

City of Isanti
Economic Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes of
February 24, 2009
Isanti City Hall

1. Call To Order

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Members Present: Chair Larry Kuechle, Keith Dragisich, Jim Kennedy and George Wimmer

Members Absent: David Jadinak (called in – not attending)

Staff Present: Community Development Director Vita

c. Agenda Modifications

None.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Wimmer to approve the agenda as presented.

2. Organization of Advisory Bodies as per Ordinance 181

- a) Oath of Office for Dragisich and Jadinak
Dragisich oath taken.
- b) Election of 2009 EDA Treasurer
Motion by Wimmer, second by Kennedy to appoint Dragisich. Motion carried unanimously.
- c) Appointment of EDA – Downtown Sub-Committee
Item was tabled until later in the meeting.
- d) Appointment to Business – Industrial Sub-Committee
Motion by Wimmer, second by Kennedy to appoint Dragisich. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve Minutes of January 2009 Regular Economic Development Authority Meeting

Motion by Kennedy, second by Wimmer without modifications. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Isanti Area Chamber of Commerce to discuss ICP and Downtown Committee

John Bettendorf, Isanti Area Chamber of Commerce President, stated that the Downtown Committee and ICP were discussed at the last Chamber retreat.

The Board state that the Downtown Committee should continue. Furthermore, the Chamber Board wants to continue supporting the Downtown Committee. Bettendorf stated that the Chamber provides financing to the Downtown Committee and is the treasurer for incremental expenses versus using the City's purchasing process. He continued that the Board will like to increase the leadership role with the Downtown Committee. Bettendorf stated that the Chamber would like to see the reporting of the Committee changed.

Bettendorf requested that the Chamber take on all responsibilities for the Downtown Committee versus the current situation as an EDA sub-committee.

Bettendorf stated that Vita provides e-mail support and minutes for the Committee. Bettendorf stated that they would like Vita or someone else to attend the meetings.

Wimmer asked how the request made by Bettendorf is different than the current situation. Wimmer said that the City contributed money to the mural and Vita wrote the second mural grant. Wimmer asked if Chamber staff will be responsible for agendas and minutes. Bettendorf stated that Vita's role would be a liaison to between the Downtown Committee and the Economic Development Authority. Bettendorf stated that the Chamber covered the costs for the benches. Bettendorf said that the Chamber is more flexible in how it can spend its money. Bettendorf said that he would like to see more volunteering on the Downtown committee. Bettendorf stated that the committee as today has a complicated chain of command. Bettendorf stated that the Downtown committee is accountable to the City for its actions.

Wimmer said that items such as the light poles need City involvement. Wimmer stated that he does not know how the process Bettendorf is stating changes the current situation. Wimmer questioned Bettendorf if he desires an EDA representative on the Downtown committee.

Bettendorf stated that Vita or other representing the City is fine. Bettendorf stated that currently there is a lot of activity in the Downtown.

Wimmer stated that he is supportive of the Chamber taking over the Downtown Committee. Wimmer said that if the Board wants to follow the Chamber's idea, that they would need to abolish the sub-committee. Wimmer stated that he would want to see Vita bringing notes back to the EDA on the Downtown Committee. Wimmer said that the Chamber taking over the Downtown Committee will free up Vita's time.

Kuechle questioned Vita's thought on the matter. Vita stated that she works at the pleasure of the EDA and City Council.

Kuechle questioned how often the Downtown Committee meets. Bettendorf stated one time a month.

Motion by Wimmer, second by Kennedy to abolish the Downtown Committee in conjunction with the request from the Chamber. Vita will not Staff the Committee, but rather Chamber Staff will be responsible for the duties that Vita has performed in the past. Motion carried unanimously.

Bettendorf stated that the Chamber Board also met on the Isanti City Partnership. Bettendorf stated that since the last EDA – ICP meeting, the economy has changed. Bettendorf stated that the Chamber Board does not have the desire to continue with the ICP. Bettendorf informed the EDA that the Chamber has other matters that it wants to focus on. Bettendorf stated that they would be willing to assist in filling the industrial park. He stated that the Chamber has other items to move their organization forward. Bettendorf stated that the Chamber is working on an Ambassador program for the business community. Bettendorf stated that they are brainstorming to begin a group like the Cambridge Development Alliance. Bettendorf stated that they do not have the money of the CDA, but they want to start something to bring businesses into Isanti.

Kuechle questioned the CDA. There was conversation on the CDA structure and participants. Wimmer informed the group that the CDA was solely responsible for the Cambridge rail station and that the group brings in businesses to Cambridge.

Kuechle stated that he believes that Isanti has businesses that would assist financially in a group to bring in businesses.

Bettendorf stated that Kolb is the incoming next President of the Chamber.

5. Industrial Park Update

Vita presented a project by project update including occupancy. Vita also presented the financial information prepared by Finance Director Smith. Wimmer stated that the City has been very proactive in ensuring that businesses with business subsidy are current on their obligation to the City.

Owens questioned the negative situation as expressed in certain financial scenarios. Wimmer stated that the Finance Committee and Long Term Financial Planning take scenarios into their plans. The plans will be reviewed to keep the project updated.

The EDA stated their pleasure with the project well completed.

6. EDA By-Laws modification

Kuechle stated that the request is straight forward.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Wimmer to approve the modification as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Abatement Application

Vita presented the Staff memo and recommended that the City application look like the County's, but changing the County references to the City. Consensus to proceed with the County application layout.

8. Other Business / Updates

a. County EDA

Wimmer stated that the County EDA is holding up the County Rail Park for Passenger Rail. Wimmer stated that the County EDA does not have money. Wimmer stated that there is not a regional rail park, the first one with a park will get the points.

b. Downtown February draft minutes

As presented.

c. Economic Development Consulting Services update

d. Other

Owens stated that Cambridge has been working for 3 years on a Cambridge high speed rail stop. Owens questioned if it makes sense for the City of Isanti to support the Cambridge high speed rail then Cambridge will support commuter rail efforts. Wimmer said that he has had conversation with Cambridge Mayor Palmer on this matter. Wimmer stated that many cities are lobbying for stops. Wimmer then stated that the City of Isanti has an important issue coming up on the zoning of property of some Downtown property that could be detrimental to the commuter rail project.

Vita gave an update on the Kimley-Horn commuter rail project.

9. Adjournment

Kennedy motioned, seconded by Wimmer to adjourn at 8:17 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Dated at Isanti Minnesota, this ____ day of March, 2009.

Respectively Submitted,

Carla MK Vita, Community Development Director