

**BELLE PLAINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2017**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Vice President Fahey led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.

The Belle Plaine Economic Development Authority met in Regular Session at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 14, 2017 at City Hall, 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, MN. Vice President Lisa Fahey called the meeting to order with Commissioners Cary Coop, Chris Meyer, Nathan Shutes, Crystal Doyle and Dick Coleman present. Commissioner Rick Krant arrived at 5:10 p.m. at which time he presided for the remainder of the meeting. Also present was Community Development Director Cynthia Smith Strack.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Commissioner Coop, second by Commissioner Coleman, to approve the agenda as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. 3.1. Regular Session Minutes of July 10, 2017.

MOTION by Commissioner Coop, second by Commissioner Meyer, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of July 10, 2017. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. TREASURERS REPORT.

4.1. Approval of Bills.

MOTION by Commissioner Meyer, second by Commissioner Coop, to approve the payment of bills as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

5. BUSINESS.

5.1. Financial Incentives Update.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained the year to date expenditures of the Façade Improvement Loan program are currently at zero. One project has been approved, a total of \$7,250.00 is remaining available for 2017. The current balance of Fund 800, Revolving Loan Fund is (unaudited) \$184,390.27. The current outstanding principal is \$140,139.75 with outstanding interest of \$9,723.03. All loans are current.

MOTION by Commissioner Coop, second by Commissioner Shutes, to approve the financial incentives update as presented by Community Development Director Smith Strack. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

5.2. Discussion: Meeting with Downtown Property Owners.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained that Mayor Meyer requests dialogue regarding EDA facilitation of meeting with Downtown building/property owners and business operators. Meyer's vision for the meeting is to discuss possibilities for Downtown spaces and to determine, from a market/economic standpoint, how Downtown can be a viable place for business owners, property owners, and local citizens to utilize.

Commissioner (Mayor) Meyer stated he would like to increase commercial activity in the downtown area. He referred back to a period about 20 years in which the State assisted with the Belle Plaine Main Street Program that provided great assistance in revitalization of the central business district. A mock-up of what a majority of the buildings would look like when restored was revealed with drawings associated with the Main Street Program. He suggested a meeting with downtown business owners and managers to gain insight to establishing a revitalization program. Staff would provide information on available grant programs and incentives. It would be a workshop or round table discussion. Commissioner Coleman commented that it is pertinent that owners of vacant buildings be invited. Once the downtown issues are addressed, it is likely meetings will continue in like manner with property owners in the highway commercial district and near the City boundaries. To make the meeting as productive as possible, Commissioner Shutes suggested learning which business owners are ready to sell as a result of retiring or relocation. President Krant wants to ensure there is a strategy for the meeting as there were often times in the past in which the meetings did not provide any measurable results. Commissioner Doyle concurred. An electronic survey was suggested. Commissioner Meyer commented on the current revitalization of Henderson. President Krant suggested that Staff contact the representatives from Henderson regarding their recent successes. The idea of pop-up businesses or shared retail space were mentioned. Commissioner Coop asked, "If you could redesign downtown from a blank slate, what would it look like?" Commissioner Fahey commented that the cricket field could serve as a great attraction for Belle Plaine and to build on that. She also commented that it would be helpful to focus on filling the vacant store fronts. Community Development Director Smith Strack asked the Commissioners to discuss what commitment the EDA is willing to make towards the downtown revitalization and also a project for the sand lot. She reminded the Commissioners of the original core of downtown and its key importance to the community and all that it represents. There has been a lot of investment in the downtown over the years, such as the Post Office, City Hall, and new commercial buildings. Community Development Director Smith Strack said that for a viable downtown, residential apartments are needed so that there is 24 hour activity. Commissioner Shutes commented the City has also had recent successes in the outlying areas and mentioned the Ridgeview Health Center, Coborns, and Oakcrest Elementary School..

It was the consensus to direct Community Development Director Smith Strack to prepare an agenda that outlines the purpose and goal of the meeting. It will be a work shop setting with two or three business owners invited to help strategize. Discussion will continue at the next EDA meeting.

5.3. Discussion: Business Subsidy Policy Update.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained the EDA held initial discussion and identified potential priorities pertaining to a revision of the business subsidy policy.

The Commissioners reviewed the final draft and recommended it be presented to the City Council for their review. A public hearing is required and it is likely a joint session with the City Council and EDA will be held.

5.4. Discussion: Listing of City-Owned 4 Acre Commercial/Industrial Lot Adjacent to Laredo Street.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained the City owns a four-acre lot adjacent to the public works facility with access from Laredo Street, South Street, and Diversified Drive. The City previously had a real estate listing agreement (2014) with a commercial broker. In 2015 the EDA reached consensus to not enter into a re-listing agreement with the brokerage firm. Earlier this year the EDA authorized mailings to area contractors and architects regarding ability to partner to create concept plans for the property. John Behnke responded to the mailing noting the lot was not listed on typical commercial/industrial real estate resource listings. Behnke asked about the EDA'S interest in listing the property.

It was the consensus to add this topic to next month's agenda for further discussion.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

6.1. Commissioner Comments.

Commissioner Shutes expressed his appreciation for the posting of EDA packet information on the City's website. He also informed the Commissioners of the recent orderly annexation agreement announced by the City of Jordan and St. Lawrence Township. Commissioner Doyle commented on the popular Belle Plaine Rocks program and thanked Community Development Director Smith Strack for starting the project here. Commissioner Doyle commented on the growth and expansion of the small town of Aitkin. President Krant noted the many new shops opening in Waconia.

6.2. Director's Update.

Community Development Director Smith Strack provided highlights from the Director's Update.

6.3. Upcoming Meetings.

- 1. Regular Session, 5:00 pm, Monday, September 11, 2017.**
- 2. Destination 2040, 6:00 pm, Wednesday, September 13, 2017.**

The Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming meetings as listed.

7. ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR SESSION.

MOTION by Commissioner Coop, second by Commissioner Fahey, to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 p.m.
ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Krings
Recording Secretary