

**City of Isanti
Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes of
February 26, 2013
Isanti City Hall**

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kuechle at 7:00 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Members Present: Tara Hallberg, Larry Kuechle, Keith Dragisich, Dan Collison and George Wimmer

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Economic Development Director Sean Sullivan

c. Agenda Modifications

Sullivan asked to add "Consider Recommendation to Choose Logo for Community Center Signage and Advertising and Acceptance of Sign Donation.

Motion by Hallberg, second by Dragisich to add Consider Recommendation to Choose Logo for Community Center Signage and Advertising and Acceptance of Sign Donation to the Agenda as item 10 and to Move Other Business to 11 and Adjourn to 12. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Organization of Advisory Bodies as per Ordinance 181

- a) Oath of Office – Dan Collison
Economic Development Director Sullivan Administered the Oath of Office for Dan Collison.

3. Approve Minutes of January 22, 2013 Regular Economic Development Meeting

Motion by Dragisich, second by Hallberg to approve the minutes for January 22, 2013. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Manufacturer's Roundtable

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the Staff Memo. Sullivan indicated that The City of Isanti of Isanti had been asked to participate in a Countywide Manufacturer's Roundtable. The Cambridge Chamber of Commerce and City of Cambridge have been hosting this event for quite some time and the manufacturers have appreciated it. The purpose of the event is to have the businesses network with one another and to try to form some mutually beneficial business relationships. City Staff and the Chamber Office work to get professionals from organizations such as the Workforce Center, DEED, ECRDC and others that can answer questions, provide financing or serve as sounding boards for the manufacturers in attendance.

Consensus of the EDA was to direct Staff to send an email invite to all City of Isanti manufactures on behalf of the EDA inviting them to this event. Direction was also given to try to get the Isanti Area Chamber involved in this event as well.

No formal action was required or taken on this item but staff received the above described direction.

5. Consider Purchase of Marketing Items

Economic Development Director Sullivan highlighted presented the Staff memo and passed around samples of the marketing materials. Sullivan indicated that the City Council had allocated an additional \$10,000 to the EDA marketing budget to help with marketing materials. The proposed marketing package consisted of: 2000 - Logo Pencils, 500 - Logo iBasset Pen, 50- Logo Monoco Pen and Pencil set, 1000 - Logo Lapel Pin, 50 - Logo Shirts, 144 - Logo Coffee Tumblers. The estimate for these items was approximately \$5,200. Sullivan indicated that some minor changes could be made to the marketing products which could potentially influence the price. The main factor driving the price was the type and cost of the logo Coffee Tumblers. Sullivan indicated that the Tumblers, shirts and the Pen set were higher quality items that certainly could be given to dignitaries. The other products were also good quality but the intent was for more general marketing and to bring along to retention visits.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of the EDA was to not have the top of the Mugs be stainless steel as some feel that there is a funny taste. A plastic screw-on top with a stainless steel cup was preferred with a blue logo. EDA communicated to staff that they trusted his judgment and wanted to be sure they authorized enough dollars to make the marketing purchase without having to come back for future approvals

Motion by Wimmer, second by Hallberg to authorize the purchase of the marketing package consisting of Shirts, Pens, Pen and Pencil Sets, Pencils, Lapel Pins, and Tumblers in an amount not to exceed \$5,500. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Consider Investment of \$750 to Initiative Foundation

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. Sullivan stated that the EDA had originally budgeted \$700 for this item but that the rate changed for 2013 to the \$750 amount. He asked the EDA to consider the request.

Member Wimmer stated that the Initiative Foundation has assisted many projects locally and that this was a good investment by the EDA and City.

Motion by Collison, Second by Dragisich to pay \$750 investment to Initiative Foundation. Motion carried unanimously.

7. CGI-Community Video Program

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. The price to the City of Isanti to have a 3-4 – 1 minute segments, professionally done video is \$0.00. The proposed video includes the following: Mayor’s Welcome, Quality of Life, Real Estate/Relocation and potentially a non-profit segment. As part of the project CGI asks the City to do a letter of support for the project that is targeted to area business to purchasing advertising on the video. CGI indicated that the project was not dependent on receiving advertising from businesses but that was how they made their money. In short they would solicit funds but if none were received they still would move forward with the project without any cost to the city.

The following concerns were raised from the EDA membership:

- Didn’t want city associated with a “Sell” of any kind.
- Worried that if the City was associated with a “hard sell” it could hurt the positive relationship that city has been building with businesses.
- How much staff time would it require (too much)
- Are they a reputable company?

Member Wimmer stated that he had been contacted by Community’s of Distinction and with Terry Bradshaw being the spokesman. The cost associated with this group was over \$30,000. Wimmer was unsure if he would be supportive of the CGI project due to the “selling” aspect to area businesses. He wanted to review the letter and see if it would be something he would be comfortable signing before moving forward.

Chair Kuechle stated that he was worried how businesses would take the “sales pitch” and wondered if it was worth the risk. He acknowledged the benefit of the video but there were concerns.

Member Collison stated that he had experience in making movies and slide shows and wondered of something like this could be done in-house or in conjunction with the school district.

Member Wimmer stated that the District had been difficult to work with when it came to a matter concerning the filming of the City Council Meetings.

Consensus was to do nothing as there were too many uncertainties with this item.

No action or recommendation given by the EDA.

8. Greater Minnesota Economic Development Partnership

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. Sullivan stated that the City was already involved in Greater MSP, EDAM and GPS 45:93 and questioned whether or not participating in another Economic Development organization was beneficial. Sullivan

recommended to not participate and cited the other member communities not being like Isanti and being way too far out.

Member Dragisich stated that he did not support joining this organization.

No action was taken and no staff follow-up was given to Economic Development Director Sullivan.

9. Role of EDA for City of Isanti

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. The City Council tasked a research project to DAC to see if the creation of an HRA helps development and redevelopment projects within the City of Isanti. Sullivan cited references from the Economic Development Handbook that outlines the powers associated with an HRA and EDA. The current EDA has had its powers limited by the City Council which keep these powers under the control of the City Council. Many communities have their EDA made up of only City Council members or a majority of City Council members. Staff indicated that the Downtown Loop was a project that the City Council discussed at the goal setting session. There was lengthy discussion that centered on the following questions:

What needs to be done to make downtown successful?

What types of businesses would do well there?

Is a loop connected our entire commercial district feasible?

How much retail can Isanti support?

Do we need to hire outside help to do a study?

Can we do the study ourselves?

Is the Current EDA membership willing to engage in a project of this magnitude?

Why do businesses come and go from downtown?

There have been some past committees that have not had great participation, are there commitment from EDA?

Do we have something in place that makes sure buildings look alike?

Is a shortened loop that circles through Dahlin, rather than Credit Union Drive a possibility?

Consensus of the discussion was as follows:

EDA's have more powers than HRA's so there was no reason to create and HRA

EDA Membership is willing to put in the time necessary to do some "heavy lifting" when it comes to a development/redevelopment project of this scope.

EDA is willing to look at changing the make-up of the EDA to include more City Council Members if the Council deems it appropriate.

Have building requirements in place to assure "look and feel" is kept for downtown.

Understand that downtowns "ebb and flow" but they are always changing.

Historic Downtown is important to the identity of Isanti and we need more destination businesses to draw traffic.

Consistent hours of operation would benefit Historic Downtown.

Member Wimmer asked the members present whether they would be committed to "getting the project done"

No action was taken other than passing on the fact that the EDA membership was willing to “do the work” if called upon and that if a structure change was suggested by the City council the EDA would support it.

10. Consider Recommendation to Choose Logo for Community Center Signage and Advertising and Acceptance of Sign Donation

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. Sullivan presented the three logos developed by Sign’s by Jill for the Isanti Community Center. Sullivan indicated DAC had reviewed the logos and had asked for a “Hybrid logo” be developed incorporating items from each. Signs by Jill has offered to donate a new Community Center sign with the new logo and the Lions logo valued at \$507. Sullivan outlined additional costs associated with new post, wrapping and installation. This ranged from \$75 to \$435 dollars depending on the amount of work done. Staff asked for a recommendation from the EDA. Logo would be used for sign, marketing materials and website.

Member Dragisich expressed that there was no lighting on the existing historic downtown sign and that no-one could tell where downtown was during the night.

Members Collison and Dragisich stated that there was some uncertainty to the Community Center being open in 2014 and he did not want to spend any public dollars on the sign, wrapping or installation.

Sullivan suggested that the EDA could ask Public Works to install the sign on the existing posts to save public dollars. He indicated new posts and wrapping could be revisited if the Community Center was going to be open for the long term.

Member Dragisich and Wimmer thanked Jill for her commitment to the project.

Member Collison asked what color the sign would be and wanted it to be visible.

Sullivan stated that the Lions logo would be incorporated which would give it color.

Consensus of the EDA was that no public dollars were to spent on this project and that the Exhibit 3 (DAC Hybrid) logo was the one to use with some minor changes to the wording if needed. Member Wimmer stated that the Initiative Foundation has assisted many projects locally and that this was a good investment by the EDA and City. Before accepting the donation staff was to communicate to Sign by Jill that there was a possibility of the Community Center closing down at the end of the year and that that sign might only be used for a few months.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Dragisich to recommending acceptance of sign donation, acceptance of Logo 3 with verbiage change and to utilize public works to install the sign on the existing posts. Motion carried unanimously.

11. Other Business / Updates

Economic Development Director Sullivan highlighted the Staff Memo.

- a. Business Prospects
- b. Isanti Hotel Partners LLC
- c. GPS 45:93
- d. Isanti County Meeting Agenda
- e. Isanti Area Chamber of Commerce
- f. Workforce Investment Board Meeting
- g. Isanti Community Center Logo
- h. Greater MSP / Chamber Retention Visit Coordination
- i. 2013 Business Arrivals and Departures in Isanti

Sullivan Presented the Staff Memo

12. Adjournment

Member Wimmer motion, second by Member Hallberg to adjourn at 8:35 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota, this 28nd day of February 2013.

Respectively Submitted,

Sean M. Sullivan, Economic Development Director