail.com  
**Subject:** EDRSTB funds

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good evening Clifford,

Please send us any necessary information regarding documents needed for the application.  
Are we eligible to receive funds/grants? based on operating in U.City since 1987 paying sales tax for 33 years.

We have been struggling since the middle of March with plummeting decrease in sales of 90% and have had to inject personal savings into the business just to make ends meet. At this point we are unsure how to get by the next 2~3 months without taking on greater debt.

I am surprised to here Libbey Tucker was furloughed. She was one of the first people whom I reached out on numerous occasion to obtain vital information to try and keep our business afloat.

George S. Kidera  
木寺 (ジョージ) 伸一



[Nobu's Inc.](#)  
8643 Olive Boulevard  
Saint Louis, Missouri 63132  
O:+314 997 2303  
C:+314 323 9147

<https://www.nobusushistl.com>  
<https://www.facebook.com/nobusushistl/>



## Clifford Cross

---

**From:** Arlene Zarembka <zarembka-politics@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 26, 2020 7:45 PM  
**To:** Clifford Cross  
**Subject:** EDRST

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Cross:

I reside at 7500 Trenton Avenue in University City. As a small business owner (although my office is not University City), I feel it is crucial that EDRST funds to support the small businesses in the University City Loop be distributed ASAP. Many of the businesses in the U City Loop are micro businesses that will go out of business if they do not receive support immediately. There should be no delay in distributing the funds. Even a week or two delay is likely to cause some of the small loop businesses to go out of business.

Arlene Zarembka  
7500 Trenton Avenue  
University City  
314-863-2576