

MINUTES OF KASSON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

August 1, 2017

Pursuant to do call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Kasson EDA was held City Hall this 1st Day of August, 2017 at 12:00p.m.

The following members were present: Chris McKern, Jeff Stevenson, Rich Wegner, Mike Peterson and Dan Egger

Absent: Julie Olmsted and Mike Langan

The following staff members were present: Rebecca Charles, EDA Director

Also Present: Ron Zeigler, CEDA President

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Stevenson called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: Chairman Stevenson asked if any clarification was needed for any of the minutes from last month. Chairman Stevenson requested a report on the Rochester Area Builders Association and the benefits of our membership. EDA Director Charles will have the report available at the next EDA meeting. Motion to Approve the Minutes as submitted was made by McKern, second by Peterson with all voting Aye.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Report was reviewed by board members of the board. Chairman Stevenson requested to have a clearer picture of what we have available in our revolving loan fund. EDA Director Charles agreed to have the revolving loan fund information broken out with the financials at the next meeting.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN: CEDA President, Ron Zeigler gave a power point presentation on the Neighborhood Development Plan. Zeigler did mention that the State Legislature has mandated that the NDC spread their services outside of the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. This is when they approached CEDA about their programs. He stated that it may be more beneficial for a bit larger cities such as Austin and Owatonna. The program is focused on low income immigrant entrepreneurial work. The key part of this program is filling downtown vacancies. We will be getting more information soon on costs/time requirements. But as a community buy in program, if we are going to be a part of it, we will need to go all in.

McKern inquired if the state helps to cover additional dollars in St. Paul for the program. Zeigler stated that yes, the state does help to cover the additional costs, also that this is the first time the program has been offered in rural areas.

Egger suggested that this may be better at a county level rather than at the city level. Chairman Stevenson wanted to know if the program was geared more towards newer or existing businesses. Zeigler confirmed that it is geared towards both.

No action was taken on this item during the meeting.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL REVIEW: EDA Director Charles informed the board that the final changes to be approved was the redevelopment of the revolving loan fund application at the end of the manual. Wenger asked if all information listed on the application was needed. Charles and McKern advised that the information was needed for record keeping and for purpose of weeding out the poor business plans. Chairman Stevenson further inquired if a committee should be created for applications. It was decided to only form a committee if needed and will address the issue on a case by case basis.

A motion to accept the final draft of the Policy and Procedures Manual was made by Mayor McKern, second by Egglar with all saying Aye.

KASSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Charles pointed out to the board the different sections on the City of Kasson's website where members of the community can interact with the comprehensive plan and encouraged board members to do so.

McKern updated the board about the Community Meeting which occurred last week on Tuesday the 25th. The meeting went very well and was set up to be interactive with the community members. Attendees were split up into groups of 4-8 people. They utilized large game boards of the city to encourage participants to share opinions and concerns about the city on the interactive maps. McKern stated that many participants were learning a lot about their own community.

This same format will be used at the chamber meeting on Wednesday, August 9th. May do as well at the American Legion Monday evening next week as well.

Chairman Stevenson stated that he would like to see the comprehensive plan as a living document which can be updated as things change in the community.

SHOPKO UPDATE: Charles updated the board that the Proposal which was sent to Kranthi Reality has now been forwarded to the contacts at Shopko. We should be hearing back regarding our proposal.

CEDA UPDATES: Charles attended the Journey to Growth Bi-Annual Meeting and informed the board that the item discussed at the meeting with the largest impact to Kasson was the Highway 14 partnership. They are working to support the partnership with the state to expand Highway 14 from two lanes to four lanes between Rochester and New Ulm.

Charles attended the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota: Main Street Training on Vacant and Underutilized buildings. She informed the board that she found the portion of the program that was designed to deal with problem landlords or buildings which are falling into disrepair. Program facilitators suggested creating a city run program that requires those operating within a set business district, to report to the city after a set period of time if their building is vacant. Vacant buildings, if left vacant for a specific period of time, will be assessed a fee paid to the city. However, fees can be avoided by working on building upgrades or working to fill the vacancy. By making it easy to avoid fines through building improvement, you end up with better looking buildings and can then work further to fill the vacancies. Fees can range from \$500 to \$2,000 per year depending on the community. Must be big enough to encourage land owners to act.

Board Members were concerned about fining for vacancies if it isn't the business owners fault, to which Charles responded that if the city is at fault for not doing enough business recruitment then that is understandable, but if they are leaving buildings to fall to disrepair, price gauging etc. then the program would hopefully induce action from problem property owners.

A number of board members commented on parking being a problem in the downtown area. Biggest problems are in the morning and again between 5:00 and 6:00 pm when parents are dropping off/picking up their children at the Daycare. May need to look into getting a housing study done.

DODGE COUNTY HOUSING STUDY: Charles informed the board that the RFP's have been sent out for the official pricing for the project. She explained to the board that the study will be at a level which will stand up for federal grants/programs and for larger companies looking to move into the area. She will update the board once more information is available.

EDA FOCUS: Charles presented to the board a report from the BUXTON Group that showed the retail leakage that Kasson is experiencing. Showing the largest leakage in clothing, sporting goods, personal care and home furnishing stores. At a chamber meeting last month, we have offered to run individual reports for local businesses, but have only had two requests for the information at this point.

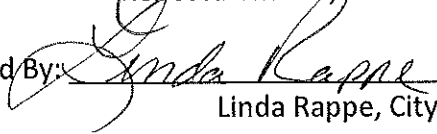
OTHER BUSINESS: No other business

ADJOURNED: Chairman Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 1:05 pm

Minutes Submitted By: _____


Rebecca Charles, EDA Director

Attested By: _____


Linda Rappe, City Clerk