

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

The City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA) conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, July 12, 2012, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Member John LeTourneau
 Member Colin McGlone
 Member Wayne Skaff
 Member Jim Steffen
 Member Jeff Wise

Members Absent: Chairperson Chris Riley
 Member Kristine Williams

Also Present: Kurtis Ulrich, City Administrator
 Patrick Brama, Management Analyst
 Mike Mulrooney, ACG
 Karen Skepper, Anoka County Director of Community and Government Relations

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Pro Tem Skaff called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:35 a.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member Steffen, to approve the agenda.

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

3. APPROVE MINUTES

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated June 14, 2012

Motion by Member Steffen, seconded by Member LeTourneau, to approve the June 14, 2012, minutes as presented.

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

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Business Retention Program Introduction

Management Analyst Brama presented the staff report and indicated this is an introduction to the Business Retention Program and provided background information. He introduced Ms. Karen Skepper, Anoka County Director of Community and Government Relations, to provide assistance for the potential Ramsey Program.

Ms. Skepper provided history on using economic development tools. She defined and explained the Economic Gardening Program and the criteria necessary for this program. She noted the key is to find 50 businesses that fit the criteria, which is narrowed down to 15 ideal companies and these 15 are provided tools to prosper.

Member LeTourneau asked the cost of the program.

Ms. Skepper noted the cost is \$10,000 to bring a company through the program. She noted HRA funds are accruing and would recommend the Board request City Council pass a resolution to add EDA powers to HRA so funds accumulated could be used for businesses.

City Administrator Ulrich asked what is the downside or concerns of granting.

Ms. Skepper noted there is no negative impact on economic development powers. She stated the program began five years ago and has an opt-out clause, which no city has exercised.

Member Skaff questioned if other cities were being approached to which Ms. Skepper replied yes.

Commissioner McGlone asked for an explanation with taxing authority.

Ms. Skepper explained taxing authority within the City and within the County. She noted they wait for the Ramsey City Council on how to direct funds.

City Administrator Ulrich noted the EDA does not have taxing authority through the County but could they if wanted.

Ms. Skepper noted the County does not have that ability.

City Administrator Ulrich felt it was worth further review and suggested they consult with their attorney as well as other cities.

Ms. Skepper stated there is no opportunity for the County to diminish the Ramsey EDA powers. She welcomed the Board attend their meeting on August 3rd.

Management Analyst Brama noted there are several other initiatives available for a retention program, which he provided along with their goals. He requested feedback and direction.

Member Wise questioned that there are no negatives to the program and suggested speaking with some cities already in the program.

Member McGlone questioned if funds are already coming out of taxes why they need EDA and to join forces. He noted the lack of information.

Member Steffen questioned if the dollars have previously been tapped.

City Administrator Ulrich noted dollars have been used in the past for housing projects.

The Board questioned the fund and discussed how to access the funds.

Member McGlone questioned \$10,000 per business noting they want 50 businesses and asked if that is a proper use of this money.

City Administrator Ulrich suggested they refer to the HRA. He noted depending upon the balance, and if earmarked for housing, some housing projects in the near future may want these dollars so should they hold to allocate then.

Management Analyst Brama stated he will bring a proposal forward.

4.02: Review Website Updates

Management Analyst Brama presented the staff report and noted some updates and revisions that were needed and implemented. Staff requested suggestions for further changes or updates.

Member McGlone questioned if under City Owned Sites they were offering to the business community to list. He also questioned sale versus lease.

Management Analyst Brama replied they are open to requests and can accommodate.

Member Skaff commended Management Analyst Brama for his work.

The Board recommended suggestions for a few additional changes.

4.03: Introduce/Adopt Business Spotlight Article Policy

Management Analyst Brama presented the staff report and provided a background of the publication. He noted currently there is no policy to decide who is spotlighted in the article and provided a proposed policy for review and adoption.

City Administrator Ulrich added it is a fairly new program and they would like to have a process with open access.

Member Skaff asked if the City is choosing the businesses or if people are seeking to be spotlighted. He also asked who writes the article.

City Administrator Ulrich noted that the City decides on the businesses as well as they receive requests. He added for the article the business provides background and the City edits.

Member LeTourneau stated there are a lot of worthy businesses so he believes less control is better and noted he has faith in Staff to select. He suggested the policy say businesses sign up per openings.

Member Wise stated he thought most businesses do not know about this and suggested sending out a postcard.

Member McGlone questioned which business would not want to be featured. If cards were sent out and they get too many responses, they would need to select and this may be considered favoritism. He noted there are only six slots per year.

Member LeTourneau stated first-come first-served may eliminate the favoritism illusion.

Member Wise questioned if the *Ramsey Resident* is delivered to businesses.

City Administrator Ulrich stated he will check and advise.

Motion by Member LeTourneau, seconded by Member McGlone, to leave the Business Spotlight Article selection process with Staff to provide the businesses and rank.

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

4.04: Selection of September/October Business Spotlight Article Business

This item was discussed in conjunction with Item 4.03.

4.05: Business Appreciation Golf Tournament Update

Management Analyst Brama provided an update of the 2012 Golf Tournament and summarized where they currently are in the process. He noted Anoka County will be submitting an article in its next newsletter.

Member McGlone questioned if someone is not a golfer but they want to be a part of the event, would they be open to the idea.

Member Skaff noted there is a provision to be a part of the event without participating in the tournament.

Member LeTourneau noted they could be a hole sponsor as well.

4.06: Selection of the 2012 Ramsey Business of the Year

Management Analyst Brama presented the staff report indicating the 2012 Ramsey business of the year top four nominees. Information has been requested from these businesses. He recommended moving the August EDA meeting to the first Thursday of the month in order to give the winner time to prepare and promote.

Member LeTourneau asked what questions were sent to the businesses.

Management Analyst Brama noted the questions from the last meeting.

Member Skaff suggested to table until the August 2nd meeting.

Consensus was reached to reschedule the next meeting on August 2nd.

Management Analyst Brama stated he will send out an email noting the meeting date change.

4.07: Ramsey EDA Business Network Breakfast Update

Management Analyst Brama presented the staff report noting the date selection of November 29, 2012. Staff reviewed options and noted there is no budget for a keynote speaker. He requested the Board discuss whether they want to pay for a keynote speaker or seek one from a business at no charge.

Member LeTourneau asked the history of paying for a speaker.

City Administrator Ulrich questioned if Mr. Mulrooney has previously presented programs.

Mr. Mulrooney stated he has the capability but there are other options, maybe tap into the Federal Reserve regarding the economic outlook, someone to draw in businesses.

Member Skaff noted it is not about having a professional speaker, it is about education, and networking is important.

Member McGlone questioned having breakout sessions.

City Administrator Ulrich agreed having a few breakout sessions should be considered for further discussion.

Member Wise questioned separating businesses by area, such as retail versus restaurants.

Consensus was reached to move from keynote speaker to a hybrid – speaker plus interactive.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

The EDA reviewed the Staff Update.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Patrick Brama
Management Analyst

Draft by Cheryl Felix
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.