

March 15, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Welcome! Join by Zoom or Call-information below

In attendance: Kent Newhart, Vito Gallo, Diane Davidson, Stephanie, Benn Smith, Jeff Warren, Rhonda Bastian, Cheryl Huckabee-Washington, Cara Butz, Mayor Michael Harakal @ 6:40 pm

- 1. Approval of Minutes-January 18, 2021 {Diane}-Attachment** Motion to approve the minutes – Rhonda, 2nd Cheryl; Approved: Kent, Diane, Rhonda, Benn, Stephanie (abstain), Cara, Vito, Cheryl; Jennifer Alderfer, Assistant Solicitor

- 2. Financials (Benn)** ·

- Current docs – Financials are attached. Page 4 of the pdf – Legal fee reimbursement \$4093.01 and management fee income \$4914.53. Payoff of the MP Square and the Sato Salon loans. They have been paid in full. Accounts receivables will drop off on page 2, will be zeroed out. The account for the salon will be zeroed out soon too. Just the Blue August loan has a remaining balance. AP aging around \$11,000. Allows us to get the cashflow so we can submit for reimbursement from the Township, allowing for additional bills to be paid. Kent – submitted the request for \$14,000 of the \$19,000 from the Township budget. We didn't have to borrow against the line of credit. Has \$31,000 available in the line of credit.

Benn made a motion to accept the financials pending Audit; Cheryl 2nd. Approved: Vito, Kent, Stephanie (abstain), Benn, Cheryl, Rhonda, Cara, Diane

- BB&T accounts status- (Benn)

- 3. President's Update (Kent)**

- Whitehall Mall activity – is going to be moving forward with a different set of plans. Vito and Kent had a good conversation Jordan Lee gave a referral contact to the person responsible for the re investment trust. What are the challenges and how can we help? They have an ROI goal that it is not currently meeting. The 2 story area does not fit into their plans. Plans of demolition are not within their budgets. Subsequent to that phone call there was a news release about them considering filing Bankruptcy – most likely a reorganization as they make plans to redevelop. Some discussion about CRIZ, WTICDA can either refer to other professionals or see how we could help. There is a conceptional drawing that has been submitted to Lee Rakus for review. Kent will email Jordan to see if he can get a copy of the drawings.

Cheryl – is there anywhere in the Township that could accommodate a theatre etc? Since there is a lot of funding currently available since the entertainment industry was hit so hard

- 4. Mayor's Report (Mike)**

- Township economic development activity and other updates
- Dairy updates – has been asked not to share anything about that at this point.

There is some activity, not just good – exceptionally good!

5. Commissioner's Report - (Jeff)

- Recent Commissioner's Board Mtg. Actions – Township was considering changing a Township owned property at Columbia & 145 has been approved for change to zoned 2A – Light Commercial District. Maximum sq ft 20,000 ft. Does not allow for restaurant; nor warehousing. Permitted: agriculture, bank, barber, bed & breakfast, conservation, educational institution, funeral homes, indoor recreation (except adult activity), medical laboratories, retail stores, automotive repair shops and more. Garages, greenhouses,
- swimming pools; special exceptions – apartments, service establishments, grocery stores, hunting & fishing clubs. It was landlocked by other commercial districts and seemed logical to make the change in zoning.
- Any action on the hospital owned land near Whitehall Diner? Mayor Mike – it is moving forward; although cannot disclose details at this time.
- We need to move forward for different types of zoning integrations, as has been exasperated during pandemic that brick and mortar retail is likely going to continue to shrink. Concept is to bring patrons to the businesses.
- Sent out conceptual drawing

- WTICDA Extension of 50 year life (Jeff) – it is still in process. Solicitor could not find specific details. Seems to be a simple decision for it to be renewed. We cannot enter into any contracts with any potential deals, beyond the life of WTICDA organization. (Mike) anticipates it being approved.

Old Business/Project Updates

- Loan Pool Payoffs-MP Square Loan Satisfaction/Reconciliation and Legal Modification loans (Benn/Vito)
- State Historical District Grant for Hokendauqua Thomas Ironworks update by Christine Ussler, Artefact, Inc. – update from Christine Ussler, Architect and Preservation Consultant: Received correspondence from PA Historical National Registry – we have received determination of eligibility; next step is more research and writing to get listed on the National Registry. Not so much about the architect although about the history of the development of the area. The front facing gable is a vernacular style to possibly be named the Hokendauqua Vernacular. They are also interested in some homes that were not on the original list submitted. (Mike) happy to help in any way he can since he grew up in one of the homes on 3rd St. (Christine) loves the area, when looking at a map it is very clear how it was planned as a community. (Mike) one of the goals is for the Township to own the land along the river as it has a great amount of history. (Christine) sounds like that would be worthy of a State Marker. There are some other organization also interested in preserving the history in this region – including Catasauqua and Coplay, too. (Vito) can share the documentation with us. It details some of the facts, period of 1867 - 1924 the boundaries and special comments and guidance. (Christine) next step is listing

it on the National Register. The document that Vito has will explain those details needed.

- LSA Report submitted to PA DCED Feb 28, 2021-expenditures-2020 (Vito)
- Grant Reimbursement Request submitted to PADCED-Mar. 2021 (Vito) - Vito did the report, submitted it, accepted. There is some money left under the grant, about 1/3 of it. That will be used to complete the submission for being added to the National Registry.
- WTICDA State Audit Report due to PA DCED by July 30, 2021-(Vito)

New Business

- Facebook/LinkedIn Committee updates (Rhonda) – no updates
- LV Chamber upcoming events (Rhonda, Cara, Cheryl) – Chamber is working on the StrEat Fest in Catasauqua. Wondering if the Governors announcement today will allow for more outdoor larger groups. Restaurant week in Whitehall – April 11-17th.
- Reminder: State Ethic Forms Annual Statement of Financial Interests to Mayor's Office - Larissa Bruder by April 3, 2021.
- Diane recommended discussing Ayon Codner to the Board as he is a great commercial Realtor and would be a benefit to the Board.
- Stephanie asked about incubator (Vito) the current police station will be vacated when the new municipal building is completed. Ideally the Township would like to have the building donated for use as an incubator.
- Stephanie has been involved in learning more about incubators in the Lehigh Valley. She learned about “The Factory” in Bethlehem. (Kent) he was in the building and there have been a lot of walls added recently. It would be ideal to remove many of the walls to make it more conducive to an incubator. (Cheryl) there are several businesses moving out to NY and CA and looking for more flexible spaces. (Stephanie) The Factory has really established a great system. Recommend a few WTICDA members visit there to learn what they are doing, so we can present it to the Township as a proposed use.
- Add it to future meeting agendas to further discuss with the Mayor about what direction the Township wishes to move towards in the future. Would it be an incubator or shared workspace for light manufacturing, medical, healthcare research. Need contributors/partners to work on this concept.

Motion to Adjourn – Cheryl Huckabee-Washington, Rhonda 2nd – All in favor – none opposed!

- **Next Meeting:** May 17, 2021 at ATA Financial, 1044 Third St., Whitehall