



# **City of Fitchburg Massachusetts 01420**

## **CITY COUNCIL**

### **Councilors at Large**

**Marcus L. DiNatale  
Amy L. Green  
Thomas C. Hughes  
Samantha M. Squailia  
Anthony M. Zarrella**

### **President**

**Anthony M. Zarrella**

### **Vice President**

**Elizabeth R. Walsh**

### **Ward Councilors**

**Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz, III  
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin  
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture  
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga  
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming  
Ward 6 – Elizabeth R. Walsh**

### **Finance Committee**

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held over the Zoom platform and live streamed at FATV Studios on Tuesday, February 23, 2021. Councilor DiNatale was absent, so the meeting was called to order by Council President Zarrella at 6:03 PM.

Committee Members present: Councilors Paul Beauchemin, Thomas Hughes, Elizabeth Walsh, and Anthony Zarrella.

Committee Members absent: Councilor Marcus DiNatale.

The chairman opened the meeting for public comment. No one had registered to speak.

021-21      **ORDER:**      that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the CARES Act, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, CDBG-CV3 Program in the approximate amount of \$235,362.00 (TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED SIXTY-TWO AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant as follows:

Homeowner and Renter Assistance	\$115,000.00
Homelessness Services	12,000.00
Support for Students	80,000.00
Food Insecurity	23,362.00

Discussion: Community Development Director Tom Skwierawski was present. He reported that this funding is part of the third round of Community Development Block Grant-Covid money from the federal government. A component of this round of funding was approved by City Council earlier--\$200,000 for small business assistance. Mr. Skwierawski wanted to hold off approval of the remainder to see what was going to happen with the Year 47 Block Grant as a result of recent requests and public meetings concerning Year 47 funds. He believes that this proposal covers some major needs that have been bubbling up related to the pandemic.

The Homeowner Assistance portion will be handled by NewVue and Renter Assistance will be handled by the Spanish American Center. A small part of these funds will be used by Community Legal Aid. North Star Family Services will handle the Homelessness Services. Although they are located in Leominster, they will house Fitchburg residents. Support for Students will be utilized by the Boys & Girls Club in trying to create a hybrid working space for students who don't have efficient or reliable access to the internet. Food Insecurity funds will be handled by the Salvation Army as an extension of the \$25,000 contract from the first CDBG-CV grant.

Councilors asked about the rental assistance and were told that the process has not been formalized, but it is only for Fitchburg residents, and there will be rigorous documentation to be sure that recipients are Fitchburg residents and income eligible. Councilors asked about the need for food support given all the food banks and service providers in the city. Mr. Skwierawski replied that there is a need, both because of a public health crisis and because of an economic crisis. Councilors asked about documentation of need at a recent food event. Mr. Skwierawski stated that the program opened at 10 o'clock and that people began to line up at 9 o'clock. If people are willing to wait up to two hours for food, they must need it. Councilors asked about the homelessness services. Mr. Skwierawski said that congregate living can be a source of disease spread, so a lot of cleaning is needed.

Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Walsh and second by Councilor Beauchemin.

Approved: By unanimous consent (4-0)

022-21        ORDER:        that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency grant in the approximate amount of \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to purchase equipment for the city's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Discussion: Fire Chief Anthony Marrama was present. He stated that this grant is a Citizen Corps Program grant through MEMA. The Fire Department handles the grant, because CERT falls under the auspices of the Fire Department. It is a reimbursement grant. The funds will be used to purchase a 4" pump, some pop-up tents with heaters, which have been used for Covid clinics, and some additional PPE and other personal equipment. Some of the personal equipment currently in use is twenty-five years old. Team members are all volunteers.

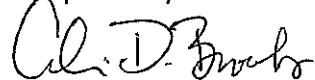
Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Beauchemin and second by Councilor Walsh.

Approved: By unanimous consent (4-0)

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Beauchemin second by Councilor Walsh. Approved by unanimous consent.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Calvin D. Brooks, Clerk