

Mayor Charles L. "Skip" Lee called a virtual special meeting of the Sterling City Council to order at 2:30pm on Friday, June 19, 2020. Roll call. Present: Aldermen Retha Elston, Josh Johnson, Joe Martin, John Stauter, and Jim Wise. Absent: Christine Wilen.

Also attending were City Attorney Tim Zollinger, City Manager Scott Shumard, Finance Director Cindy Von Holten, Kris Noble with the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, Jana Groharing with Sterling Main Street and City Clerk Teri Sathoff.

Mayor Lee opened a public hearing at 2:31pm for the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

On or about June 22, the City of Sterling intends to apply to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for a Grant from the State CDBG program. This program is funded by Title 1 of the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended. These funds are to be used to provide working capital for the benefit of JJM Printing, Inc., Urban Outlet, Inc. and Paone's Blackhawk Lanes, Inc. The total amount of the CDBG funds to be requested is \$75,000 and will address the urgent needs of the business due to the COVID-19 emergency.

There were no comments from the council or audience. Mayor Lee Closed the public hearing at 2:32pm.

Alderman Elston made a motion to approve **Ordinance # 2020-06-21 Formally Codifying Fair Housing Practices in the City of Sterling**; seconded by Alderman Wise. City Manager Shumard advised the council that is a requirement for the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant. Because the grant is a CDBG grant it is a stipulation. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Alderman Elston a motion to approve **Resolution # R2020-06-17 Support of Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity**; Seconded by Alderman Johnson. City Manager Shumard stated that we had a committee consisting of representatives from Sauk Valley bank, Sterling Federal Bank, Alderman Stauter, Alderman Johnson and Kris Noble from the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. The committee reviewed the applications, in the end there were three candidates. Kris Noble added that she appreciated the commitment the City Council showed the small businesses by participating in the process. She was also thankful to the two banks, Sterling Federal Bank and Sauk Valley Bank for loaning their personnel to assist. Mayor Lee noted that our committee made sure that we had good businesses involved and we were not just turning in mass volumes of grant applications.

Alderman Stauter wanted to know if there have been any recipients of the grant money thus far. Kris Noble said that of the \$20 million that is available \$1.3 million has been awarded to businesses. She also stated that some municipalities turned in a lot of applications without following the guidelines. The money is there, the \$20 million is still committed to the grant.

Alderman Wise asked if we only received three applications. Kris stated that there were approximately ten businesses that were interested, some were nervous about having their financial information out there, some had received other assistance so they did not feel the need to pursue this grant, others were outside the city limits and were directed to go to Whiteside County. When the grant decisions are made, and if they are not awarded the money they can appeal and resubmit.

Alderman Elston questioned one of the businesses closing a store in another community, and would this be a concern in Sterling. That business closed their store due to leasing issues prior to COVID-19. This business is a Sterling based, family owned business and that is very unlikely to happen here. Voting: Ayes – Aldermen Elston, Johnson, Martin, Stauter, and Wise. Nays – None. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45pm.

Teri Sathoff
Deputy City Clerk