

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA) conducted an EDA meeting on Thursday, February 9, 2012, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Member John LeTourneau
 Member Colin McGlone
 Member Wayne Skaff
 Member Jim Steffen
 Member Kristine Williams (arrived at 7:33 a.m.)
 Member Jeff Wise (left at 9:00 a.m.)

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Aaron Backman, Economic Development/Marketing Manager
 Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator
 Heidi Nelson, Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director
 Councilmember Randy Backous (arrived at 8:10 a.m.)
 Economic Development Consultant Mike Mulrooney
 Scott Davy, General Manager of Comfort Suites (left at 8:40 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Riley called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members Skaff, LeTourneau, McGlone, and Wise.
Voting No: None. Absent: Member Williams.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Skaff, to approve the January 12, 2012 minutes as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members LeTourneau, Skaff, McGlone, Steffen, and Wise. Voting No: None. Absent: Member Williams.

EDA BUSINESS

Case #1 2012 Work Plan

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the Staff Report that gave an overview of the 2012 EDA Work Plan.

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman explained two new additions to the work plan: membership in the Minnesota Commercial Association of Realtors (MNCAR) Exchange and the Twin Cities Gateway Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

Economic Development Consultant Mulrooney stated the most important part of MNCAR is the exchange of information regarding properties, etc.

Discussion ensued regarding membership in MNCAR.

Member Williams stated she has experience with MNCAR and it is an important resource and stated she thinks it is a good idea to become a member especially now that city economic development memberships are more common with MNCAR.

Member McGlone stated that with trying to understand the roles of the HRA and EDA, he sees items on the work plan as shown in the guidelines that seem to be outside of the EDA purview. He stated the public could get the idea that the EDA can do something it cannot do.

Chairperson Riley stated the board has struggled with this before and there does seem to be some overlap of responsibilities between the bodies. He stated there might be some language that needs to be clarified in the work plan. He stated the board's position is to make sure the City is as business friendly as possible.

Discussion ensued regarding if and where the 167th/Hwy 47 commercial node redevelopment and obtaining a zip code for Ramsey fit on the 2012 EDA Work Plan.

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Williams to approve the proposed 2012 Work Plan with a few tweaks in the language that were discussed in regards to the post office and code enforcement.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley. Members LeTourneau, Williams, Skaff, Steffen, and Wise. Voting No: Member McGlone. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman suggested moving Case #3 before Case #2 as Scott Davy, General Manager of Comfort Suites was present for that case and as it is part of the 2012 work plan.

Case #3: Membership in Twin Cities Gateway CVB

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the Staff Report that updated the EDA on membership in the Twin Cities Gateway Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB). Membership would bring more people into the community to stay at the hotel, to attend events like Game Fair, venues like the Links at North Fork and the Fountains of Ramsey, and to frequent area restaurants and businesses. Guests pay a 3% local option sales tax when staying at hotels within member cities. The CVB would receive the proceeds of the sales tax collected for marketing activities and the City would receive funds to be used for Happy Days and administrative costs.

Scott Davy, General Manager for Comfort Suites explained the hotel's relationship with the National Sports Center (NSC), how the CVB membership would benefit the hotel and any future hotels in Ramsey, as well as the area businesses and the City, and described the remodeling that has taken place in the hotel.

Discussion ensued regarding membership in the Twin Cities Gateway CVB.

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Skaff to recommend City Council consider joining the Twin Cities Gateway CVB.

Further Discussion

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman stated that there is a Twin Cities Gateway CVB Board of Directors that meets once every two months, and the City of Ramsey would have one member on the board.

Member LeTourneau asked if the board member could come from the community or if it needed to be City Staff.

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman stated the member could come from the community; it is typically a city staff person, elected official, or person representing a hotel.

Chairperson Riley clarified that staff time would not have to be used to fill the board position.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley. Members LeTourneau, Skaff, Steffen, Williams, and Wise. Voting No: Member McGlone. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

Case #2: 2012 Marketing Plan

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the Staff Report that discussed the components of the 2012 Marketing Plan.

Chairperson Riley stated he wants to make sure the EDA is not overlapping what the Development Team is doing here in the COR.

Member LeTourneau stated he does not see anything in the Marketing Plan that is in conflict with what is on the 2012 Work Plan.

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Williams to approve the 2012 Marketing Plan as proposed.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley. Members LeTourneau, Williams, Skaff, Steffen, and Wise. Voting No: Member McGlone. Abstain: None. Absent: None.

Case #4: Buxton Prospect Update

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the staff report that updated the members on Buxton retail prospects. He stated that it was conveyed to him by one prospect that a major anchor would create more excitement for other retail to be located in the COR.

Case #5: Update on Big Ben Project

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the Staff Report that updated the members on the Greater MSP request for possible site locations. He stated that the City made the first cut and a more in-depth submittal for each of two sites, the old Municipal Center and Connexus Energy Outlot A was sent by the February 3rd deadline.

Case #6: Staff Update

Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman presented the Staff Report that discussed current leases on Highway #10. For the first time in six years all city-owned buildings on Highway #10 are fully leased.

Member Wise left the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Case #7: COR Update

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Nelson presented the Staff Report that discussed the activity in the COR.

MEMBER/STAFF INPUT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Skaff, seconded by Member Steffen, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Members Skaff, Steffen, LeTourneau, McGlone, and Williams. Voting No: None. Absent: Member Wise.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron Backman
Economic Development/Marketing Manager

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Planning Division Secretary