

Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Community Development Committee

July 20, 2020

Members: Meika Penta, Chair
Russ Balthis
Jeff Iula

Ms. Penta called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the July 6, 2020 Community Development Committee were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Ord. A-47

Discussion:

Temp. Ord. A-47

An ordinance appropriating Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 funds, in the amount of \$394,954.00, for the Community Development Block Grant fund, and declaring an emergency.

Ms. Peggy Szalay, CDBG Entitlement Administrator, presented Temporary Ordinance A-47 to Council. The City of Cuyahoga Falls has been awarded Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 funds to facilitate programs that will help ease the economic burden of low-to-moderate income individuals within the City. It is necessary to appropriate the funds in the amount of \$394,954.00 in the Community Development Block Grant Fund in order for the Department of Community Development to fund projects and meet timeliness with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Director of Finance will be authorized to increase appropriations in the Community Development Block Grant Fund, line item Other Operations by \$315,964.00 and to increase appropriations and make payment from same in the Community Development Block Grant Fund, line item Salary by \$78,990.00.

Mr. Gorbach asked if they do not spend the money as they are requesting now, are they able to shift that, or do they have to come back to Council. He also asked if there is a timeline to spend this money, or will they have to give that money back. Ms. Szalay stated that she would need to delve into that a little more before she could answer that. In regular CDBG funding, if they do not spend it, they lose it. They do need to spend it. It can only go for Coronavirus aid or prevention. Most of the needs in the city are businesses that had to close their doors. They are hoping that this will allow them to help 20 more local businesses stay in business.

Mr. James asked if these businesses must apply for the funds, or do they go to these small businesses and suggest to them that this is available. Ms. Szalay stated that the businesses do need to apply for them, but they do put out the word and let the businesses in the area know that this is available.

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Mr. Stams asked why they limited the first round of money to businesses on Graham Road, State Road and Front Street. Ms. Szalay stated that were a couple of reasons for that. The first time around, they did not know exactly how was going to be received in funding until April 4. The funds they originally put out were their funds for economic development. At that point, they were willing to use funding that they normally use to give grants and loans to businesses to help save businesses. They do a lot of work on Front Street, State Road and Graham Road, so it seemed like a good area to start. As they went along, they heard from other areas that also needed help. They knew that there would be a second round, and they are excited to focus more other areas. They would like to beef up State Road, as well. Mr. Stams asked if Council will receive a breakdown or the administrative cost of \$78,000. Ms. Szalay stated that they could give Council that breakdown. There were a lot of hours expended in writing up the contracts. She stated that if Council would like to see that broken down, she would be happy to provide that. Mr. Stams stated that everyone is grateful for her work.

Mrs. Penta stated that it is wonderful that they have helped these businesses and will hopefully help 20 more with the funding. She appreciates all the work that has been done.

Mr. Iula moved to bring out Temp. Ordinance A-47 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Balthis. Motion passed (3-0).

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.