

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 21, 2020

Meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m.

On a roll call vote, the following members answered present: Mr. Robert Foley, Mr. Albert Spadafora, and Mr. Michael Williams. Mr. Robert Rotondi was present at 5:53 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Spadafora, seconded by Mr. Williams, the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 18, 2020 were unanimously approved.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed correspondence from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development dated February 18, 2020 informing the City of Malden of allocations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program funding allocation is \$1,405,683 and the HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program funding allocation for the eight-city North Suburban Consortium managed by the MRA is \$2,050,947. These programs provide funding for housing, community and economic development activities, and assistance for low-and moderate-income persons.

The Executive Director and Board also reviewed correspondence from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development dated April 2, 2020 informing the City of Malden that they will be receiving a special allocation of CDBG funds in the amount of \$826,910 to be used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus (COVID-19). This allocation was authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) which was signed by President Trump on March 27, 2020 to respond to the growing effects of this historic public health crisis.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed correspondence from Quaker Lane Capital dated March 5, 2020 regarding a request for Parking Memorandum of Agreement for approximately 75 parking spaces in the downtown area managed by the MRA. Quaker Lane Capital is planning a commercial development at 11 Dartmouth St. The Board tabled this discussion as more information regarding capacity in the various garages is needed before a decision can be made.

The Executive Director updated the Board on the implementation of remote access enabling all employees to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis. Ms. Burke has worked with the Comptroller and department Directors executing new practices for daily work with her main concern being minimizing the risk to all employees from the virus.

The Executive Director informed the Board that due to the COVID-19 crisis it is expected that some borrowers may find it difficult to make timely loan payments. Realizing that from time to time, a borrower may experience personal or other situations beyond their control that will make it difficult to make their loan payments as called for in their promissory note a Loan Deferment/Extension Policy was drafted by members of the MRA's finance office and reviewed by the Board. This policy, which will also apply to situations post-COVID-19, was voted under New Business.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed the FY 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget that the Mayor presented to the Malden City Council at its meeting of March 14, 2020. The budget was voted and approved by the Council. The approved budget totaling \$1,901,517 addresses the most pressing challenges facing the City's low-and-moderate income population, including responding to the immediate consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and investing meaningfully in the long-term needs of the community.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed correspondence from Mayor Gary Christenson to the Malden City Council regarding a rental assistance and small business assistance program. In partnership with the Malden Redevelopment Authority, two proposals that will respond to the most urgent needs using approximately \$800,000 in CDBG stimulus funds and local sources were presented to and passed by the Malden City Council on March 14, 2020. One proposal would create a Malden Emergency Rental Assistance Fund to provide short-term assistance to low-income Malden households that would otherwise be unable to pay rent. The other proposal would create a Small Business Assistance Grants Program to help with rent, utilities, payroll, and other operating expenses. Businesses must have a brick-and-mortar location in Malden and be able to demonstrate significant losses since the onset of the crisis. The Executive Director and staff are working diligently writing policies and procedures and creating applications for these programs.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed a memorandum and spreadsheet from SP Plus Senior Facility Manager Stephen McGovern encapsulating transient and monthly parkers statistics from March 1 through April 3, 2020. The information explains the decrease in parking revenue due to the corona virus. The Central Business District (CBD) Garage and Jackson Street Parking Garage have been closed to short-term/transient parkers. The labor costs associated with keeping those facilities open to transients could not be justified. Since mid-March, the loss in parking revenue has resulted in eight layoffs in the program.

The Executive Director and Board discussed many issues that the Parking Program faced due to the COVID-19 virus. The Executive Director reviewed correspondence from SP+ Senior Facility Manager McGovern regarding the creation of a Malden Monthly Parker Cancellation Exception Policy. The Executive Director authorized this policy to accommodate those parkers that are being seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following changes were approved: the 30-day cancellation policy is waived; monthly parkers will be allowed to place their parking on hold during this crisis; and their allotted parking space will be held for up to 10 days after the Governor lifts the State of Emergency.

The Executive Director provided the Board with a notice SP+ posted informing customers that they are committed to doing their part to help protect against the COVID-19 virus. Links to informational sites were also supplied.

The Parking Program Update from operator SP Plus dated March 2020 was distributed to the Board members. The Executive Director informed the Board if they have any questions regarding the report they should contact her and she will obtain additional information.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed a recommendation from Landscape and Design Consultant Shadley Associates, P.C. to accept the bid from Sciaba Construction Corporation, 1801 Main Street, Walpole in the amount of \$182,200 for the Beebe School Accessible Playground Project. The project includes construction of a new accessible playground consisting of a new play structure, poured-in-place rubber safety surfacing, concrete curbing, drainage strip, and lawn repair. The project will be funded using CDBG funds. This was voted under New Business.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed a contract with Metro Housing Boston, 1411 Tremont St., Boston to perform inspections and re-inspections for approximately 70 HOME-assisted rental units. These inspections are required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This was voted under New Business.

Under Old Business the Executive Director and Board reviewed a memorandum from CD Director Alex Pratt updating them on current park projects being funding using CDBG funds. Due to the COVID-19 crisis parks have been closed which is impacting construction work being performed at the Ferryway School Tot Lot, Beebe School Tot Lot and Trafton Park Project which is currently in the design phase. All initial timelines for these projects will be affected and an update will be provided when the parks reopen and contractors are able to return to construction at these parks.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed correspondence from Senior Planner & Policy Manager Evan Spetrini summarizing the Request for Quotes (RFQ) for an Inclusionary Zoning Financial Feasibility Study. Four firms submitted quotes and the Selection Committee has recommended that the City enter into a contract with Levine Planning Strategies of Portland, ME, the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. The Malden Redevelopment Authority, Malden Housing Authority, and East Boston Savings Bank are partially funding this feasibility study.

The Executive Director and Board reviewed correspondence from Rehab Specialists Kevin Nestor and Wayne Martineau summarizing the quarterly conference call on the MRA-administered Lead Paint Abatement Grant with HUD Government Technical Representative (GTR) Sacsheen Scott. Ms. Scott advised that it is recommended that grantees follow CDC guidance and follow state and local mandates regarding COVID-19 and stay at home orders; the Program Manager's School scheduled for June 2020 has been cancelled; and other operational items were discussed. The MRA will not be able to meet its benchmarks under this grant program since lead paint abatement work has been curtailed in an effort to minimize risk of COVID-19 for local homeowners and contractors.

The meeting moved on to New Business in which the following resolutions were passed:

1. Authorized Executive Director to execute a contract with Sciaba Construction Corporation.
2. Authorized Executive Director to execute a contract with Metro Housing Boston.

3. Approved Loan Deferment/Extension Policy as presented at April 21, 2010 meeting.
4. Authorized Executive Director to enter into a contract(s) with properly procured housing service provider(s) to perform intake services for Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2020.