

Community and Economic Development Committee Meeting

Topics:

1. Changes to the BIAP Policy

2. Creation of an Emergency Assistance Provision in the BIAP

3. Blush Salon BIAP

Date: Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Committee members present: Chair Tadio, Alderwoman McClure, Alderwoman Davis

Others present: Mayor Doenges, President Talbott, Alderman Barbagallo, Ed Bove from RRA, Barbara Spaulding from RRA, Treasurer Markowski, Paige Carrara, Jamie Jenson, Jamie Watkins, Attorney LaChance, Gordon Dritschilo from the Rutland Herald

Meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

Barbara Spaulding from the Rutland Redevelopment Authority presented changes made to the Business Incentive Assistance Program (BIAP) policy including the addition of an Emergency Assistance Provision. The Emergency Assistance Provision permits eligible businesses to apply for emergency assistance due to a Federally Declared Disaster and/or State of Emergency declared by the Mayor that is not covered by other programs created because of the disaster.

President Talbott asked why relocation assistance provided to businesses as part of BIAP loans had been removed from the BIAP policy. The committee agreed that it was a reasonable part of a business's expenses and felt that it should be added back into the policy.

Alderwoman Davis made a **motion to approve the amendments to the BIAP policy including the addition of an Emergency Assistance Provision, and with the reinclusion of any references to relocation assistance.**

Motion passed 3-0.

Next, Barbara Spaulding presented the RRA's recommendations on Paige Carrara's BIAP grant. In 2020, Paige was awarded a \$10,000 forgivable BIAP loan for expanding her business Blush Salon by moving it from 60 Center Street to 15 Center Street. When COVID hit, she had to pivot her business and instead used the \$10,000 to keep her salon at 60 Center Street compliant with COVID safety measures. She managed to keep the business open but when she began renovations on 15 Center Street it became clear it would need far more work. The property on 15 Center Street is still not open which was a condition of the grant. The RRA recommended a request for repayment. Paige Carrara explained that former RRA Director Duffy stated during COVID to not worry and that they would forgive her loan if she used the money to pivot and

remain open during COVID. Barbara Spaulding was not involved in the BIAP loans at that time. Paige explained that she employs over 20 people in the community and that she was able to keep people employed during COVID. She asked for a little grace from the Board of Aldermen and asked for forgiveness of her loan even though the conditions had not been fully met.

Alderwoman Davis made a **motion to deny the application for loan forgiveness and recommended repayment of the \$10,000 BIAP loan.**

Motion passed 2-1.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.