



# TOWN OF WARE

## Planning & Community Development

126 Main Street, Ware, Massachusetts 01082

t. 413.967.9648 ext. 120

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Meeting Minutes from

Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Select Board Room, Town Hall

### CDA Members Present:

Chairman Danielle Souza (Remote), S.K. "Rob"

### CDA Members Absent:

Robinson, Rhiannon Gresty (Remote), John Carroll

Brandy Bruso

### Public:

Ted Harvey-PVPC (Remote), Sheila Cuddy -

QV CDC

### Staff Present:

Rob Watchilla, Director,

Alex Ziter, Assistant (Remote)

---

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Danielle Souza called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ADMINISTRATIVE

- Approval of meeting minutes from October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Motion by Rhiannon Gresty to approve minutes from the October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. Seconded by John Carroll. All in favor. Approved 4/0/1.

### REVIEW FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

- Brief review of account summaries through October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Motion by D. Souza to approve financial accounts through October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Seconded by Rob Robinson. All in favor. Approved. 4/0/1.

### CDBG UPDATES

- FY2019: Ware and Hardwick: reallocation of funds- update on projects

Funds have been reprogrammed to help with the installation of the streetlights.

R. Watchilla stated that most of the streetlights have arrived. T. Harvey stated that the installation will likely be paused until the spring.

- **FY2020: Bank Street**

The Bank St. project will be going out to bid, and will likely be ready to implement in the spring. R. Watchilla and T. Harvey stated that there will be an outreach meeting for neighboring residents on Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The residents will look at the plans and suggest recommendations and express their opinions with the project engineer.

- **FY2020-CV: Social Services & Microenterprises**

T. Harvey stated that there was extra funding through the C.A.R.E.S. Act and CDBG which will help the Literacy project, Senior Outreach program, and Domestic Violence program. T. Harvey stated that the contract is set to end on December 31<sup>st</sup> 2021, and an official request to extend for a one-year extension is ongoing with the town and the state.

- **FY2021: Façade Improvement program**

No updates on FY2021 as of yet, the application was submitted last month to the state.

## **OLD AND NEW BUSINESS**

- **Corrective Action Request – Hardwick Housing Rehab Project**

T. Harvey requested that the CDA use funds from a discretionary cash account to assist a homeowner in Hardwick with a Corrective Action claim. The homeowner was part of a housing rehabilitation project in FY2017 in which the contractor had improperly installed bathroom flooring. This construction is out of the warranty period and the original contractor is no long in business with the town or PVPC. The quote for repair was an estimate of \$1,350.

Rhiannon Gresty stated that she thought the original quote seemed high, and requested getting additional quotes before moving to vote of the expenditure of funds.

D. Souza agrees with the request for additional quotes to compare prices for the corrective action expenditure requested by T. Harvey.

Request was tabled, pending on additional quotes to assess the value of the corrective action claim.

- **Informational presentation on QV CDC by Shelia Cuddy**

Sheila Cuddy from the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QVDC) gave a presentation on the non-profit, regarding its structure and ongoing efforts throughout the region. QVDC serves 20 communities within the region by providing small business loans & technical assistance.

During the beginning Covid-19, the inclusion of Rapid Response Loans from QVDC assisted 10 applicants and funded \$132,000.

Business Development Services from QVDC provided 58 clients with getting assistance to get started, stabilized or increasing growth, in doing so QVDC created 23 jobs and preserved 115.5 jobs. These clients included members from low to moderate income households, low to moderate income zones, representatives of ethnic minorities, women owned, and other underrepresented demographics.

QVDC launched a Financial Fitness Club which will match your savings on a 1:1 ratio up to a capped amount which will help mitigate the costs of medium to large scale investments including purchasing a vehicle, educational costs, household repairs and more.

Covid-19 Response from QVDC as of June 30, 2021 includes 35 assisted business with accessing Payroll Protection Program for a total of \$2,097,523. Assisted 5 businesses with accessing Economic Impact Disaster Loans for a total value of \$141,000. Assisted 2 businesses with accessing Restaurant Relief Fund for a total value of \$438,149. QVDC was also able to expand its Hardwick Senior Outreach program to include Warren, Ware and Belchertown with additional CDGB-CV funding.

The QVDC had over \$1 million dollars in Grants available through the Microenterprise Assistant Grants. QVDC is assisting the lead communities of Palmer and Southbridge as well as PVPC in administrating this program. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, there have been 32 grants awarded totaling just under \$500,000.

The QVDC is working with many local partners and Holyoke Community College to increase workforce training through the Education to Employment building in downtown Ware.

The QVDC is working on multiple municipal projects including the senior outreach program and owners of multiple rental spaces in Ware which are used to develop and increase cultural significance and art appreciation within the community including the business Clayworks.

QVDC has received a \$70,500 Resiliency Grant from Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation to further their efforts to revitalize downtown Ware and promote Ware's small businesses. Currently there are 29 business in Ware which have signed up for this grant.

- **Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP) – update and recommendation for future funds**

R. Watchilla delivered a presentation on five implementable projects within the Local Rapid Recovery Program which were submitted to the state via the town of Ware, facilitated by the PVPC.

T. Harvey stated that this program is a continuous process and by no means is there a limit to the five projects which have been submitted.

R. Watchilla stated that the LRRP was supported and advised by three subject matter experts, which were Civic Space Collaborative, Innes Associates and Nelson/ Nygaard.

The focus point for the LRRP is on Ware's downtown and commercial zones which extends a significant portion of Main St. and West St, down to the larger commercial store areas.

#### **D. Souza leaves the meeting**

The first project which was included in the LRRP plan is the Design Guidelines for Downtown Ware. This project has a low budget of less than \$50,000 and would focus on the Main St. Route 9 corridor.

The second project which was included in the LRRP plan is Cultural Events Programming. This project is focused on developing community wide strategies and policies to improve the cultural events within Ware, and improve the rates of visitors in town. The budget for this project is medium ranged with an approximated expenditure of \$50,000 - \$200,000 dollars.

The third project which was included in the LRRP plan is the Façade Improvement Program which will be funded by the FY2020 CDBG funds. An additional \$50,000 could be used to create design guidelines in the spring of 2022 to help implement this project.

The fourth project which was included in the LRRP plan is the Develop a Comprehensive Parking Implementation Communication Program. This project has a low budget of less than \$50,000 and will be used to inform the residents of the available public parking options through increased communications such as wayfinding signage.

The fifth project which was included in the LRRP plan is the Connecting Downtown Ware Program, which is broad project aimed at improving the micro-mobility of downtown. This can have a ranged budget from low to high and would be implemented though multiple phases.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Motion** made by J. Carroll to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm. Seconded by R. Robinson. All in Favor. Approved. 3/0/2.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 13th, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Minutes from November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Respectfully submitted by,

Alex Ziter

Assistant,

Planning & Community Development

Minutes Approved on: 12/13/2021

Souza \_\_\_\_\_

Carroll \_\_\_\_\_

Bruso Brendy Bruso

Robinson [Signature]

Gresty \_\_\_\_\_