### MICROSOFT "TEAMS"

#### TAX POLICY COMMITTEE

October 5, 2022

PRESENT Angie Parkinson, Chair, Councillor Travis Simpson

ABSENT Councillor Don Bell

ALSO Eileen Buckheit, Development Director

PRESENT Jay Margnelli, CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce

Richard Kehoe, Town Council Chair (arrived via phone (6:55 pm)

# **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Parkinson called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

## June 29, 2022

MOTION By Travis Simpson

seconded by Angie Parkinson

to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2022 meeting.

Motion carried 2/0.

# OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

No one came forward.

# **NEW BUSINESS**

#### Review of ARPA Small Business Assistance Applications

Chair Parkinson stated that this is the second meeting to review applications for the ARPA Small Business Assistance Program. In April the Town Council approved a resolution to assist eligible East Hartford businesses as they recover from the pandemic with the use of an allocation of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding provided to the Town. The Council is provided a quarterly report of the process, and through the Tax Policy Committee has the opportunity to provide oversight and ask questions of the team assigned to vet candidates.

<u>Eileen Buckheit</u>, Development Director and <u>Jay Margnelli</u>, CT Valley Chamber of Commerce have been leading the effort to review candidates and provided four candidates for the Committee to review.

<u>Barilla's Salon</u> (144 Main Street; Suite B) is looking to expand her business into the vacant space that is adjacent to her current Salon. The business is looking to bring more

infrastructure to the East Hartford area and to provide more job opportunities for young stylists coming into the industry as well as those who have been displaced due to other salons that have been forced to close. Barilla's is seeking support of \$125,000 which would be used against the lowest quote of \$213,660 with Barilla's covering the balance. The funds would be used to renovate and expand the business's space. Barilla's is a minority and woman owned business, both considered a priority categories of support for the program.

<u>Dave's Service Center</u> (330 Main Street) is seeking funding of \$125,000 to be used for the purchase of a new wrecker truck to continue towing services and the paving of the businesses driveway area. The business has been in East Hartford for over 50 years. Mr. Margnelli has recommended that the committee support funding to support the purchase of the wrecker truck, (roughly \$110,000) but considers the paving less essential.

<u>Cream Time</u> (188 Park Avenue) is seeking support of \$113,335 for reimbursement of kitchen equipment and refrigeration purchases and upgrading the building's siding and windows as well as the handicap accessible ramp (\$71,000); the paving of their parking lot and creation of patio space (\$32,000); and to hire 6 additional employees (\$10,000). The patio and paving needs will be separated from the remainder of the application as they will require Planning and Zoning approval. The recommendation is to support the equipment purchases and renovation projects only at this time.

Glenbrooke Outdoor Sports Center (429 Oak Street) is requesting \$124,993.50 for the installation of a new roof (\$51,587), connecting to the Town sewer system (\$53,200) and the funds to remove trees to prevent future damage to the proposed new roof (\$20,206.50). The sports center is a 501c7 non-profit.

Mr. Margnelli feels that funding the needs requested can provide a lifeline to sustaining the non-profit.

The committee then discussed the overall evaluation process. Currently over 100 applications have been submitted looking for various degrees of support. Mr. Margnelli stated that given the influx, the group has put a pause on taking in additional applications as of September 30<sup>th</sup>. The group agreed that going forward, priority will be given to applications that have greater community impact, projects that will improve the overall beautification of the town, and improvements that will directly increase tax revenue, thus providing a return on investment of public dollars. It was noted that the intent of the Town Council in appropriating the ARPA funds was to provide small businesses with the opportunity to establish or expand in East Hartford, thereby growing jobs and expanding the tax base.

Given the discussion regarding Glenbrooke's status as a non-profit, the committee proposed that the Glenbrooke application be tabled pending further review.

MOTION By Travis Simpson

seconded by Angie Parkinson

to **adjourn** (7:02 pm) Motion carried 2/0.

cc: Town Council Mayor Walsh