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5 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

6 Wednesday, July 24, 2019 to 7:30 p.m.

7 Lorraine Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room G300

8
9 **Members Present:** H. Powell, J. Sierant, L. Dziekan, M. Wynne, P. Braithwaite, A. Rainey
10 (arrived at 7:47 p.m.), R. Rue Simmons

11 **Members Absent:** A. Pigozzi, D. Wilson

12 **Staff Present:** P. Martínez, P. Zalmezak

13
14 **1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

15 Meeting called to order at 7:41 p.m.

16
17 **2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF April 24, 2019**

18 Mr. Hecky moved to approved

19 Ald. Wynne seconded

20 Approved 7-0

21
22 **3. Public Comment**

23
24 Mr. David Tognarelli introduced himself as an employee of First Northern Credit Union
25 (FNCU). He explained FNCU offers financial education, and works with various community
26 organizations. Mr. Tognarelli mentioned FNCU is interested in partnering with the City of
27 Evanston to offer complementary financial education sessions for the community.

28
29 **4. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

30 **A. Great Merchant Grants**

31 **a. Howard Street Business Association**

32 Ms. Martínez explained the Howard Street Business Association (HSBA) was planning its
33 first open house, and requested \$250 through the Great Merchant Grant for social
34 advertising.

35
36 Ald. Simmons moved to recommend

37 Ald. Rainey seconded

38 Passed 7-0

39
40 **B. Entrepreneurship Support Program Grants**

41 **a. Charrisse Roberson – Gettwisted Designs**

42 Ms. Charrisse Roberson introduced herself and explained her business model. Ms.
43 Roberson explained she is a designer, and mainly focuses on custom wedding dresses,
44 alterations, and bow ties. She is requesting \$2,160 through the entrepreneurship support
45 program to upgrade her equipment and be able to double her production.

46
47 Ald. Braithwaite moved to recommend

48 Ald. Rainey seconded
49 Passed 6-0-1 Ald. Simmons recused

50
51 b. Rachel Holmes – Confidence Now Consulting
52 Ms. Rachel Holmes introduced herself and explained her business modeled. Ms. Holmes
53 explained she is a confidence consultant, but that she has a full-time job in the healthcare
54 industry, which she hopes to transition out of as she grows her consulting work. Ms.
55 Holmes indicated she currently works with a handful of clients one-on-one, but that she
56 also does corporate trainings.

57
58 Ms. Holmes explained through the Entrepreneurship program she is asking for \$1,000 to
59 register her LLC and buy a laptop and a microphone, to help her continue making videos
60 for promotional purposes. She currently has a laptop on a loan.

61
62 Mr. Powell moved to recommend
63 Ald. Wynne seconded
64 Passed 6-0-1 Ald. Simmons recused

65
66 C. Equity in the Arts Hiring Program
67 a. Mudlark Theater

68
69 Mr. Paul Zalmezak introduced himself, Maureen Powers, and Daisy Copeland from
70 Mudlark Theater. Daisy Copleand was hired by Mudlark Theater with partial funding from
71 the Equity in the Arts Hiring Program from the City of Evanston, which is a program aimed
72 to help arts organizations diversify their staff.

73
74 Maureen Powers, Executive Director of Mudlark started in January 2019. Ms. Copeland is
75 the Development Director. Ms. Powers explained Ms. Copeland’s job is to cultivate donors
76 for Mudlark; one of her projects was to launch its first major gift program. Ms. Copeland has
77 also helped achieve equity goals, as the organization is in the process of analyzing its
78 programs and processes to find biases and fix them. The Mudlark staff is also concentrated
79 in building relationships with organizations and audiences they have not interacted with
80 before, especially organizations and audiences of color. While Ms. Copeland’s job is not
81 operationalizing equity, her relationship building skills have helped the Mudlark go in that
82 direction.

83
84 Ms. Copeland explained she learned about the job through her neighbors and other
85 professional relationships she has in her equity network. She mentioned she has had good
86 training while on the job, and it has opened doors to organizations she had not interacted
87 with before, i.e. Women in Development, Evanston Community Foundation, etc. Ms.
88 Copeland also explained Mudlark Theater will create an equity committee to work on a
89 racial equity tool.

90
91 Ms. Powers said the organization is working on making sure the role is sustainable beyond
92 the 2-year grant.

93

94 Ald. Rue Simmons said the Economic Development Committee is not the right committee
95 to have this request going forward. Ald. Rainey rebutted that the theory is that the arts will
96 create further economic development.

97
98 Ms. Dziekan asked Mudlark staff if they are capturing metrics about their equity impact. Ms.
99 Powers said they do not require participants to report their race, but from the data they do
100 receive Mudlark can demonstrate the impact. Ms. Dziekan also asked if their partnerships
101 help reach a broader pool of young actors. Ms. Powers said “yes.”

102
103 Ald. Braithwaite asked how close Mudlark is to its fundraising goals. Ms. Copeland replied
104 said they are expecting the majority of their funding to come in the second half of 2019.

105
106 Ms. Sierant commended Mudlark on their work.

107
108 Mr. Zalmezak asked for clarification on the future of the program. Ald. Simmons said she
109 would like to see support to the arts, but not from the economic development fund.

110
111 Mr. Powell moved to recommend
112 Ald. Wynne seconded
113 Passed 7-0

114
115 D. Financial Wellness Initiative

116
117 No need to vote.

118
119 Mr. Zalmezak provided a recap of the initial referral of this initiative; he mentioned Ald. Rue
120 Simmons made the referral. Mr. Zalmezak explained that while researching options to
121 create an initiative, he came across established financial wellness programs. He said staff
122 believes that issuing an RFP to partner with established programs to provide the services
123 would be the best course of action.

124
125 Ms. Sienrant asked why not reach out to the YWCA, since they have an established
126 financial wellness program. Mr. Zalmezak said the RFP would be open to anyone, but that
127 he doesn’t know if the YWCA has the capacity to provide completely free services. Ms.
128 Sierant also asked what the parameters will be to judge the proposals. Mr. Zalmezak said
129 purchasing guidelines will be followed to score each proposal.

130
131 Ald. Rue Simmons said she liked the idea, but asked FNCU if insurance would be part of
132 the curriculum in their proposal. Mr. Tognarelli said FNCU already partners with Balance,
133 but they also bring in local partners if they do not have all the content required.

134
135 Ald. Rue Simmons asked staff to make sure you cover the financial needs of everyone in
136 the household when drafting the RFP/Q, especially for youth.

137
138 Mr. Zalmezak asked for clarification on what “youth” meant in this context. Ald. Rue
139 Simmons said “children.”

140

141 Staff was directed to move forward with issuing the RFP.

142

143 E. Business License Process Change

144 Mr. Zalmezak said the City of Evanston is shifting from a business license to a business
145 registration process. This is to ensure we provide better economic development services to
146 them, help with code enforcement, and fire and safety services. Mr. Zalmezak added that in
147 2008 the City Council approved a business license for home-based businesses, but that it
148 was never codified.

149

150 Ms. Dziekan asked what the value for home based businesses is. Mr. Zalmezak said that is
151 he wants to see a nexus between the fee and the services, but that staff needs to first hear
152 from home-based businesses about the services/technical assistance they need.

153

154 Ms. Dziekan also asked what the impetus for this change was. Mr. Zalmezak replied “to
155 better capture our businesses and provide better services to the small and home-based
156 businesses.”

157

158 Ald. Braithwaite added that City Council also wants to make sure that City contracts under
159 \$20,000 go to go small and home-based businesses in Evanston, because right now 90%
160 is spent outside of Evanston.

161

162 Ald. Rainey said it is important to know who is here to make sure we inform people of our
163 programs, i.e. entrepreneurship training program.

164

165 Mr. Zalmezak added that we want to collect Minority, Women, and Evanston-based
166 Enterprise (MWEBE) data to make sure these businesses connected to the right
167 procurement opportunities.

168

169

170 **5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

171 None

172

173 **6. COMMUNICATIONS**

174 A. Monthly Economic Development Communication

175

176 B. Announcements/Updates from EDC Members

177 Ald. Rue Simmons announced that the City Council approved a new restaurant user for the
178 Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center. The group owns six restaurants in Chicago. They employ
179 the neighbors and feed the hungry. They are hoping to be open in time for the 2019-2020
180 school year.

181

182 Ald. Wynne said the Parking/Transportation Committee approved an additional 2-hour
183 parking across the street from the Gibbs-Morrison Cultural Center.

184

185 **7. ADJOURNMENT**

186 Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.