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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

Planning,
Zoning,
Building Safety,
Construction Inspection Services,
Public Health,
Housing Inspections,
Code Enforcement

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Jodi Royal-Goodwin, Community Development Director
Cc: Greg Jenkins, Interim City Administrator
Date: July 2, 2020
Re: Request to Approve Waiver of Match Requirement for Code/Accessibility Loan

INTRODUCTION: An application was received from Louise Munday for financial assistance through the Code/Accessibility Loan Program to make accessibility improvements to Miss Louise's Dance School. The improvements will increase access to fine arts activities for children with special needs. The rules of the forgivable loan programs require a 1:1 match. Due to extenuating circumstances Ms. Munday is unable to commit the matching funds., Staff is requesting Council waive the requirement to provide the matching funds prior to executing the loan agreement.

BACKGROUND: In October City Council approved the creation of a loan program to support code and accessibility improvements to buildings housing existing businesses within the Urban Revitalization District. The program provides up to \$10,000 for such improvements and requires a one-to-one match.

Louise Munday submitted an application for accessibility improvements to Miss Louise's School of Dance, which has operated in downtown Muscatine since 1977. Staff then met with Ms. Munday, who explained the improvements were to allow individuals with special needs to participate in dance and music programming and family members with mobility issues to bring children to or observe lessons. During that meeting she also said she was unaware of the \$10,000 loan limit or the match requirement. Staff worked with Ms. Munday to evaluate opportunities to secure other resources to support the improvements, but this effort was unsuccessful. Then the COVID-19 public health crisis shut down the Dance School, reducing business resources.

Now that the Dance School is able to reopen, Ms. Munday would like to proceed with the project and have at least the external ramp completed this construction season. As a result of not being aware of the requirement followed by the loss of income due to the mandated shut down, match funds are not immediately available. However, Ms. Munday is committed to completing all aspects of the projects including creating accessible bathrooms and accessible movement within the building. The full project is anticipated to be complete within 12 months. To facilitate this project staff is requesting Council waive the \$10,000 match commitment required the prior to execution of the loan agreement.

PROPOSED MOTION: Move to waive the match requirement for an accessibility loan to Miss Louise's School of Dance.