

**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD
WALLINGFORD ARPA APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE
129 Center Street (HUBCAP)
Wallingford, CT 06492**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2023
6:30 p.m.**

UNAPPROVED DRAFT RECORD OF VOTES AND MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Members in attendance were Mike Glidden, Vice Chair; Craig Fishbein; Robert Fritz; Robert Gross; Jacqueline McNamee; Christopher Regan; Jesse Reynolds; and Amy Walsh. A quorum was declared.

Recusals: Bob Gross for Diversafit

Members of the public: Custom Travel, Wallingford Wine and Spirits

Discussion and possible action on procedural and administrative matters.

The consensus was to table this until the Chair is present.

Discussion and possible action on the following grant applications.

Mr. Glidden reviewed the scoring process and read the evaluation criteria. He stated that businesses have to get a total average score of 70 or above to get a favorable recommendation.

Custom Travel

Mr. Gross outlined the application. They qualify based on the submitted tax returns. They were impacted by COVID and are not back to pre-pandemic levels yet. They received PPP.

Committee comments on this application included:

- In 2021 they made more than the prior years.
- Not clear what they will do with the grant money and how it relates to the loss in prior years.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	75
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	80
Fishbein:	50	Regan:	70
Fritz:	80	Reynolds:	70
Glidden:	80	Walsh:	absent

The average score is 72.14

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend further favorable action in the matter of Custom Travel in the amount of \$25,000.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein

Seconded by: Mr. Gross

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Recusals: 0

Absent: 3

Motion carries

Diversafit

Mr. Regan outlined the application. They have been in town for three years. They provided P&Ls for 2019, 2020, and 2021. The funds are to be used to establish a brick-and-mortar studio, rent, and website for \$25,000. He suggested discussing a lower dollar amount since the grant request is more than they have made in the past.

Committee comments on this application included:

- There is a proportionality issue.
- Looking at revenue alone may be misleading.
- They are in the process of moving into a building.
- A proposal for reducing the grant to \$10,000 was made.
- They pivoted during COVID to build the business.
- They are trying to get back on their feet.
- Another suggestion was made for \$15,000

Would a lower amount change the scoring? The intent is not to enrich a company but help bring them back to being whole.

Mr. Glidden proposed scoring it based on a \$15,000 grant.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	abstain
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	80
Fishbein:	80	Regan:	75
Fritz:	80	Reynolds:	75
Glidden:	80	Walsh:	83

The average score is 79.0

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend further favorable action in the matter of Diversafit in the amount of \$15,000.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein

Seconded by: Mr. Reynolds

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Recusals: 1

Absent: 2

Motion carries

Wallingford Wine and Spirits

Ms. Walsh outlined the application. They provided single-page Profit and Loss statements. They want to use the funds to pay back debts, back taxes, and cash on delivery payments for supplies and rent, which is an inappropriate use of the funds.

Committee comments on this application included:

- No clean status letter from the State of CT due to taxes being in arrears. This means the application is incomplete.
- The rules set up by Council are that they can't use the funds for taxes.
- Suggested recommending no action due to incompleteness instead of saying no.

Motion to recommend no further action by this body in the matter of Wallingford Wine and Spirits due to the application being incomplete. (No clean State of CT Status Letter)

Made by: Mr. Fishbein

Seconded by: Mr. Reynolds

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0

Recusals: 0

Absent: 2

Motion carries

Tim Sway Perspectives, LLC

Ms. McNamee outlined the application. The financials show an increase in 2020 and a loss in 2021. Very good documentation. He is asking for \$12,000. The funds will help him build guitars in town and rely less on outside international vendors. He will make more parts here. This goes along with what ARPA is for.

Committee comments on this application included:

- Sales went up every year.
- In 2021 he had a large depreciation.
- Uncertain how a contract could be written for the proposed use.

- Didn't see the negative impact of COVID.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	50
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	75
Fishbein:	30	Regan:	70
Fritz:	70	Reynolds:	80
Glidden:	30	Walsh:	60

The average score is 58.13

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend no further favorable action in the matter of Tim Sway Perspectives, LLC.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein

Seconded by: Ms. Walsh

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0

Recusals: 0

Absent: 2

Motion carries

Executive Graphic Systems

Mr. Regan outlined the application. This single proprietor business has been in Wallingford for 18 years. A solid and stable business in 2019 with a steady decline in revenue after that. There was a profit in 2020 and a loss in 2021. The funding request is fairly detailed to establish a brick-and-mortar with shop expenses. The application meets the criteria.

Committee comments on this application included:

- Would like to see more detail.
- Office expenses went up in 2021 without a clear explanation.
- Type of business that will have to change. They need to pivot.
- Business isn't recovering yet. This may be due to the delay in the change in the business model but not clear.
- Was creating signage nationally, now pivoting to local.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	65
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	75
Fishbein:	45	Regan:	75
Fritz:	80	Reynolds:	70

Glidden: 80 Walsh: 65
The average score is 69.38

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend no further favorable action in the matter of Executive Graphic Systems.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein
Seconded by: Mr. Regan

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8
Nays: 0
Recusals: 0
Absent: 2
Motion carries

Route 5 Realty

Mr. Reynolds outlined the application. They own and manage commercial rental and lease properties. They lost revenue when clients couldn't pay rent. Their gross income dropped from 2019 to 2021. They are asking for \$25,000 towards the cost of repaving their parking areas and other projects that were planned before the pandemic. They will fund the remaining \$27,000 of the project costs.

Committee comments on this application included:

- Investing in improvements to their property.
- Good backup material.
- Uncertain of whether the funds will assist in the long-term recovery of the business.
- No proof that the drop in income is from tenants not paying rent.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	55
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	70
Fishbein:	50	Regan:	60
Fritz:	65	Reynolds:	70
Glidden:	25	Walsh:	50

The average score is 55.63

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend no further favorable action in the matter of Route 5 Realty.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein
Seconded by: Mr. Gross

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8
Nays: 0
Recusals: 0
Absent: 2
Motion carries

Rivas Meat Market

Mr. Glidden outlined the application. This is a butcher and grocery. They had to close during COVID and lost perishable items. Financials show they took a hit in 2020 but in 2021 they nearly doubled their numbers. They receive PPP. They are asking for \$15,000 for equipment, \$10,000 for payroll, and \$2,500 for bills. There is no explanation of what the equipment is.

Committee comments on this application included:

- No detail on the amount of the grants they received.
- This is a successful business.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	55
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	60
Fishbein:	40	Regan:	65
Fritz:	45	Reynolds:	60
Glidden:	45	Walsh:	62

The average score is 54.0

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend no further favorable action in the matter of Rivas Meat Market.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein
Seconded by: Mr. Gross

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8
Nays: 0
Recusals: 0
Absent: 2
Motion carries

Everest Isles LLC

Mr. Fishbein outlined the application. This is a men's clothing manufacturer for wholesale and direct sales. It is a failing business. Based on the tax returns the numbers have been negative for quite a long time. The funds would be used to sign a lease and renovate a storefront.

Committee comments on this application included:

- They have been losing money.
- They were ready to ship products in 2020 and all their accounts were canceled.
- 2020 was their best year.

Score sheets were handed in.

Total Scores:

Brodinsky:	absent	Gross:	35
Bonamico:	absent	McNamee:	70
Fishbein:	20	Regan:	50
Fritz:	75	Reynolds:	55
Glidden:	30	Walsh:	80

The average score is 61.25

Motion, based on the average score, to recommend no further favorable action in the matter of Everest Isles LLC.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein

Seconded by: Mr. Regan

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0

Recusals: 0

Absent: 2

Motion carries

RCP Unlimited

Mr. Fritz outlined the application. This is an eight-year-old company primarily involved in excavation and construction-type activities. They received PPP. They took a slight hit in 2020 and bounced back in 2021. The application is incomplete because the P&Ls are not stamped by an accounting firm. There are no tax returns.

Committee comments on this application included:

- The P&Ls don't match the numbers in the application.

The consensus was that the application is incomplete.

Motion to recommend no favorable action in the matter of RCP Unlimited due to the application being incomplete (missing tax returns).

Made by: Mr. Gross

Seconded by: Mr. Fishbein

Vote: Unanimous

Ayes: 8
Nays: 0
Recusals: 0
Absent: 2
Motion carries

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn at 7:44 pm.

Made by: Mr. Fishbein
Seconded by: Mr. Gross

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted
Cheryl-Ann Tubby
Recording Secretary