

**WOBURN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MINUTES FOR THE (VIRTUAL) JANUARY 26, 2021 MEETING**

Chairman Queenin called the January 26, 2021 Woburn Redevelopment Authority meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and City Planner/Grant Writer Dan Orr called the roll.

1. Roll call of members

Mr. Gary Fuller, Mr. Art Duffy, Mr. Wayne McDaniel and Chairman Queenin were present; Mr. Dave Ryan was absent. WRA Administrator Tina Cassidy and City Planner/Grant Writer Dan Orr were also in attendance.

2. Approval of minutes: December 8, 2021

Queenin called for a motion to approve the prior meetings' draft minutes if members were prepared to do so.

Motion to accept the December 8, 2020 minutes, made by Fuller;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept the December 8, 2020 meeting minutes, as submitted:

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Abstain
Fuller-Aye
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 3-0-1, with McDaniel abstaining after mistakenly being instructed by staff to do so based on an error regarding meeting attendance. (It was determined later in the meeting that McDaniel was in fact present that McDaniel was present at the WRA's December 8, 2020 meeting.)

3. Bills to be paid

Queenin indicated that there are two bills before the Authority to consider authorizing payment this evening, including one in the amount of \$981.00 from the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and a second in the amount of \$134.00 from the U.S. Post Office.

Queenin called for a motion to approve the Bill Roll if members were prepared to do so.

Motion to approve the Bill Roll, made by Fuller;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept Bill Roll, as submitted:

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Aye
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

4. Monthly financial report

Queenin provided the figures of the monthly financial report for the period ending December 31, 2020. The Authority's Operating and Sign/Facade Program current account balances are \$69,135.60 and \$16,294.15, respectively.

Queenin called for a motion to approve the monthly financial report if members were prepared to do so.

Motion to accept the monthly financial report, as submitted, made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to accept the monthly financial report

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Aye
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

5. Update on Storefront Façade and Sign Program, including financials, interest in program expressed since last meeting and efforts related to recent expansion of sign grant eligibility area

Orr stated that applicant Nikki Zhang, of Nikki's Nails, located at 440 Main Street, is hoping to obtain total grant funding in the amount of \$1,860.92 (amounting to two installments of \$930.46) based upon the lowest quote from Flyer's Unlimited. The proposed signage for her business uses black and white colors which conforms to the requirements of the WRA. He added that a change in the name from the former business ("Impression Nail Salon") is the result of new ownership and necessitates the new sign.

Orr further stated that the required materials have been submitted in their entirety, including a sign program application, tenant permission form, business certificate, proof of insurance, tax certification, and lease agreement. Additionally, the applicant has obtained approval from the Building Commissioner and the required sign permit has been issued.

Queenin asked whether the application had been reviewed by the Sign Review Board (SRB). Orr responded that the SRB is not convening at the moment, so approval of the sign design and permitting falls to the Building Commissioner by default.

Queenin called for a motion to approve the sign grant application, for new signage located at 440 Main Street for Nikki's Nails, in the amount of \$1,860.92, if members were prepared to do so.

Motion to approve the 440 Main Street sign grant application, made by Fuller;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to approve the 440 Main Street sign application:

Queenin-Aye
McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Aye
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

6. Discussion of possible WRA initiatives and actions to support downtown businesses during and after the pandemic

Cassidy stated that this topic was placed on the agenda given the timeliness of business challenges. She proceeded to provide an overview what the WRA has supported relative to financial support of downtown business. In addition to the Downtown Sign & Façade Improvement Program, the WRA provided \$28,000 in funding to local businesses in the form of the Downtown Restaurant Gift Card Program.

Cassidy further stated that, in addition to direct funding, the WRA promoted at least two opportunities for local business participation in the State's Microenterprise Grant program to which at least six (6) Woburn businesses have applied to date.

Cassidy further stated that the Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP) grant is another opportunity for the WRA to offer its administrative and member support. The application is currently under review but is intended to offer state-supplied and grant-supported consulting services to support the creation of an Action Plan to improve the downtown business environment over a short-term and medium-term timeline. She added that staff anticipates an announcement to be made by the program agency regarding applicant selection over the next couple of weeks (in early February).

Queenin asked if there was any sense of the types of consultants that would be involved with the LRRP program. Cassidy responded that she is not specifically aware of the consultants involved in the program but imagines that it would entail a number of subject experts on local economies, design, and public infrastructure.

Queenin asked about the Phase II efforts to procure more street furniture in the downtown area and when additional items, such as more trash receptacles, are expected to be delivered and installed. Cassidy responded that it is the hope that DPW staff will be able to install the remaining street furniture by springtime, most practically to avoid conflicts and potential damage during the winter snow season.

Fuller asked about the status of applicants to the Microenterprise programs and whether there is any awareness about participation of downtown business applicants. Cassidy stated that she anticipates obtaining an update on the latest "batch" of Woburn applicants over the next week, but as of this moment she is not able to provide that information.

7. New/Other Business

McDaniel stated that he was present at the December 8, 2020 meeting in correction to Orr's earlier indication and asked that the record reflect this correction. Orr responded that he would do so.

Fuller asked about the possibility of meeting in person at City Hall. Cassidy stated that there is nothing necessarily precluding the WRA from meeting in person again with proper social distancing

and capacity limits. She added that is aware that the City Council has held at least some in-person meetings since the onset of the pandemic, although they have since gone remote meetings again for the time being. She added that she would not necessarily feel comfortable holding in-person meetings at City Hall at this time on a personal level and would have to give it some thought.

Queenin stated that he would not advocate to hold in-person meetings of the WRA quite yet given the active status of the pandemic. He believes that the widespread practice is still to hold most meetings remotely in the public and private sectors, and he would like to keep that in practice until there is more time for COVID-19 to be brought under control.

Queenin stated that the next WRA meeting will be held on February 23, 2021.

8. Adjournment

Seeing no further business, Queenin called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn the January 26, 2021 WRA meeting at 5:18 p.m., made by McDaniel;
Seconded by Duffy;

Roll Call Vote on the motion to adjourn the January 26, 2021 WRA meeting at 5:18 p.m.:

McDaniel-Aye
Fuller-Aye
Duffy-Aye
Ryan-Absent
Queenin-Aye

Motion carried, 4-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Orr

Dan Orr
City Planner/Grant Writer