

June 20, 2023

Seward Economic Development Program - LB 840 Application Review Board

June 20, 2023 - 5:30 p.m.

Seward Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 142 North 7th Street, Seward, Nebraska

The meeting was called to order at 5:55 p.m. to ensure a quorum, with the following members present: Patricia Johnson, Ann Underwood, Karl Miller, Megan Kahler, Kevin Sagehorn. Absent: Patricia Coldiron, Jeremy Tonniges, John Owens. Also in attendance were: Seward County Chamber & Development Partnership Director Jonathan Jank, City Administrator/Program Administrator Greg Butcher (recording minutes).

1. Election of Chair

This item was handled at the February 22, 2023 meeting and kept on the agenda by mistake. No action was taken.

2. MINUTES – February 22, 2023

Moved by Kahler, seconded by Sagehorn, that the minutes be approved.

Aye: Johnson, Sagehorn, Miller, Underwood, Kahler.

Nay: None.

Absent: Coldiron, Tonniges, Owens. Motion carried.

3. Financial Reports

City Administrator Butcher noted at the end of May the LB 840 fund had \$408,511, and the balance as of June 19, 2023 was \$413,476. Two projects have not been distributed yet, \$50,000 to Sparetime Lounge for their DTR project and \$75,000 to SCCDP for their housing grant match.

Moved by Johnson, seconded by Miller, that the financial report ending May 31, 2023, be approved.

Aye: Johnson, Sagehorn, Miller, Underwood, Kahler.

Nay: None.

Absent: Coldiron, Tonniges, Owens. Motion carried.

4. CDBG DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (DTR) GRANT APPLICATIONS – REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

City Administrator Greg Butcher introduced the project for the third phase of downtown revitalization grants. The City received applications on a first come, first serve basis. The applications were date and time stamped. Applications were sent to Kelly Gentrup (CDBG Administrator for this grant) at Southeast Nebraska Development District, for her review and comment. At the April 27, 2022 LB 840/DTR Committee Meeting, it was noted this project did not include photos nor two (2) bids for the project. Additionally, the Committee was concerned about potential SHPO concerns. The applicant was able to get another bid (Lincoln Glass, Inc on 5/20/22) and provided photos and documentation to SHPO for a final Tier II Environmental approval at completed by Kelly Gentrup at SENDD.

1. 625 Seward Street – Wang: A general review and discussion of the project took place. Moved by Johnson, Seconded by Sagehorn, that the application be recommended to the City Council for approval.

Aye: Johnson, Sagehorn, Miller, Underwood, Kahler.

Nay: None

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Absent: Coldiron, Tonniges, Owens. Motion carried.

5. Update on CDBG Downtown Revitalization Projects

City Administrator Butcher updated the Committee on current DTR projects. He noted that at least one more project 606 Seward would need final Committee approval. It was further discussed to have a motion by the Committee at the next regular meeting to allow for updated numbers for delays in approval by SHPO or other factors to allow for project owners to recoup up to 75% of their costs within the \$50,000. This was due to delays and the added costs of materials overtime for contractors. This will allow the City to expend most (if not all) grant funds in an efficient manner. Amendments to applicant agreements will only be necessary should the Committee approve at the next meeting.

6. Update on LB 840 2023 Election

City Administrator Butcher along with Jonathan Jank (SCCDP) briefed the Committee on the potential upcoming renewal of the LB 840 project. The program is scheduled to be reauthorized by the voters every ten (10) years. A discussion of the past election, ballot questions and process took place. It was noted that SCCDP will be handling the campaign elements of the vote while the City will only supply informational data about the program in the past. The Committee discussed the timeline for a potential special election, likely held in November 2023. Butcher noted that he had been working with County Clerk Schweitzer on the calendar and estimated costs. The Committee will need to decide two (2) questions in short order: (1) should we reauthorize the program; (2) if so, at what amount. Jonathan Jank (SCCDP) will also provide the Committee with research about the amounts other first class cities are utilizing in their programs.

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30p.m. in a motion by Underwood, seconded by Kahler.

Aye: Johnson, Sagehorn, Miller, Underwood, Kahler.

Nay: None

Absent: Coldiron, Tonniges, Owens. Motion carried.