



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION/TIF ADVISORY

## SPECIAL MEETING

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*February 24, 2025 – 5 PM – Ludlow Room, Windsor Town Hall and via Zoom*

**PRESENT IN PERSON:** *Randy Graff, Nathan Karnes, Sharran Selig-Bennett, Tim Rice, Al Loomer, and Bill Davis (TIF Advisory Committee)*

**PRESENT ONLINE:** *Jermika Cost*

**ABSENT:** *Trevor Thorington*

**STAFF PRESENT:** *Patrick McMahon*

**GUESTS:** *Debbie Delucia, FTDT, Andrew Surprise, Windsor Chamber of Commerce*

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Graff called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

### **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment.

### **3. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a. Windsor Center Tax Increment Financing Budget**

McMahon provided a recap that the EDC/TIF Advisory Committee was charged in the Windsor Center Tax Increment Financing District Master Plan to review the annual TIF budget for recommendation to the Town Manager and Town Council. For FY25, the TIF budget included \$20,000 for First Town Downtown and the remainder was devoted to the General Fund to ameliorate effects from the two-year property revaluation phase-in. McMahon reviewed a draft budget for FY26 that was distributed ahead of the meeting. McMahon prefaced that the draft numbers were subject to change based on the mil rate not being finalized. It was estimated that \$506,790 would be real estate taxes generated in the district. 25% would go to the General Fund and 75% would generally go to TIF. As we are in a two-year phase in for revaluation, it is proposed that an additional \$125,000 would go to the General Fund for revaluation mitigation. Most of the increase in value in the district was attributable to property revaluation and not new construction. That would leave approximately \$255,000 for eligible uses in the TIF District. The draft included \$26,000 for First Town Downtown and \$20,000 for the Windsor Arts Center. Three alternatives were presented for the remainder: 1) Pavement & Parking Lot Improvements along the Green from the Post Office to the Masonic Lodge; 2) Costs associated with Traffic Calming & Pedestrian Safety Project; 3) Cost associated with Redevelopment Properties like Larsens, Fusco, etc.

FY25 was the first year for First Town Downtown to be funded through TIF. Previously, it was funded \$20,000 per year from the General Fund. First Town Downtown put in a specific request for \$26,000 this year due in part to higher event insurance costs.

There was discussion on the allocation proposed to the Windsor Arts Center. McMahon stated that the Arts Center has been supported in the amount of \$2,000 previously and that would be pulled into the TIF account. The increase is due to the activation of the Arts Center Gallery and enhanced programming like the recent Roots Festival. Arts can be an economic generator for the community as a draw to downtown and area restaurants and businesses. If the Arts Center is funded through the TIF there is the possibility that it would be funded from TIF in subsequent years. The funds would help pay for part-time administrative support for the organization. The Arts Center has reached out and received funding from the Hartford Foundation, as well as fundraising from the public like Art in Bloom, but is looking for additional support. The Arts Center's formal request was for \$12,000 but \$20,000 would allow for more programming.

McMahon stated that the TIF funds can roll over between fiscal years as it is a separate special revenue account. So there is the possibility of saving up for a larger project rather than spending it in one year.

Option one is a Pavement & Parking Lot Improvements initiative. Milling and paving Constitution Way is estimated at \$65,000 to \$75,000. Paving of Mechanic Street lot is estimated at \$145,000.

There was discussion that Option 2 with the Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project could be a use of TIF in the future if there is a budget gap.

For Option 3, though there are redevelopment property candidates like Larsens and Fusco, there were no specific proposed uses of TIF funds to move those properties forward. Potential uses could be predevelopment costs or incentives. Fusco is a brownfield. It has been tested but needs to be remediated.

The EDC/TIF Advisory makes a recommendation on the budget. The Town Council can amend the budget that is recommended.

Selig-Bennett made a motion to recommend the budget as presented including alternative number 1 for the paving and parking lot project. Davis seconded. The motion passed 4 to 2 with one abstention.

It was recommended that in the future, First Town Downtown and the Windsor Arts Center, provide backup for any requests in TIF funding.

#### **4. ITEMS FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS**

Delucia said that 8 concerts on the green have been scheduled. The Farmers Market will begin on June 19<sup>th</sup> and run to October 16<sup>th</sup>. Auction and Restaurant Week went well.

Surprise said there will be a combine Chamber Auction and Annual Meeting at the Birdcage on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Before Hours and After Hours have been scheduled out for the year. The next one is on March 20<sup>th</sup> at Union Street Tavern at 5:30 p.m. The Chamber participated with First Town Downtown on Restaurant Week. The Chamber has initiated a Health and Wellness business group. The Chamber is working on the education to business alliance with a \$20,000 American Rescue Funds grant. The Chamber also held on Presidents Roundtable with some of the larger Chamber members.

**5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION**

Bowfield Green is moving forward after some weather-related delays. Founders Square is aiming for a June completion. A houseplant shop will be moving into the commercial space, as well a retail unit for Moneta Moments. Tobacco Shed is being more active. Loft 147 is going well. Tulsi is delayed for installation of a resized gas line. Likkle Patty Shop is going well. Bart's is now servicing beer and wine. Two hairdressers from Hairology will be opening their own shop in the space formerly occupied by Likkle Patty Shop. Giovanni's, Don's Catering and an Asian restaurant are working on spaces at the Windsor Shops. No news about the Big Lots space.

**6. ITEMS FROM STAFF**

McMahon provided an update on the Windsor Annual Breakfast with the Chamber of Commerce on March 12<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Garden Inn and the Bradley Spring Gathering on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Dudleytown Brewing.

**7. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of previous meetings will be reviewed at next regularly scheduled meeting.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Selig-Bennett motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned by Graff at 6:25 p.m.