

**City of Isanti
Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes of
March 25, 2008
Isanti City Hall**

1. Call to Order

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Members Present: Chair Larry Kuechle, Louise Duff, Sue Larson & George Wimmer

Members Absent: David Jadinak

Staff Present: Development Director Carla Vita

c. Agenda Modifications

None.

Motion by Larson, second by Wimmer to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Approve Minutes of February 2008 Regular Economic Development Authority Meeting

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Abatement Policy

Vita gave a Staff presentation.

Kuechle stated that within Exhibit A, the section labeled eligibility could be arranged better. Kuechle stated that he has no objections to the policy. Kuechle further stated that relocated jobs from another community should be stricken. Wimmer stated that jobs must be created. Wimmer stated that a relocated job does not mean a created job. Vita stated that the policy was reviewed by the consultants and meets State Statute. Kuechle stated that he understood.

Wimmer discussed the priority projects and how they may achieve higher points when requesting assistance. Wimmer stated that he believes that a hotel is a priority project. Wimmer stated that priorities may adjust and change.

Kuechle questioned the term on adding tax base. Wimmer stated that it is the taxes paid. Kuechle stated that that the term is vague. Wimmer stated that projects are to obtain points for adding tax base to the City's tax roles. Kuechle questioned where the increased taxes would come from. Wimmer stated from additions to existing buildings or newly constructed buildings.

Wimmer questioned the priority projects. Kuechle stated that the priorities as listed should stay for now.

Vita reiterated the three recommendations that the ICP presented the EDA.

Kuechle stated that the \$2500 for the TIF fee is good.

Wimmer motioned, seconded by Larson to recommend to the City Council the Abatement policy as presented, an abatement fee of \$1000 plus costs, with the priorities as stated within the Staff memo and attachments.

General discussion took place on bankruptcy.

4. Reader Board

Vita presented the Staff memo, color images and costs for the reader board sign.

Duff requested that Greg Owens, President of Community Pride Bank, inform the EDA on the successfulness of the reader board at his business. Owens stated that the bank received significant feedback on the sign. Owens stated that certain colors of the sign are easier to read. Owens informed the EDA that the color amber is easier to read 24 hours a day, whereas red is not so easy to read 24 hours a day. Owens stated that the EDA needs to determine the size of the sign and letters. Owens further commented that having four lines of text is difficult to read when traveling at 65 miles per hour.

Wimmer questioned the purpose of the sign. Wimmer stated that the sign has significant costs and would need to be budgeted. Wimmer questioned why the City would have the sign. Duff stated that the sign would inform the citizens. Owens stated that many businesses within the community display events within the City. Owens questioned the need for the sign.

Wimmer stated that if the City has a reader board sign, it would need a policy regulating its use. Wimmer stated that the City has funds for entrance signs. Duff stated that the sign would have on-going costs. Duff stated that the Isanti businesses are doing a great job promoting the City. Duff stated that she is not convinced on spending money on a reader board sign.

The item is dead on lack of motion.

5. Downtown Renew Request

a) City Hall Bunting

Vita presented a Staff report. Duff questioned if the bunting is weather resistant.

Vita stated that the website stated that the bunting is a plastic material. Vita further stated that high winds may easily destroy the buntings.

Motion by Duff, second by Wimmer to recommend the bunting to the City Council. Motion carried unanimously.

b) Flowers

Vita presented a Staff report. Wimmer stated that a plan is needed for maintenance. Duff stated that flower baskets that are maintained, look nice. Kuechle stated that the flowers in the downtown is a good idea. Wimmer stated that the baskets that are not maintained could be removed. Larson stated that the businesses could assist in watering the flower baskets.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to recommend the flower baskets to be hung on the downtown street poles. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Isanti City Partnership - Update

Vita presented the Staff report. Wimmer stated that Bettendorf will replace Guthmueller on the retention visits when Guthmueller's term is up on the Chamber.

7. County EDA Update

Wimmer stated that following updates on the County EDA: The website project basically promotes Cambridge only; the City may only place publicly owned property on the website; privately owned property must be placed by a broker. The County EDA is promoting Braham as much as Isanti and Cambridge, yet Braham has not joined the County EDA. The County EDA is trying to find out the type of EDA it wants to be. Wimmer expressed his concern on City Staff assisting the County. Wimmer stated that the rail industrial park sites have been reduced to 4 locations. Wimmer does not know the schedule on any selection of a site. Wimmer informed the group that the City of Cambridge has been attending the commuter rail meetings and it looks definite that they will receive a commuter rail stop. Wimmer stated that the City of Isanti should receive a rail industrial park as Isanti has never been allowed to attend a commuter rail meeting, and thus the County prevented the City from Isanti vying for a commuter rail stop.

Duff questioned the role of Janna King. Wimmer stated King was to assist on the rail industrial park. Wimmer expressed his concern on the type of County EDA. Wimmer stated that the County's goals are important for budgeting. Wimmer questioned what a County EDA will be used for. Wimmer stated that King has helped Cambridge in the past.

8. Other Business / Updates

a) Downtown Sub-Committee Minutes

b) Other

None.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Duff, second by Wimmer to adjourn. Motion carried 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla MK Vita
Community Development Director