

Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2019, 5:00pm - 6:00pm

Chester City Hall, Council Chambers

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Attendance: Councilwoman Angela Douglas (Chair), Councilman Carlos Williams, Mrs. Stephanie Jackson (City Administrator). No members of the public asked to speak.

Quick Updates

- **Economic Development Master Plan Committee**
The City Administrator was not present during this portion of the meeting to give an update.
- **Opportunity Zones Prospectus**
The City Administrator was not present during this portion of the meeting to give an update.
- **Opportunity Zones Summit**
The Committee Chair gave her report of the potential investors interested in touring Chester for opportunity. Trying to schedule tours by the end of the year, where possible. The City Administrator was not present during this portion of the meeting to give her report of the Summit.
- **MASC – Hometown Economic Development Grant 2019**
The City did not receive the grant for 2019.
- **AmeriCorps VISTA program**
The Committee chair reached out to the current SC Program Specialist to find out about some upcoming changes. It was agreed to wait to pursue this endeavor until the federal changes are made, expected in late winter/early spring of 2020.

Policy Tools Discussions/Recommendations

- **Bailey Bill**
The committee has reached out to County Councilman Alex Oliphant to garner potential interest in a countywide “Historic Downtown” Bailey Bill. In the meantime, the committee will start outlining one for the City to be presented to Council in early 2020.
- **Downtown Economic Development Incentives**
The committee was reminded to brainstorm on incentive ideas for a comprehensive economic development incentive plan and bring back examples.

New Business

- **Business Licenses**
Due to illness, the business licenses outreach plan was postponed. Tasked to identify a more doable outreach approach for such a small committee. Also, requested the City Administrator to follow up with the code enforcement of business licenses.

Marketing & Promotion

- **Website, Social Media, TruVista, etc.**
The City Administrator said that the webmaster had attended a training and they were talking about some improvements. Additional website items, listed in the Economic Development Master Plan, were briefly mentioned. Due to the time constraint, the committee was asked to gather concerns and ideas for improvements.
- **Chester Live**
The Committee discussed Chester Live as a 12-month event calendar to capture how the City of Chester comes to life with fun and festivities. It will help the City and its event partners to “Tell Its Story” and market the events to increase participation and attendance. The goal is to bring people into downtown and increase capacity for economic development. This item will be the featured topic of next month’s meeting.
- **Grant Opportunities & Updates**
After a brief update of current open grants and applications, the committee agreed to continue listing opportunities to be presented to Council during budget and/or project discussions, especially potential need for a grant writer.

Committee Announcements

- **National Women’s Small Business Month - October 2019**
Due to conflicting schedules, The SBA Business event with the Chamber of Commerce and Mayor Pro Tem Douglas was postponed until Spring. Will update committee and council as soon as it is scheduled.
- **Meeting Calendar FY2020**
This item was briefly discussed, but not all dates were set. Next meeting will be decided upon the availability of City event partners and department heads.

The committee adjourned at 6:15pm.