

**Economic Development Retail Sales Tax Board  
Minutes  
August 24, 2023  
6:30 p.m.**

The Economic Development Retail Sales Tax (EDRST) Board held a virtual meeting on Thursday, August 24, 2023. The meeting commenced at 6:31 pm and adjourned at 7:54 pm.

**Voting Members Present:**

Kathleen Sorkin  
Bobette Patton  
Brendan O'Brien  
Brandon Bradshaw  
Cynthia Martin

**Voting Members Absent:**

Matthew Bellows  
Byron Price

**Council Liaison:**

Mayor Terry Crow

**Staff Present:**

Brooke A. Smith, Deputy City Manager/Dir. of Economic Development  
Rajaye Smith, Assistant City Manager  
Montez Miles, Economic Development Specialist

**Others attending:**

Deb Henderson, Executive Director – U City Farmers Market

**Mayor's Comments**

Mayor Crow said he wanted to take a minute to apologize for not attending the last meeting as he knows it got a bit dicey. He noted that as the Mayor he has to appoint the members of both EDRST and LSBD and he wasn't there to mediate. He mentioned that members of both boards are volunteers, and he would have liked to have been present to smooth things out and have a better understanding. He thanked the members for their service on the boards. He said if something like that happens again, he would encourage the board members to reach out to him as the connector between both boards.

**Minutes – May 19, 2022**

Motioned by Cynthia Martin, seconded by Brandon Bradshaw and carried by voice vote to approve the minutes.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Old Business**

- i. *LSBD Reimbursement Request – 4/20 Event*

Chair Sorkin opened the floor to discuss this item. Deputy City Manager provided a brief overview of this agenda item, noting there were some concerns about funding the 4/20 event due to it promoting the use of marijuana. She stated that the item was tabled at the last meeting so that both the board and staff could review the expenditures from the event. She said the City Manager did review the expenditure report and he is recommending that the event be reimbursed this time but that this would not establish a precedent. Smith said there is an item later on the agenda that will recommend establishing a policy to prohibit the funding of these types of events in the future. Further discussion was had on this topic.

Motioned by Brandon Bradshaw, seconded by Cynthia Martin and carried by voice vote to approve the reimbursement of the LSBSD's 4/20 Event.

ii. *End of Year Reports for FY23*

Chair Sorkin opened the floor for this agenda item. Deputy City Manager Brooke Smith presented the End of Year reports for FY23 for U City in Bloom, Farmers Market, The Mannequins Project, and the Loop Special Business District.

Motioned by Brenda O'Brien, seconded by Bobette Patton and carried by voice vote to accept the End of Year reports for FY23.

**New Business**

i. *Policy Recommendation – Prohibit Funding of Events Promoting the Use of Marijuana, Cigarettes, and/or Alcohol*

Chair Sorkin stated that staff has spent some time thinking and talking about this agenda item and are recommending a policy that prohibits the funding of events promoting the use of marijuana, cigarettes, and/or alcohol. Deputy City Manager Smith summarized the information in the recommended policy. Smith noted that with an affirmative vote from the EDRST Board, the policy would then go to the City Council for final approval.

Chair Sorkin stated that this policy does not mean the LSBSD can't hold the event, just that they cannot use EDRST Funds to pay for it. Deputy City Manager Smith confirmed, stating that as long as they meet the requirements for the city's Special Use Permit, they can host the event.

Byron Price asked if the LSBSD sponsors a restaurant event, they can't use the money if they sell liquor internally in their restaurant. Deputy City Manager Smith answered no and explained why.

Cynthia Martin stated that alcohol can be served, it just cannot be the primary purpose of the event. Deputy City Manager Smith confirmed that this is correct.

Further discussion was had.

Motioned by Brendan O'Brien, seconded by Cynthia Martin and carried by voice vote to recommend approval of the policy as written, with the understand that the purpose is not to prohibit the holding of the events, but the use of EDRST funds to pay for the event.

*ii. FY24 Allocations – UCIB and Farmers Market*

Deputy City Manager Smith presented this agenda item. She started with U City in Bloom and noted that they were requesting \$52,090 for FY24, the same amount as last year. She noted that they did not ask for an increase for this fiscal year, and they do not anticipate any changes in their budget.

Motioned by Brandon Bradshaw, seconded by Bobette Patton and carried by voice vote to approve funding for U City in Bloom for FY24, not to exceed \$52,090.

Deputy City Manager Smith discussed the FY24 request from the U City Farmers Market. She noted that prior to the last meeting, both the city and Deb Henderson found out that the space they are using will no longer be available to them. Smith noted that Deb Henderson was able to go back and negotiate the use of the space until December 31<sup>st</sup>. Smith stated that Deb will be using that time to find a new space. Based on this information, Smith said staff was a recommended a pro-rated amount for the Farmers Market to cover operations through December and when the Board convenes in January, they can release the funds for the rest of the year if a new location has been found. She noted that this was only for the Saturday market. Smith said she was able to calculate how much was spent last year between July and December of 2022, which was \$20,115, so staff is recommending that \$20,000 be released now with the understanding that if a new location has been identified in January, the remaining \$8,000 can be released.

Deb Henderson added that she and Deputy City Manager Smith discussed the possible use of Municipal Lot 4 as a backup plan. She also said it might be possible to negotiate with the property owner for more time. Deb also discussed long-range goals, including buying the property or another site in U City.

Further discussion was had on this topic and accepting new applications.

Motioned by Bryon Price, seconded by Brendan O'Brien and carried about voice vote to recommend approval of a pro-rate amount not to exceed \$20,000 to cover the Farmer's Market through December 31, 2023.

*iii. Façade Improvement Program Policy Changes*

Chair Sorkin opened discussion for this agenda item. Deputy City Manager Brooke Smith presented potential policy changes to the Façade Improvement Program for review and discussion based on concerns that were received from the City Council.

Discussion was had.

*iv. Projects for FY24 – New Applications*

Deputy City Manager Smith stated that the LSBDD has a pending request for the LSBDD that totals over \$540,000, which includes the \$275,000 for their Events and Receptions. She noted that Mannequins in the Loop intends to ask for more money, though she was unsure of the amount. Smith noted that the Farmers Market also intends to request money for their Wednesday Farmers Market and the city also intends to submit applications as well. Smith then details the breakdown of how the money can be spent.

Deputy City Manager Smith proposed returning to the application process and marketing the available funds to the rest of the city. She said she was looking for guidance from the board on having an application process.

Chair Sorkin said there would need to be marketing and then applicants would need time to prepare a proposal. She also said she would like to get back to having the applicants present the way they used to. She noted that this all cannot happen before October 5<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion was had.

Based on the discussions around the timing of marketing the program, Deputy City Manager Smith asked if there was interest in moving the October meeting to the first week in November to allow for a marketing plan to be created and presentations received from applicants.

Cynthia Martin asked if there are some administrative things that need to be documented, noting that if we are going back to the people that have been receiving money and having them incorporate their entire ask into one proposal so there aren't multiple applications from the same people. She also noted that if you are asking people who have never applied, what is the process for them. She said we need to make sure everything is in place before going out to market for this.

Discussion was had.

Deputy City Manager Smith noted that the regular funding for UCIB, Farmers Market, LSB, and Mannequins in the Loop was already included in the budget, so they will not apply for those funds in FY24, they will only apply for anything extra. She said the intent was to have them submit a separate application for each project, though the one applicant can present on all of the projects at one time. Smith noted that this will allow the Board to vote on each project independently.

Discussion was had.

### **Board Member Comments**

**Next Meeting Date – October 5, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. – Cancelled**

### **Adjourn**

Motioned by Brandon Bradshaw, seconded by Cynthia Martin and carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.