

**City of Isanti
Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes of
July 26, 2011
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, Jim Kennedy, Larry Kuechle, and George Wimmer

Members Absent: Keith Dragisich (Excused)

Staff Present: Economic Development Director Sean Sullivan

c. Agenda Modifications

Economic Development Director Sullivan asked to add a Letter of Support for a RDOG application for GPS 45:93 to as agenda item 4.5.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Wimmer to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Approve Minutes of June 28, 2011 Regular Economic Development Meeting

Motion by Wimmer, second by Hallberg to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Rail Industrial Park Update

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the Staff Memo. Sullivan highlighted the fact the City of Isanti site was identified, by an outside rail expert, as the **best site** to proceed with in Isanti County. The City of Isanti site was identified as the only economically feasible site. A full report will be available to all members interested in receiving a copy. Sullivan also stated that there is currently not a market and no immediate, desirable users for the site. The City currently has 20 acres of development ready industrial lots within Isanti Centennial Complex and the City should reserve the rail area identified for rail to keep all options open.

Chair Kuechle asked if the City was going to still continue to market the site for rail.

Economic Development Director Sullivan stated that the site would continue to be marketed for rail if the right user presented itself.

No action was taken on this item.

4. Consider Recommendation to Adopt Resolution Requesting the Isanti County to Not Institute EDA Levy

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the Staff Memo. The County EDA met on July 12, 2011 and a motion was adopted to have the full Isanti County EDA Board consider an EDA levy. Sullivan stated the motion by the County EDA did not include a dollar amount or a purpose for the funds that would be considered for a potential levy.

Sullivan indicated that the City Council had adopted Resolution 2010-127 as a response to the County EDA asking for feedback as to the role of the County EDA in May of 2010. The adopted resolution asked for focus to remain on the rail industrial park, and to not institute an additional county EDA levy.

Member Wimmer stated he wanted to take the resolution one step further and wanted to let Isanti County know that the City would withdraw from the County EDA after the 5 year required membership expires.

Member Wimmer expressed concern over an unidentified levy amount or purpose. He also had concerns about how projects would be chosen to receive funds. He highlighted a proposed hotel project in Isanti that the County EDA chose not to help citing a focus on industrial development. He stated that the County EDA recently pledged its support to a commercial project in Cambridge that would move a government facility to promote commercial growth.

Economic Development Director Sullivan asked if the City could refrain from adopting a resolution that stated the City intention to withdraw from the County EDA. He stated that if a rail project were to surface within the next calendar year it might be difficult to expect support from the County EDA.

Member Wimmer stated that the City of Braham is not a participating member of the County EDA and is not subject to a levy if it were adopted. Wimmer also stated that Braham was included in the rail study so that they already were receiving benefits of the EDA without being responsible for a levy within their city.

Chair Kuechle stated the onus is on the County EDA to show their value.

Member Wimmer stated that the County EDA has a year to show their value and that at that point the City of Isanti might reconsider its position.

Motion by Kennedy, Second by Wimmer to recommend to the City Council to adopt Resolution 2011-___ City of Isanti Recommendation to Isanti County Board of Commissioners Regarding EDA Levy with the following addition:

4) The City of Isanti gives notice that it will be withdrawing from the County EDA after the required 5 year period expires.

Motion carried unanimously.

4.5. Consider Authorizing Staff to Submit Letter of Support for Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Application by GPS 45:93

Economic Development Director Sullivan presented the staff memo. The grant would be used to create a virtual business incubator to help entrepreneurs and small businesses. Sullivan stated that this grant would help create jobs and tax base in the region.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Wimmer to authorize Economic Development Director Sullivan to draft a letter of support to USDA in support of a RBOG application by GPS 45:93.

5. Other Business / Updates

Economic Development Director Sullivan highlighted the following items.

- a. Update on Special TIF Projects
- b. Shovel Ready Certification
- c. Real Estate Sign Storm Damage
- d. RMW Twins, LLC Project Update
- e. Business Retention Visits
- f. Business Prospects
- g. GPS 45:93 Meeting Agenda
- h. Isanti County EDA Meeting Summary
- i. Isanti-Cambridge Bike Walk Trail Opens
- j. Business Arrivals and Departures in Isanti

Economic Development Director Sullivan highlighted items on the Staff memo.

Member Wimmer stated the Hardware store was opening on July 27, 2011. The Grand Opening will be in September 2011.

Economic Development Director Sullivan stated the Reller Signs building was being purchased by AST Compressors and the Reller Signs is now located at 236 Broadway St.

Member Kennedy asked why the City of Isanti wasn't mentioned in the news article about the grand opening of the Isanti/Cambridge Bike Walk Trail.

Member Wimmer stated the Bill Carlson set the Grand Opening date without working with Isanti officials. He also stated that the wooden bridge would be named "Oberstar Overlook" but that the City of Isanti had not been consulted on this matter. He stated there needed to be a process and that there was none that involved the City of Isanti in this instance. As a party of a joint powers agreement he felt that the City of Isanti would need to be involved in all decisions relating to the

bike/walk trail. Member Wimmer states he sits on the bike-walk trail committee and he wasn't even involved in the planning for this event.

Member Wimmer met with City Attorney Joslin to discuss taking action on how to remedy this problem. Attorney Joslin will set up a meeting with Marlys Palmer and Bill Carlson.

Member Kennedy expressed his displeasure at the fact that the City of Isanti was not mentioned in the article in the newspaper.

6. Adjournment

Member Kennedy motioned, seconded by Member Hallberg to adjourn at 7:29 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota, this 27th day of July, 2011.

Respectively Submitted,

Sean M. Sullivan, Economic Development Director