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City of Mt. Vernon, Illinois
Public Hearings – Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant Program
Monday, May 4, 2020
6:30 p.m.

The Mt. Vernon City Council met for Public Hearings to hear comments regarding six applications for the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant Program on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chamber at City Hall, 1100 Main Street, Mt. Vernon, Illinois via teleconference due to the COVID-19 quarantine.

Mayor John Lewis called the meeting to order.

Present: Council Member Ray Botch, Council Member Joe Gliosci, Council Member Donte Moore, Council Member Mike Young, Mayor John Lewis.

Others present in-person: City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel, Assistant City Manager Nathan McKenna, City Clerk Mary Jo Pemberton, Travis Morse-Mt. Vernon Sentinel, Dan Horner-Waffle Company, Jeffrey McGuire-Rare Chop House.

Others present via-teleconference: Tourism Director Angela Schrum, Jay Woodrome-Off Broadway Dry Cleaners, Mario Hodge-Parkway Shoe Repair Service, Michele Ashby-Green Hills Golf Club, Wendi Caserotti-Geo's Lounge.

PUBLIC HEARING

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel stated that the Public Hearings are being held for the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant Program. This program was established by the State of Illinois to benefit non-essential businesses that have been negatively impacted because of COVID-19 and the Governor's orders to stay closed, are losing business, and have employees that have been laid off. The State of Illinois set aside \$20 million for downstate businesses. Municipalities apply for the grants, hold public hearings, approve support Resolutions for the businesses, and submit the applications to the State of Illinois. The grant funds cannot be used for expansions, for capital improvements, or for capital purchases. The funds are strictly for the businesses to start up again for wages, working fund capital, mortgage, rent, and utilities for sixty-days. The grant funds are not required to be paid back by the businesses.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel asked if the City Council or public had any discussion or comment about Community Development or housing needs in the City of Mt. Vernon. No comments were heard.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel explained that the City is applying for the grant in the name of the City of Mt. Vernon to the State of Illinois for their approval. She stressed that this hearing and the application for the grant does not guarantee that the businesses the amount of funds requested or that they will be approved. The State of Illinois will review each application and make their determination based on the merit of the businesses' information in the application.

Council Member Ray Botch asked what the State's turnaround time is. City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel replied that the turnaround time is very soon. The State realizes that the businesses need the funds quickly.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel reported that this is the first round of applications to be submitted to the State. The applications are to be submitted by May 8, 2020. The City is accepting applications for a second round and will continue until the funds are depleted.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel thanked Executive Director of the Jefferson County Development Corporation Tony Iriti and Tourism Director Angela Schrum for working with the businesses and compiling the grant applications.

City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel identified each business and how the funds will be used. She asked for comments after presenting each business application. No comments were heard.

Business Name	Total Grant Amount Requested	Number of Employees	Wages	Sixty Days of Operation Uses				
				Rent or Mortgage	Utilities	Communication	Inventory	Contractual Services
Geo's Lounge, Inc.	\$25,000	7	\$12,110	\$2,052	\$2,960	---	\$7,878	---
Green Hills Golf Club, Inc.	\$25,000	12	\$16,000	---	\$3,000	\$1,000	---	\$5,000
Off-Broadway Dry Cleaners	\$21,195	6	\$13,212	\$2,618	\$2,750	\$160	\$2,455	---
Parkway Shoe Repair Service	\$12,000	2	\$5,535	\$2,400	\$940	\$180	\$2,945	---
RARE Chop House	\$25,000	24	\$16,000	---	\$5,000	---	\$4,000	---

The Waffle Company	\$25,000	10	\$13,800	\$7,602.68	\$2,750	\$252	\$595.32	---
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City Manager Mary Ellen Bechtel stated that the applications need to be submitted by May 8, 2020. To apply, the businesses should contact Tony Iriti at the Jefferson County Development Corporation at (618) 244-3554.

Council Member Donte Moore clarified that the total funding for the Downstate Small Business Stabilization Grant Program is \$20 million for Southern Illinois non-essential businesses.

Mayor John Lewis asked if there were any questions or comments. No comments were heard from the audience or from the City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Joe Gliosci motioned to adjourn the Public Hearing. Seconded by Council Member Mike Young. Yeas: Botch, Gliosci, Moore, Young, and Lewis.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jo Pemberton
City Clerk