



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 – 7:00pm

Lorraine Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, City Council Chambers

Members Present Ald. Wynne, Ald. Wilson, Ald. Simmons, J. Sierant, A. Pigozzi,
H. Powell

Members Absent Ald. Rainey, M. Berns, Ald. Braithwaite

Staff Present P. Zalmezak, C. Plante

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Ald. Wilson Called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 28, 2018

Ald Simmons moved approval of the minutes

Ald Wynne Seconded

Approved 6-0

3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. Entrepreneurship Grants

C Plante introduced the four applicants for funding under the entrepreneurship program. The requests total about \$8,000 spread among the four businesses.

Eric McLoyd requests funding assistance for state licensing fees, software, and an ipad for Hubris Wealth, his financial planning and wealth advising business. He completed entrepreneurship training through the Rogers Park Business Alliance GROW business incubator program.

Ald. Wynne thanked Mr. McLoyd for the written materials and for working to improve financial planning and financial literacy for underserved communities.

Salina Roberson of Eye Boutique Klotset on Main Street was part of the first cohort to complete Sunshine Community Business Academy in Evanston and opened a brick and mortar store on Main Street. She's requesting assistance for new display mannequins and improved flooring.

Clarence Weaver introduced himself. He and his wife Wendy Weaver own C&W market and ice cream and are requesting funding for an additional freezer case and a slushie machine for their convenience store and ice cream parlor at the corner of Church Street and Dodge Ave.

Eric Dingle of Best 1 Built isn't here yet, but Ald. Simmons recommended approval anyway, spoke of his history in the community.

Ald. Simmons moved approval
H. Powell seconded
Approved 6-0

B. Small Business Workforce Funding – Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse

P. Zalmezak introduced the program, which was created several years ago to encourage businesses to train young people in workforce skills by providing reimbursements of up to \$3,000 for each person employed through the program. This request is for \$15,000 total, or 5 people. Similar to what was done several years ago with funding for Curts Café at that time we were encouraged to standardize and formalize the program for the future. Rebuilding Warehouse trains young people in deconstructing buildings to reduce landfill and reuse building supplies.

ERW said that they've been operating a training program for some time; participants are certified in deconstruction and gain OSHA certification during the program, and the organization helps place them in union apprenticeships and jobs in construction trades. The current cohort includes two women and several people of color. The added funding will help to expand the program.

Ald. Wynne asked what prevailing wage is like for people who complete the program.

ERW is working on a more formalized arrangement with the carpenters union. They start at \$10/hr and can go up to \$40 with benefits.

Ald. Wynne thanked ERW for also including OSHA training and an emphasis on workplace safety for trainees.

J. Sierant asked how many people have completed the program.

ERW has had some attrition, but about 5 have completed the program and some have been placed. Not everybody sticks with it after being placed, but even in those cases it's useful to get them in the habit of getting into a routine and developing employment skills. Even those who haven't stayed in construction trades have gone on to gainful employment elsewhere or in a related field.

Ald. Wilson thanked ERW for all that they've been doing for the community and spoke in favor of the proposal.

Ald. Simmons also spoke in favor.

A. Pigozzi thanked ERW and said he wasn't previously aware that the program existed but is glad that it does.

P. Zalmezak added that after the staff report was submitted she asked if it would be possible to get reimbursed earlier. In the past the requirements has been that each person be placed in a job for 90 days, but would like to do it earlier. Also Kevin Brown from workforce development will also be reviewing applications and referring people.

They currently have trainees from Curts Café and youth job center. Requesting money earlier in order to bring on staff. The organization's total budget is only \$900k a year, so being able to access funding would make it easier to serve more people.

H. Powell asked if that would be allowed.

P. Zalmezak said that it would ultimately be up to City Council.

Ald. Wilson asked that the council memo be updated to reflect the change.

P. Zalmezak reached out to Squeezebox, hasn't heard back, asked if people wanted to take action on the proposal.

- c. Storefront Modernization Grants
 - a. Squeezebox Books & Music at 743 Main St.
 - b. Stepping Out On Faith at 1632 Orrington Ave.

Ald Wynne spoke in favor of approval on Squeezebox with the condition that they be present at the Council.

**Ald. Wilson moved approval.
Approved 6-0**

Ald. Wilson asked if there was interest in doing the same with Stepping Out on Faith.
**Ald Wynne moved approval.
Approved 6-0.**

Ald. Simmons asked about the status of a request she had made for a report from staff on the West Evanston Plan.

P. Zalmezak replied that J. Leonard will be presenting this report after she returns from maternity leave in May.

5. ADJOURNMENT

**Ald. Wilson moved to adjourn.
H. Powell Seconded.**

Adjourned at 7:36pm