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..Title

Small Business Recovery Task Force- For the purpose of establishing a temporary emergency Task Force commissioned to focus on the experiences that Annapolis businesses are facing in the time of the COVID-19 declarations protecting citizen health.

..Body

**CITY COUNCIL OF THE
City of Annapolis**

Resolution R-25-20

Introduced by: Mayor Buckley

Co-sponsored by: Alderwoman Pindell Charles and Alderwoman Tierney

A RESOLUTION concerning

Small Business Recovery Task Force

FOR the purpose of establishing a temporary emergency Task Force commissioned to focus on the experiences that Annapolis businesses are facing in the time of the COVID-19 declarations protecting citizen health.

WHEREAS, Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., pursuant to the Maryland Constitution and Title 14 of the Public Safety Article, proclaimed a state of emergency and a catastrophic health emergency for the entire State of Maryland on March 5, 2020, which was renewed on March 17, 2020, to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Maryland Department of Health recommend social distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Gavin Buckley declared a local state of emergency on March 12, 2020, to control and prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the City of Annapolis, and the local state of emergency still exists; and

WHEREAS, to reduce the spread of COVID-19, Governor Hogan issued an Executive Order on March 16, 2020, closing all restaurants and bars in the State of Maryland to the general public; and

WHEREAS, as of March 23, 2020, Governor Hogan ordered closed all non-essential businesses in the State of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Governor Hogan issued guidance recommending that people at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible, including public places; and

1 **WHEREAS**, this guidance is appropriate for public health reasons, but it has economic impacts
2 on local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and workers in businesses in the City
3 of Annapolis; and
4

5 **WHEREAS**, local businesses have recently reported laying off employees, experiencing severe
6 revenue losses, dealing with lost business, and seeing major declines in foot traffic
7 as thousands of employees are being asked to work from home; and
8

9 **WHEREAS**, these impacts are being felt across all industry sectors, including retail, restaurant,
10 hospitality, transportation, logistics, arts and culture, and many more; and
11

12 **WHEREAS**, it is important to keep the economic impact from having long-term, dynamic and
13 unpredictable local and regional consequences, necessitating that the City act and
14 plan accordingly; and
15

16 **WHEREAS**, Mayor Buckley and a number of City departments have convened meetings with
17 partners to strategize immediate interventions for affected local businesses and
18 displaced workers.
19

20 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

21
22 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the temporary **Small**
23 **Business Recovery Task Force** commissioned to focus on the experiences that Annapolis
24 businesses are facing in the time of the COVID-19 declarations protecting citizen health is hereby
25 established.
26

27 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that with the
28 recent passage of the federal Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental
29 Appropriations Act, local businesses and nonprofit organizations facing economic hardship from
30 COVID-19 will soon be eligible for Economic Injury Disaster Loans administered by the federal
31 Small Business Administration (SBA).
32

33 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the **Small**
34 **Business Recovery Task Force** is convened to advise on long-term policy recommendations and
35 provide technical assistance on future strategies:

- 36 A. The Task Force shall be co-chaired by Stephen Rice, Economic Development
37 Manager, and Dick Franyo, who will report directly to the Mayor.
38 B. All members shall be appointed by the Mayor. Membership shall include community
39 members from different Annapolis business organizations and types of businesses
40 including non-profits representing a variety of industries. The initial membership will
41 include up to two representatives from:
42 a. Downtown Annapolis
43 b. Arts District/Inner West Street
44 c. Maryland Ave/State Circle
45 d. Annapolis Design District
46 e. SOFO

- 1 f. West Annapolis Business Affiliation
- 2 g. Eastport Business Association
- 3 h. Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce
- 4 i. Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation
- 5 C. Alderwoman Finlayson shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Task Force.
- 6 Coordination with additional councilmembers will be welcome.
- 7 D. The Task Force shall provide the Mayor and City departments:
 - 8 a. real-time updates on the COVID-19 outbreak's impacts to local business and
 - 9 workers;
 - 10 b. support for the City's outreach and education efforts to local businesses; and
 - 11 c. policy recommendations at the local, state, and federal level to assist local
 - 12 businesses and workers, including, but not limited to:
 - 13 i. support for gig economy workers;
 - 14 ii. deferral of various City permit payments;
 - 15 iii. investments in Women and Minority-Owned Business Enterprises;
 - 16 iv. acceleration or delays to construction of different City capital projects;
 - 17 v. interventions for arts and cultural organizations and other non-profits;
 - 18 vi. barriers to participation in existing City benefit programs for impacted
 - 19 workers;
 - 20 vii. rental assistance programs for economically distressed workers;
 - 21 viii. full funding and expanded worker access to federal Unemployment
 - 22 Insurance;
 - 23 ix. state policies related to loss of business income coverage and exclusion
 - 24 under commercial insurance policies;
 - 25 x. state measures related to anti-eviction policies; and
 - 26 xi. disconnect or shut-off policies for non-City utility and cable franchises;
 - 27 xii. assistance in locating Federal and State benefits to help Local
 - 28 Businesses and
 - 29 xiii. deferral of other state taxes impacting local businesses.
- 30 E. Meetings shall be convened weekly, either telephonically or in-person, using
- 31 appropriate social distancing guidelines. The first meeting shall be held the week of
- 32 April 16.
- 33 F. The Task Force will also coordinate technical assistance workshops so that local
- 34 business owners can quickly apply for and access SBA loans.
- 35 G. In order for the City to take full advantage of these SBA loans, the Office of
- 36 Economic Development is directed to assist Annapolis' local businesses and
- 37 nonprofit organizations by:
 - 38 a. advocating for SBA resources to be distributed quickly and sufficiently;
 - 39 b. ensuring that the available resources are broadly and clearly communicated
 - 40 to the public;
 - 41 c. providing educational materials/technical assistance for businesses to reduce
 - 42 SBA application process wait times for local businesses; and
 - 43 d. identifying any shortcomings that need to be addressed as the program is
 - 44 implemented.
- 45 H. The Task Force shall be disbanded no earlier than the termination of the COVID-19
- 46 Declaration of Emergency, and may continue longer if the economic impacts of

1 COVID-19 endure beyond the public health emergency.

- 2 I. The Mayor's Small Minority Business Liaison shall staff the Task Force, with the
3 assistance of the Economic Development Manager.
4

5 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that:
6

- 7 1. Task Force members shall serve without compensation.
8 2. The Task Force shall have at least one meeting at which the Task Force takes
9 public testimony.
10

11 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the
12 **Small Business Recovery Task Force** shall submit its findings and recommendations to the City
13 Council 30 days after the termination of the Annapolis State of Emergency.