



# TOWN OF WARE

## Planning & Community Development

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Meeting Minutes from

**Monday September 14, 2020**

Select Board Room, Town Hall

### CDA Members Present:

Paul Opalinski, Danielle Souza, James Baird, John Carroll (Arrived at 7:30)

### Guests:

Ted Harvey (PVPC)

### Staff Present:

Rebekah DeCoursey, Director of Planning & Community Development; Jack Carolan, PCD Assistant

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### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

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

**Note-** B. Brusso absent to attend Parks Commission Meeting

### ADMINISTRATION

**Motion** by J. Baird to approve the meeting minutes from 8/10/2020. Seconded by D. Souza. All in favor. Approved 3-0

### REVIEW OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

A discussion was held on the financial accounts and it was determined that the town should try and spend the money in the program income account by the end of December 2020. It was decided to commit some of the money would be on new fencing in the Millyard, which is within the Slum & Blight designated area.

**Motion** by J. Baird to approve the funds for the installation of new fencing around a portion of the Millyard. Seconded by D. Souza. All in favor. Approved 3-0

There was a discussion on the available CDA funds and the possibility of funding small business grant program and the process of this. It would be an opportunity for a business that wasn't eligible for other funding opportunities. Smaller amounts than the CDBG-CV program.

**Motion** by J. Baird to approve the financial accounts. Seconded by D. Souza. All in favor. Approved 3-0

## **UPDATES**

T. Harvey provided an update on the FY19 Code Enforcement, Social Services, and Housing Rehab programs. There have been 8 - 9 units that have taken advantage of the housing rehab loan program. Senior Outreach money has been spent with the expansion of the program, as well as money towards Ware Adult Learning, the Domestic Violence Task Force and PATCH program.

T. Harvey stated that he had reached out to DHCD in regards to a waiver that would give the town more time to spend the money allocated for the fiscal year. A. Marques had stated that she felt the money allocated for code enforcement could be spent in time.

P. Opalinski asked how long the town had to spend the money if there was no movement on code enforcement. T. Harvey said that he would follow up with A. Marques. He also said that the state would definitely like to see some of the funds spent before the end of the year.

There was a discussion on FY20 and the Bank Street project and the town is still waiting to hear back regarding the budget for that project.

430K awarded been spent towards social services including domestic violence, the literacy project, and senior outreach. The town of Ware is the lead for the domestic violence portion partnering with a number of towns in the region. There was then a discussion on the Covid-19 money that was allocated as part of the FY2020 CDBG program. R. DeCoursey provided a brief update on the microenterprise grant program in conjunction with Palmer. These grants are for businesses of less than 5 employees and for up to \$10,000. R. DeCoursey will be attending a training related to this on September 15, 2020.

## **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

A discussion was held on the FY2021 CDBG application and what the timeframe was. It was agreed that part of the FY2021 budget should go to a façade improvement program. The program could either be set up through small grants for new signage or through a loan program for façade improvements. Including lighting and uniform guidelines was also suggested as part of the potential program. It was agreed that a program like this would benefit the economic development goals of the community. It was determined that the façade program could take up a large chunk of the FY2021 CDBG budget.

**Motion** by J. Baird to look into a façade improvement program for FY2021. Seconded by D. Souza. All in favor. Approved 3-0

There was a brief discussion on how FY2021 funds could be used to assist with demolition projects in town. It was determined it would be best if those funds were specifically for cleaning up downtown and upgrading parking. T. Harvey mentioned that DHCD is aware that demolition funding is a problem for many communities.

R. DeCoursey introduced the Vacant Storefronts Program. It was determined that 20K could come out of the economic development revolving fund to support the program in its first year.

J. Carroll joined the meeting at 7:30 pm.

**Motion** by D. Souza to approve allocating 20K to the Vacant Storefronts Program. Seconded by J. Baird. All in favor. Approved 4-0

**Motion** by J. Baird to accept the Vacant Storefronts District. Seconded by J. Carroll. All in favor. Approved 4-0

## ADJOURN

**Motion** by D. Souza to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm. Seconded by J Carroll. All in favor. Approved 4-0

Next meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2020, if needed, at 6:30 pm.

Minutes from September 14, 2020  
Respectfully submitted by,

Jack Carolan  
Department Assistant

<i>Minutes Approved on:</i> _____	
Opalinski	_____
Carroll	_____
Souza	_____
Bruso	_____
Baird	_____