



Downtown Ferndale Businesses Can Access Free HR...



Downtown Ferndale Businesses Can Access Free HR/Financial Consulting

(Crystal A. Proxmire, April 21, 2020)

Ferndale, MI – Felicia Harris has over 30 years of human resource experience, and she knows the struggles that small businesses are facing in light of the coronavirus crisis and the subsequent “[Stay Home, Stay Safe](#)” order.

That’s why her consulting company Everything HR has teamed up with the Ferndale Downtown Development Authority to offer up to three hours of professional advice in the areas of human resources and finance for businesses within the DDA.

“We were referred to them by an organization called [TechTown](#) who had done an excellent job at spinning up a business support program with support from donors like DTE Energy Foundation, Google, Invest Detroit, and others,” said DDA Director Lena Stevens. “We have not worked with them in the past, but in an effort to balance immediate support with long-term planning, we felt they were well suited to start answering questions quickly. They are offering financial planning in addition to the more traditional Human Resources questions, which we felt was valuable as we move into gradual recovery.”

Stevens said that business owners have had many questions and concerns since the state’s “Stay Home, Stay Safe” order last month closed nonessential businesses.

“Primary questions have centered around the various loan/grant programs,” Stevens said. “With so much information flying around, it can be difficult to cut through the noise. The Ferndale DDA, City of Ferndale, and the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce have been working diligently to stay on top of the updates and provide down to earth summary information to our businesses.

Stevens said there were lots of questions about unemployment in March as businesses were concerned about their employees accessing support.

“I think we will start to see new questions as businesses are allowed to gradually start opening back up, and as they receive federal grants/loans. They will need to decide how and when to bring back their workforce. Having access to professional, reliable advice will be critical to recovery,” she said.

In addition to setting up the consulting, the DDA has initiated other efforts to help business, including promoting carryout options, and their “Social Distancing BINGO” contest. They’ve also worked with the City of Ferndale and the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce to gather resources for businesses.

Some creative business solutions have already come to fruition with businesses instituting curbside pickup with help from DDA staff, delivery options, collaborations between businesses, online gift cards, and businesses that have set up GoFundMe pages for support.

Ferndale Mayor Melanie Piana praised the effort of “leveraging ideas from our regional friends in Detroit to support storefront business owners and small businesses.”

She posted on Facebook “I’m grateful to Rachel Lutz, owner of the Peacock Room, and Ned Staebler at Tech Town, for giving guidance on this idea and connecting to the potential resources. Thank you to our DDA leadership for funding this idea so quickly and tailoring the need to our downtown. Hats off to our DDA Director Lena Stevens, City Econ Director Jordan Twardy and Chamber Director Joy Wells for pulling together the resources to make this happen.

“This rapid response assistance will help small business owners navigate the unemployment assistance. financial planning and going after loans and grants. If we can help them save time and money once they reopen as part of the recovery process, then it’s worth the investment. We’re all in this together.”

Book an appointment at www.everythinghr.net.

Business owners can reach out with questions and ideas to businessvm@ferndalemi.gov.

Also check out the [City of Ferndale COVID-19 Resources](#) page and the [Downtown Ferndale website](#).