

Economic Development Board meeting November 6, 2014

Present: Dickrell, Meissner, Michalski, Sennholz, Staab, Wagner
Absent: Hendler
Others: Angell, Barg, Dieringer, Earll, James-Mork, Meyer, Olson

Sennholz called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. in Room 108 of the City Hall Plaza.

Approve minutes – October 9th

EDB14-45 Wagner moved and Michalski seconded a motion to approve the October 9th minutes as presented, with a change to reflect that Wagner was present and Hendler was absent. Motion carried unanimously.

Conflicts of interest

No members indicated that they had a conflict of interest with anything on the agenda.

Citizen comments

Sennholz invited comments from citizens, but no one spoke at this time.

Economic development reports

- General updates
 - Angell noted that the Library & Community Center is moving forward, with Phase 4 architectural work and an RFP sent out for construction management services. A generous donation from Everett Roehl put the private fundraising campaign over its \$4 million goal. On the Penney Court project, the façade work is now expected to be \$178,000, above the \$125,000 first anticipated. Angell asked if the Board would increase its grant of \$53,000 to provide the remaining funds available for façade work (\$7,500), or consider more funds to reach the \$89,000 maximum (50%) allowed by program guidelines. It was the consensus to allocate the \$7,500 left in the fund, but nothing additional.
 - Dieringer advised said that Pampered Pooch is moving to a location on North Central Avenue, and Kandy Girl has closed. Jennifer's is opening when their sign arrives, and a nail salon business is opening soon as well. She has done 9 business retention visits in the last month, and she is working with Barg on a "First Impressions" exchange with Chippewa Falls to occur in April 2015.
 - Olson reported that the recent succession planning workshop went very well, although attendance was a bit light. The DNR Secretary spoke last week at a well-attended event, and it's clear that she recognizes the critical role that her agency plays in the overall economic development picture.

- Downtown master plan
 - Angell reported that an Open House is planned for November 20th. Hours are 11:00-2:00 and 4:00-6:00 in Room 108 of City Hall, and after Main Street's holiday parade at Holiday Inn. It will be an informal setting, and it's hoped to get a good turnout and helpful input from business owners and citizens. This project is still on track, and it's expected that the consultant will provide a final report by the end of January 2015.

- 200 block redevelopment
 - Angell noted that redevelopment of the 200 block of Central/Chestnut is still moving forward, but things have slowed down, due to extra time needed for the Penney Court renovation. Earth Tech of Arpin will raze the 2 structures next spring, and discussions continue with the party who originally showed interest in doing a project at this location. It was agreed we need a “Plan B”, in case development seems unlikely, and it was noted that “green space” was mentioned at the last meeting on the downtown master plan in September.
- Housing programs/projects
 - Angell stated that Wood County has expressed interest in partnering with the EDB on a City subdivision. Efforts continue to explore other ideas from the housing study and members discussed some of the areas identified, including how to best address the issue of dilapidated homes.
- 2015 City budget process
 - Angell noted that the Council has approved a preliminary budget, which goes to a public hearing on November 25th. Nothing changed from what the Board approved in August, and \$5,121 added later to offset the Finance Department staffing costs to administer the old revolving loan fund has been pulled, with this cost now being covered another way. Significant discussion occurred on concern raised at the Council level on funding for the Business Development Director position. It was agreed that the Board needs to portray its projects and successes as a team effort, so that we’re seen as one cohesive group.

Review recently completed TIF strategic plan update

Angell briefly highlighted a report drafted by SCS Engineers and accepted by the Council on October 28th showing the current status and opportunities of each of the City’s 5 active TIF districts. It was noted that recent projects in Mill Creek Business Park have greatly improved the financial outlook for TID #5. No action required.

Consider possible revision to City Policy 4.320 – Economic Development Fund

Wagner offered a proposed revision to City Policy 4.320 requiring a 75% majority of the Council to overturn an EDB decision involving the expenditure of utility dividend funds. **EDB14-46** Wagner moved and Dickrell seconded the motion to recommend approval to the City’s Finance, Budget & Personnel Committee. Motion approved unanimously.

Announce next Board meeting date/time

Sennholz announced that the next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, December 4th at 3:00 p.m. in Room 108 of the City Hall Plaza.

With no further business before the Board, Michalski moved and Meissner seconded the motion to adjourn. With no objection, Sennholz adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Barg, City Administrator