



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date:	June 2, 2026
Agenda Item:	Memo re Barista Cat Café LLC and Wind Up Program
Staff Contact (name, email, phone):	Mason Becker, mbecker@whitewater-wi.gov

BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

Community Development Department staff were recently made aware of some social media posts regarding Barista Cats Café (135 W Center St) and their real estate concerns. A Common Council member reached out to me with questions on that matter, relating to the previous assistance the business was given by the Community Development Authority (CDA) through the Wind Up Program in 2024-2025.

The below summary was provided in response and was also provided to the city manager. The CDA board was also provided this information in an email sent on May 22, 2026.

Summary:

The total Wind Up award to Barista Cat Café LLC was \$71,153.92. It was a grant, with agreement signed on August 16, 2024 which was awarded based on reimbursement requests. Reimbursements were able to be awarded within 12 months of the agreement. They did provide monthly financial reports for the 12 months of the agreement (we have these on file). This is the spreadsheet record I have on the reimbursements:

Barista Cat Café	payee: Natalie Serena	71,153.92
8/16/2024	14,700.00 pre-paid 12 months rent, technically not a reimbursement	
8/26/2024	18,236.29 quarantine renovation	
9/5/2024	17,012.98 Build out	
10/25/2024	2,776.78 Renovations	
12/19/2024	18,236.29 Renovations	
6/25/2025	191.58 Misc reno materials	
Reimbursements Subtotal:		71,153.92
Remaining balance (none)		-

The applicant did give their final presentation to the CDA as required by the Wind Up Program. This was at the November 20, 2025 CDA board meeting.

The agreement does not call for any further audits. It does state that the business has to remain operating at its stated location or within the City for a period of two years. If they stay open within the City of Whitewater through August 2026, that obligation would be fulfilled. The signed agreement is attached for reference.

The Economic Development Coordinator has reached out to the business to see if we are able to help them find another location in the City of Whitewater, and possibly discuss any other advising or assistance we can provide.

As always, the Community Development Department is available to assist any new or existing business within the City of Whitewater in addressing location concerns, inquiries for assistance, connecting with resources, or any other needs.

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

- N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

- The grant funds have already been expended as agreed to in the Wind Up agreement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- None. This memo is for information purposes only.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

- Wind Up Program agreement
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