

ATLANTIC CITY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

Zoom Conference Call

1) REMARKS FROM DCA CHIEF OF STAFF AND ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER KIM HOLMES ON BEHALF OF LT. GOVERNOR SHEILA OLIVER

- a) Called attention to DCA team of skilled technical advisors who are helping Atlantic City on a daily basis.
- b) Division of Local Government Services Director Jacquelyn Suarez is able to send these advisors in to assist the City and Senior Advisor for Atlantic City Affairs Chris Brown whenever necessary.
- c) Each of these advisors (there are five of them) have spent decades working in their respective areas of expertise such as police, fire, revenue & finance, public works, and management.
- d) They are using their knowledge, industry standards, and best practices to ensure City departments are operating as cost efficiently and productively as possible and to build the capacity of City staff.
- e) Appreciative of the Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office (ACIPO) and its ongoing efforts to implement the vision laid out in the Jim Johnson report.
- f) ACIPO has received some amazing news about their STEM initiatives for young adults and broadband access.
- g) ACIPO is making a meaningful difference in the lives of residents and are doing so by creating partnerships among Executive Council members, which is a big reason why the Council was created.
- h) Touched on two new programs at the state level that can benefit residents of Atlantic City and Atlantic County.
- i) Applications being accepted for the Emergency Rescue Mortgage Assistance program that is being run by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, which is affiliated with DCA.
 - i. Homeowners who have fallen behind on their mortgage and/or property taxes, due to a COVID-19 hardship, may be eligible for up to \$35,000 in assistance.
 - ii. People can visit www.njerma.com to see if they're eligible and to start their application.
 - iii. Program is also providing free housing counseling services to help homeowners apply, guide them through all available options, and even work with their loan servicers to achieve the best outcome available.
 - iv. Counselors will also ensure that the application process is accessible to those without internet or those having difficulties navigating the process.
- j) DCA also launched the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) earlier this month.

- k) We are urging people who are behind on their water and sewer bills to apply to the program as soon as possible to avoid having their services disconnected.
- l) The LIHWAP program, which is federally funded, provides benefits directly to water and wastewater companies, on behalf of residential customers. The assistance can be used to:
 - i. restore services where services have been terminated;
 - ii. avoid service disruption for those customers who are in danger of disconnection (i.e., received shut off notices or have past due balances); and
 - iii. support those customers who are current in their bills but might be in danger of falling behind in the near future.
- m) Priority is being given to families with elderly or disabled household members and/or with children under the age of five.
- n) People can apply online through the DCAid application portal.
- o) People who do not have access to computers or the internet can call 1-800-510-3102 to be directed to one of the community action agencies to assist them with starting, completing, and submitting an application online.

2) REMARKS FROM ATLANTIC CITY INITIATIVES PROJECT OFFICE DEPUTY DIRECTOR INDIA STILL

- a) The Mark Cuban Foundation Artificial Intelligence Boot Camp for underserved high school students in the Atlantic City area has turned into a broader collaboration.
- b) Working to build an apprenticeship program off of the Artificial Intelligence Boot Camp collaboration.
- c) This work recognized by the New Jersey STEM Pathways Network.
- d) The Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office (ACIPO) was part of a group that won the 'STEM Collaboration of the Year' award. Shared the award with Atlantic Cape Community College, Atlantic City School District, Mindbytes, South Jersey Industries, and South Jersey STEM and Innovation Partnership (SJSIP).
- e) AtlantiCare, Ocean Casino Resort, and others are working with ACIPO to create apprenticeships in cybersecurity and data analytics for Atlantic City young adults.
- f) As part of this endeavor, ACIPO is working with Atlantic Cape Community College to apply for National Science Foundation grant for racial equity in STEM. Hoping this will lead to a broader partnership with area industries to create the apprenticeship program for Atlantic City youth and surrounding towns. It is a lot of hard work, but making progress.
- g) ACIPO is also helping with the groundwork to conduct a comprehensive plan to make sure everyone living in Atlantic City has internet access and has the skills to take advantage of such access.

3) REMARKS FROM CITY OF ATLANTIC CITY MAYOR MARTY SMALL, SR.

- a) City has been holding budget meetings and will present its budget to Lt. Governor Oliver for review tomorrow, March 16.
- b) Proposing another municipal tax decrease.
- c) Phase 1 of Atlantic Avenue road diet should start in about two weeks. Phase 1 includes the stretch from Maine Avenue to Tennessee Avenue.

- d) Phase 2 of Atlantic Avenue road diet is from Tennessee Avenue to Boston Avenue.
- e) Road diet will made Atlantic Avenue safer for all users. Will include better street lighting, sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic calming measures, etc. Includes paving the roadway.
- f) City will get more than \$14 million in federal funding for the project.
- g) Provided update on Venice Park Bridge. Construction will resume next week on the first bridge and City will go out to bid in June on second bridge.
- h) Flooding resilience projects such as repair/replace bulkheads in Chelsea are ongoing.
- i) Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) approved \$650,000 in funding for City's new department of senior services, recreation, youth services, and multicultural services. City has hired staff and programs are now full go.
- j) Last week announced City contributed \$300,000 and is willing to go up to \$500,000 for mortgage and rental assistance programs for residents and some utility assistance. Salvation Army and Catholic Charities managing the CDBG program for the City.
- k) Provided Shoprite update; hope to see project break ground in April.
- l) City has a MOU for Bader Field waiting for State approval.
 - i. MOU is for a \$2.7 billion development that could double Atlantic City's ratable base and put the City on a stronger fiscal path, provide jobs, and create a new industry.
 - ii. Development is geared towards auto enthusiasts who would live at the property.
 - iii. Development will have residential, retail, entertainment, and its own boardwalk.
 - iv. Development group has the capital and wherewithal to get this done.

4) REMARKS FROM ATLANTIC CITY INITIATIVES PROJECT OFFICE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MICHAEL C. EPPS, ESQ.,

- a) Welcomed Atlantic City School District Superintendent Dr. La'Quetta Small to the Atlantic City Executive Council.
- b) Dr. Small said she appreciates being a part of the Executive Council.

5) PRESENTATION: STOCKTON UNIVERSITY, ATLANTIC CITY CAMPUS, PRESENTED BY BRIAN JACKSON, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF STOCKTON'S ATLANTIC CITY CAMPUS

- a) Stockton University is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.
- b) University held its first classes in 1971 at Mayflower Hotel on the Atlantic City boardwalk with 1,000 students and 55 faculty because the Galloway campus was not yet ready to be occupied.
- c) University is thrilled to be back in Atlantic City and expanding its presence in the city.
- d) Stockton broke ground in the city on its second residential building, which will house over 415 students. Will open mid to late summer 2023 and will get the Atlantic City campus close to 1,000 students living on premises.
- e) Stockton is planning a community day clean up and after party in O'Donnell Memorial Park on Saturday, April 23 to celebrate Stockton's 50th anniversary.
 - i. Target is to register 1,000 people for the event.
 - ii. Clean up in all six wards of the city.
 - iii. Have nine projects going on.

- iv. Will kick off 8:30 in the morning.
- v. Close to 50 vendors participating for the party in the park.
- f) Another initiative is Atlantic City Summer Experience, which encourages Stockton students to stay in Atlantic City over the summer to work in hospitality industry.
 - i. Will be paid, get free campus housing paid by the employer, and receive four free college credits (summer work readiness course).
 - ii. Will get work experience.
 - iii. List of all job opportunities on Stockton's website.
 - iv. Students complete application of interest and indicate what jobs they are interested in; the university connects students to the employer.
 - v. Earn minimum of \$13 an hour, but can make more depending on the job.
 - vi. Positions in finance, accounting, HR, security, information technology.
 - vii. This is a pilot program, first time Stockton has done this.
 - viii. Expected 40 students to apply, but now more than 300 have applied.
 - ix. Employers paying \$20 a day for housing, which is discounted rate.
 - x. Expect this to grow and go beyond hospitality industry.
- g) Stockton will bring back commencement ceremonies to Boardwalk Hall. Commencement will be May 13th and will have two ceremonies because so many students scheduled to graduate.

6) PRESENTATION: EVAN SANCHEZ, CO-FOUNDER OF AUTHENTIC CITY PARTNERS

- a) Authentic City Partners and many other developers doing great work in the Orange Loop.
- b) The Orange Loop is area in Atlantic City bounded by New York Avenue, Saint James Place, and Tennessee Avenue. Called the Orange Loop because New York, Saint James, and Tennessee are the three orange properties on a Monopoly game board.
- c) Provided some examples of projects underway in the Orange Loop.
 - i. Leadership Building opened in 2017 and is a yoga studio and community center. Ten (10) new market rate apartments just opened on the building's upper floors. The apartments were completely filled within weeks, which speaks to how much demand there is for housing in Atlantic City.
 - ii. Plan to do townhomes in the Orange Loop for short-term rentals. Still really early in the process and look forward to a collaborative process with the City.
 - iii. Orange Loop flats will be long-term rental housing on upper floors and retail on bottom floors.
 - iv. The Loop is an entertainment venue that features a lot of outdoor events.
 - v. Surf-focused shop going up in the Loop.
 - vi. Cardinal Restaurant & Hotel being development. Will start construction very soon.
- d) Talked about philanthropic efforts.
 - i. Atlantic City Community Fund: Applications are open right now for most recent grant round. Plan is to deploy \$50,000 – \$60,000 small grants for small nonprofits. Application period ends April 15.
 - ii. Thrive AC, which launched earlier this year by Evan Sanchez and his wife. \$1 million commitment to nonprofits in Atlantic City

- There are leadership grants, which are larger, multi-year grants.
- Smaller grants that are similar to grants from the Atlantic City Community Fund. First grant round accepted applications until February and decisions will be made April 1.
- 5-year grant to the Atlantic City Community Fund -- \$10,000 per year.

7) PRESENTATION: STEPHANIE KOCH, CEO OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF ATLANTIC CITY

- a) STEAM lab runs out of the organization's Chelsea Club and is supported by Apple. Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City proposed to Apple to establish a workforce development aspect of STEAM strategy and (1) start a pre-apprenticeship program out of the Club's teen center and (2) expand STEAM program to the organization's Drexel Club.
- b) This Friday, Boys & Girls Club will announce that this STEAM strategy has been approved and will be expanding across Atlantic City. Will benefit kids from age 6 to age 18. There are currently 11 kids enrolled in the pre-apprenticeship program.
- c) The Club on April 1 will host an open house of its Wellness Center, which provides health care. Nurses on site two days a week for kids and access to nutrition information.
- d) Club serves 2,500 kids a year.
- e) Boys & Girls Club accepts any kid who wants to join the club. Just need a parent or legal guardian signature on the application.

8) GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a) City of Atlantic City Business Administrator Anthony Swan said City Hall is modifying its COVID policy and face masks will be optional. Modified policy will be rolled out some time this week.