

**Community Development Authority of the City of Whitewater, Wisconsin
Municipal Building - Community Room (1st Floor), 312 W. Whitewater St.,
Whitewater, Wisconsin
January 23, 2020**

**ABSTRACT/SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE OFFICIAL
ACTIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF WHITEWATER, WISCONSIN**

Chairman Stanek called the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Community Development Authority to order at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Stanek, Allen, Parker, Meyer, Gleason, Singer. ABSENT: Bucholtz. STAFF: Cameron Clapper (City Manager); Steve Hatton (Finance Director), Judy Atkinson (HR Director), Wallace K. McDonell (City Attorney); Bonnie Miller (CDA Administrative Assistant).

Chairman Stanek introduced and welcomed new Board Member Jason Gleason who is filling the unexpired term of Denise Ehren.

Approval of Request to Amend Agenda. It was moved by Singer and seconded by Meyer to authorize amendment of the Agenda without 72 hour notice (as required by City of Whitewater Transparency Ordinance) by adding Item 7.V.i. - Discussion of Status of Pending Application for Capital Catalyst Funds from WEDC and CDA Matching Funds. AYES: Stanek, Allen, Parker, Meyer, Gleason, Singer. NOES: None; ABSENT: Bucholtz.

Hearing of Citizen Comments. None.

Approval of Agenda. It was moved by Singer and seconded by Parker to approved the Agenda. AYES: Stanek, Allen, Parker, Meyer, Gleason, Singer. NOES: None. ABSENT: Bucholtz.

Approval of Minutes. It was moved by Allen and seconded by Meyer to approve the Minutes of the 12-19-2019 CDA Board Meeting. AYES: Stanek, Allen, Parker, Meyer, Gleason, Singer; NOES: None. ABSENT: Bucholtz.

Acceptance of Financial Statements. Financial Statements for period ending 12-31-2019 not yet available.

Old Business.

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding City Ordinance Updates Related to Economic Development. Clapper provided a brief update and overview of efforts to update City Ordinances with respect to Economic Development and introduced presenters Greg Johnson of Ehlers & Associates (financial advisors) and Rebecca Speckhard, Esq. of Quarles & Brady (Bond Counsel/via phone conference). Attorney Speckhard summarized the statutory authorities granted to a Community Development Authority (CDA) and available legal options to finance redevelopment projects and/or housing projects, including any financial and practical constraints limiting the ability of a CDA to use those options. A CDA is a separate legal entity that can be created by a City to carry out development activities to include, amongst other development activities, to effectuate urban renewal and blight elimination projects and housing projects. Pursuant to applicable Wisconsin Statutes, a CDA combines the powers of a redevelopment authority and a housing authority into one entity. So long as the structure of a CDA is statutorily

correct, City staff can act to provide support services to the CDA (See attached “Community Development Authority Financing Tools”). Greg Johnson of Ehlers & Associates then presented information with respect to practical and implementation strategies of the two forms of debt commonly issued by a city or municipality. General obligation debt is secured by an irrevocable tax levy that the City pledges to repay any general obligation debt and is the most secure and least expensive type of financing. The Wisconsin Constitution limits the amount of outstanding debt that can be issued by a city or municipality on a general obligation basis. Any bonds issued by a CDA are considered revenue debt and are not considered in the calculation of a city’s total amount of outstanding debt. The advantages and disadvantages of both types of debt were then outlined (see attached “CDA Financing Options”).

Recruitment of Economic Development Professional for the City. Clapper updated the Board with respect to the City’s efforts to recruit an Economic Development Professional. Clapper has consulted with other economic development entities in both Walworth and Jefferson Counties for feedback with respect to how neighboring communities structure their economic development activities on behalf of their respective community. Various skill sets required of an Economic Development Professional can be summarized under the following categories: (1) Ability to apply for and manage grant and loan programs; (2) ability to serve as point of contact for the City’s business community; (3) ability to manage administrative tasks of the CDA; and (4) knowledge of incentives and programs available to assist in development activities in the City. Clapper restated his desire for the Economic Development Professional be a manager within the city, not at a department level, reporting directly to the City Manager and act as Director of the CDA, with the option to contract with outside consultants to provide professional services that cannot be provided by City staff. Allen expressed his concern that previous attempts to operate under the direction of the City Manager have failed to produce positive results and is opposed to restructuring and redefining that position as recommended by Clapper. Allen felt that it was important for the City to maintain a separation between the City and the CDA to ensure a level of confidentiality acceptable to developers interested in pursuing projects in the City. Allen supports filling the existing Executive Director position with a qualified individual that is hired with the approval of, and is under the direction of, the CDA Board of Directors. Meyer expressed a desire to look at the City’s unique needs and fill the position accordingly. Singer expressed his feeling that what the CDA has been doing historically is not producing the desired results either and supports creating a more sustainable structure that promotes teamwork between the CDA and City staff. Allen suggested placing this item on the Agenda for the next CDA meeting for further discussion. HR Director Atkinson expressed a need to clearly define what qualifications will fit the City’s unique set of circumstances. Allen and Singer expressed the need to codify a structure wherein the CDA Board functions as an advisory board to the CDA Director and the CDA Director reports directly to the City Manager. Allen and Singer supported posting of the position as soon as possible. The CDA Board will have an opportunity in the recruitment process to meet a candidate under consideration for purposes of giving feedback to the City Manager.

It was moved by Allen and seconded by Singer to continue to advertise the Economic Development Director position at a salary range of \$60,000-\$79,000 depending upon qualifications and experience. AYES: Stanek, Allen, Parker, Meyer, Gleason, Singer; NOES: None; ABSENT: Bucholtz.

Discussion Regarding Annual Housing Reports. Stanek summarized the City’s demographic statistics from the report in terms of percentage of owner-occupied housing, rental housing, and

residential vacancy rates, etc. and encouraged the Board to study the report in preparation of future discussions regarding housing affordability. Meyer requested that City staff prepare maps showing available lots in the City, with an overlay of the TIF Districts, Economic Opportunity Zones and zoning districts to be utilized as a development tool when meeting with potential developers. Allen suggested that the City consider purchasing a track of land for development of affordable housing in the City, using available incentives available to municipalities to attract an actual developer.

Clapper provided an update regarding ongoing development activities, including meetings with local financial institutions, real estate brokers and local realtors and business retention visits. City staff has been assembling additional information regarding utilizing development incentives such as Economic Opportunity Zones and New Market Tax Credits. Clapper presented examples from neighboring municipalities as to what efforts other cities are undertaking to attract business development. Steven Chmielewski, UW-Extension Community Development Extension Educator, has been working locally meeting with businesses to offer support through a program aimed at business retention.

New Business.

Pending Application for Capital Catalyst Funds from WEDC. Clapper reported that our application for another round of funding under the Capital Catalyst Program is still in the underwriting process and will continue to monitor that process. With a recommendation from Mark Johnson at the Innovation Center, the CDA was made aware of a start-up business located in the Innovation Center that received an initial grant from the CDA in 2019 is interested in pursuing an application for a loan for funds to expand their business operations here in Whitewater. The Board encouraged Clapper to begin the due diligence required to consider the loan so that upon receipt of the funding from WEDC, the CDA will be in a position to consider action on the loan request.

Future Agenda Referrals. TIF Districts, CDA Goals, Analysis of Capital Catalyst Program Portfolio; Status of Progress of Grocery Cooperative Group.

Moved by Allen and seconded by Meyer to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Minutes approved at CDA Board Meeting on February 27, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Miller, Recorder