

**City of Isanti**  
**Economic Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes of**  
**May 27, 2008**  
**Isanti City Hall**

**1. Call To Order**

**a. Pledge of Allegiance**

**b. Roll Call**

Members Present: Chair Larry Kuechle, Louise Duff, David Jadinak, Sue Larson and George Wimmer

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Community Development Director Vita

**c. Agenda Modifications**

None.

Motion by Larson, second by Duff to approve the agenda without modifications. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Approve Minutes of April 2008 Regular Economic Development Authority Meeting**

Larson motioned, seconded by Wimmer to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Isanti Retail Meats Project Request**

Vita presented a Staff report on the request noting that Mr. Demo and his banker were present to answer any questions. Vita reiterated that the school district and county both approved the use of tax abatement as outlined for the project. Vita continued that the EDA would need to make 2 motions for this matter. One recommending the call for public hearing and the other requesting the City Council to sell the property as the property is owned by the EDA.

Wimmer stated that he attended the County Commissioner meeting for the tax abatement request on behalf of the City. Wimmer informed the EDA that the County Coordinator stated that the City of Isanti is handling tax abatement the way it should be done.

Kuechle questioned parking. Vita stated that the Planning Commission will be reviewing the parking variance, site plan review and conditional use permit at their June 2008 meeting. Vita further stated that the City is exploring other parking options in the downtown, but stated that having people in the downtown is a goal of the EDA and City.

Kuechle questioned what would happen if the Isanti Retail Meats fell through. Vita stated that Staff plans to write all of the items conditional on the development agreement being signed and building permit obtained.

Motion by Larson, second by Wimmer to pass the resolution as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Larson, second by Wimmer to recommend to the City Council to order a public hearing on a business subsidy request for the Isanti Retail Meat project proposed by Joseph Demo. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Isanti City Partnership – Update**

##### **a) ICP Chair presentation**

Greg Owens, ICP Chair, stated that the ICP has completed many projects. Owens stated that Staff is great. Owens informed the EDA that some members of the ICP plan a trip to visit other Cities to find out how they were able to attract businesses. Jadinak stated that the actual City should be visited. Owens stated that visits to the actual cities is in the plan. They are reviewing smaller cities that are next to bigger cities. Owens stated that the Cities were chosen on terms of a similar situation between Isanti and Cambridge. Owens stated that communities were chosen that Isanti might want to be similar to. Wimmer stated that City Administrator Lorsung has a background in dual cities similar to the Isanti – Cambridge situation. Wimmer stated that the ICP wants to look at the “Shadow” city and how they work with the smaller City stigma. Wimmer stated that the relationship needs to be reviewed. Wimmer stated that the ICP is trying not to re-invent the wheel.

Owens stated that the Revolving Loan Fund Advisory Committee should be meeting within the next few weeks. Wimmer stated that the appointments to the committee will be at the next City Council meeting. Wimmer stated that the Mayor’s letter is being sent out a portion at a time. Wimmer further stated that the City needs a good marketing program / model.

Larson stated that the downtown benches will be coming in any day. Larson stated that assistance is needed in constructing the benches. Owens stated that the Chamber could pass the request for assistance along to its members.

##### **b) Monthly Staff Memo**

Vita presented the Staff memo.

#### **5. Chamber Dues**

Vita presented a Staff memo. Duff questioned if the City Council has reviewed the value of a Chamber membership. Wimmer stated that the topic will be addressed at the next City Council meeting. Wimmer stated that he is recommending not to continue with the Chamber membership. Wimmer further stated that the City supports the Chamber significantly. Wimmer stated that the City is not a full member. Wimmer stated that the City has a very good relationship with the Chamber.

Larson stated that the City of Cambridge is not a member of their Chamber. Larson stated that the City of Isanti spends money towards Chamber events such as the golf tournament and parade. Larson stated that the events show support and that we are a part of assisting the Chamber.

Larson stated that the City needs to review what it sponsors thru the Chamber.

Wimmer stated that the in-kind policy is to show what the City partners with other organizations.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to recommend to the City Council to no longer fund a Chamber membership, but to continue a partnership with the Chamber. The motion passed with an unanimous vote.

## **6. County EDA Update**

Wimmer stated that at the last County EDA meeting many additional City representatives were present. Wimmer stated that the intent of the meeting was to help determine what type of County EDA the County should compose. Wimmer stated that the topic will be at their next meeting. Wimmer stated that his concern is that the City of Braham has been giving advice, but is the only government within Isanti County to not impose a levy.

Vita stated that the additional City representatives from Isanti were John Bettendorf and herself. Vita stated that the group that she was a part of was surprised by the discussion of the County participating in Housing. Vita stated that all members at her table had not heard of this before and thus did not recommend that the County pursue this as a goal. Vita stated that other groups wanted to focus on what they felt was the best return on investment. Vita stated that those groups felt that housing and commuter rail along with Staff was preferred.

Vita further stated that the room had a variety of opinions on the levy amount the County should have in 2009. Vita stated that her table had the least, but other tables had half to even the full amount. Vita stated that one table stated that the County should levy the maximum for 10 years to accumulate a pool of funds, then it could be self-sustaining. Vita stated that people at her table were concerned on this additional burden on the taxpayer, especially the commercial taxpayer.

## **7. Other Business / Updates**

### **A) Mayor Marketing Project**

Wimmer discussed the marketing letter going to businesses that lease their space to try to have them move to Isanti where they could own their property. Wimmer further discussed the Isanti Employer Week Luncheon to be held on June 11, 2008.

### **B) Downtown Sub-Committee Minutes**

Vita presented the downtown update.

### **C) Other**

Kuechle questioned if the City has witnessed additional industrial park activity. Vita gave an update on Hi-Lo and another business looking at the same location.

Wimmer stated that WCCO had a segment on the news on May 23, 2008 on Ever Cat Fuels which stated that the new facility is to be located in Isanti. Larson stated that the piece was educational. Vita stated that the Ever Cat Fuels powerpoint is on the City's homepage.

Owens discussed the foreclosure / mortgage issue. Owens stated that on June 10, 2008 a train the trainer meeting will be held. Owens stated that the meeting is to educate businesses, City, County and others on ways to try and prevent foreclosures. Owens stated that the three large issues with the foreclosure issues is the meeting; communicating the information on the City website, newsletters, and newspaper articles – getting the word out;

and to try and compose a large loan holders meeting in the area to bring people with loan issues face to face with their loan company. Wimmer stated that the next Isantian will have information on the foreclosure situation and links for interested parties.

**12. Adjournment**

Duff motioned, seconded by Larson to adjourn at 7:50 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Dated at Isanti Minnesota, this \_\_\_\_ day of June, 2008.

Respectively Submitted,

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Carla MK Vita, Community Development Director