

City of Isanti
Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes of
June 24, 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 Wimmer to approve the agenda without modifications.
Motion carried unanimously.

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

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

3. Downtown Mural Request for Funds

Vita presented a Staff memo on the request for funds from the Downtown Committee.

Wimmer stated that the mural is a good marketing of the downtown. Wimmer commented on the improvement the mural will have on the downtown image.

Steve Martin, Isanti Family Pathways, stated that Family Pathways will “up front” the costs of the project. Martin stated that they are requesting a thousand dollars from the City to share in the cost of the project. Martin continued that he is also asking the community at-large to contribute a thousand dollars.

Kuechle stated that this is a good project.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to recommend to the City Council the allocation of one thousand dollars in the EDA marketing funds to be allocated to the downtown mural project. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Downtown Parking Sign Budget Request

Vita presented a Staff memo.

Jill Reller, downtown committee volunteer, presented three downtown parking sign images that she created as ideas for the sign. One looks like a standard sign and the other two look similar to the downtown banners. Reller stated that the cost is \$35 a piece for the signs.

Vita discussed the location of the signs and the intent to bring people to park in existing parking areas to meet the concerns on parking expressed over the past year.

Kuechle stated that the signs look good and affordable.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to recommend to the City Council \$500 towards the downtown parking sign project for the 2009 budget. Motion carried unanimously.

5. New City Bulletin Board Budget Request

Vita presented a staff memo.

Duff stated that she struggles with this item as the TH 65 sign was denied. Wimmer stated that this issue is different as this sign is to assist the downtown. Duff discussed the Co-Op sign and that they post different items promoting the City. Duff stated that she feels that this item was previously discussed.

Kuechle stated that he reviewed the sign and noticed that it is becoming tattered. Kuechle stated that the cost is high. Kuechle stated that the committee has a good case to request the sign as the sign is showing its age.

Jadinak questioned the useful life of the sign. Jadinak stated his concern on this type of budget request in this economic time.

Wimmer stated that the sign has been up a long time.

Duff stated that the sign was erected as an Eagle Scout project. Duff gave the history of the sign.

Reller stated that she had discussed the sign issue with the Fire Department. Reller stated that they did not think that the sign was an issue. Reller stated to be sensitive to the sign's history, a plaque could be placed on the new sign to honor the person that put up the sign and the whole Fire Department.

Reller presented the EDA with a less costly sign. The sign is changeable copy with a cover. The price of the sign with shipping is approximately \$5500. New letters are approximately \$300 or less. Reller stated that the letters would be 8 inches tall. Reller showed renderings of the new sign on CSAH 5 and 1st Avenue. Reller stated that the sign would still need an electrician and this is not a part of the \$5500 cost estimate.

Vita discussed costs and the ideas that lead up to this request. Vita reiterated that the \$5500 sign is for a changeable copy sign, but would also need footings and an electrician.

Duff questioned the difference between this sign and others within the Isanti Community.

Vita stated that the information would have the same information as today. The sign would state City meetings and events. Wimmer stated that he does not see people using the sign and stated that he does not think people attend EDA due to the sign informing them of the meeting.

Mark Rojas, Downtown Committee volunteer, stated that the sign discussion began months ago to enhance the entrance to the City's downtown. Rojas stated that the sign is tacky and the sign needs upgrading. Rojas stated that the sign needs upgrading and would be used for the same community events.

Wimmer stated that the banks already show community events. Wimmer questioned if the sign is worth the money.

Rojas stated that he understands both sides of the issue. Rojas stated that the sign will be lit with four rows of copy.

Wimmer stated that this is a tough decision in this economic situation.

Jadinak questioned why this item is at the EDA.

Larson stating he issue is at EDA because the sign is marketing the downtown.

Duff stated that the sign could come down and see if people really use it to find out about events through complaints. Duff stated that the City website has a better bang for the buck.

Kuechle stated that communication is important and the sign informs people.

Mark Reller, Isanti citizen, stated that he look s at the sign.

Wimmer stated that the city website receives 20,000 hits a month. Wimmer stated that we have no data on how many read the bulletin board.

Larson stated that taking the sign down might upset the Fire Department.

Wimmer stated that the Fire Department is not "wedded" to the sign. Wimmer stated that he believes that meetings and recording need to be on the website.

Motion by Duff, second by Jadinak to recommend to the City Council the removal of the Community Bulletin Board sign, directing Staff to monitor the calls on the removal. If many calls occur, then Staff is to bring the item back to the EDA at their July 2008 meeting, otherwise the item is to be brought back to the EDA in one year. The motion carried 3 – 2 (Kuechle and Larson voting nay).

6. Small Cities Development Program

Vita presented a Staff memo. Kuechle questioned how the project could help Isanti. Vita discussed that it could assist downtown businesses.

Wimmer stated that he reviewed the item and most funded projects are joint city applications and housing upgrades with businesses.

Vita discussed the joint City program, the process that Cambridge used to find projects, and the large amount of Staff and financial resources to make this project work.

There was considerable discussion on the amount of time needed for this project and the competing projects within the City that Vita is responsible to complete.

Kuechle stated that Staff should explore and move forward. Wimmer stated that there are many competing sources for Staff time. Larson stated that the toll many benefit Isanti businesses. More discussion on whether to proceed.

Consensus on the matter was to hold off this project for an additional year. Furthermore at the 2009 EDA goal setting session, the EDA should explore if this should be their 2009 goal.

7. EDA Appointments to ICP and Business-Industrial Sub-Committee

Vita presented a Staff memo.

Wimmer stated that all people serve at the pleasure of the board. Wimmer stated that Statute gives requirements to City Council attendance to meetings, but not boards and commissions. Jadniak stated that it is difficult for him to attend meetings and he could resign.

Kuechle requested when the meetings are held. Neither Kuechle nor Duff could attend due to other commitments.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Larson to accept the resignation of Jadinak on the ICP and Business-Industrial sub-committee. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Kuechle to recommend Larson to be placed on ICP sub-committee. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Kuechle to recommend Larson to be placed on the Business-Industrial sub-committee. Motion carried 5-0.

8. Isanti City Partnership – Update

Vita presented an update.

9. County EDA Update

Wimmer stated that nothing has changed from his last EDA update.

10. Other Business / Updates

A) Downtown Sub-Committee Minutes

B) Isanti Retail Meats Project Update
Vita presented the downtown update.

C) Other

11. Adjournment

Duff motioned, seconded by Larson to adjourn at 8:15 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Dated at Isanti Minnesota, this ____ day of July, 2008.
Respectively Submitted,

Carla MK Vita, Community Development Director