

**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, December 11, 2014, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Acting Chairperson Wayne Skaff
 Member Glen Hardin
 Member John LeTourneau
 Member Chris Riley
 Member Kristine Williams

Members Absent: Chairperson Steffen
 Member Philip Brunt

Also Present: Patrick Brama, Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development
 Tim Gladhill, Development Services Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

It was noted that Approve Minutes should be removed from the agenda, as the minutes were not included in the packet.

Motion by Member Hardin, seconded by Member Williams, to approve the agenda, as revised above.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Acting Chairperson Skaff, Members Hardin, Williams, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Steffen, Member Brunt.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

This item was removed upon adoption of the agenda.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Review Draft EDA Workplan

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama presented the staff report and asked for input on the EDA Workplan.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated when reading the resident survey, the only area the City was marked down on was business and retail and he wondered if they could include that on their work plan list because that would be a quality of life issue.

Member LeTourneau agreed and also thought about a greater expectation of the community. He would like to see something added that addresses quality of life.

Member Riley stated that would be kind of a different direction for this group.

Acting Chairperson Skaff thought since they were taking on the role of the HRA, this would be a new direction the Board would need to take.

Member Riley agreed.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama thought the survey was a great tool. He reviewed the first priority list with the Commission as follows:

Item 1 – Deliver Quality Customer Service to their existing businesses, prospect businesses and other types of businesses in the area.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama noted there is a lot of behind the scenes work done by staff in regard to customer service. As the City continues to grow and they have additional customer service demands, it will outweigh the current staff resources. He noted some of the outside services they use to maintain customer service demands.

Member LeTourneau stated this almost seems to be a case in itself. He suggested this come back at a future meeting in Case format for further review and to dig in deeper to see how they can address this before it becomes a potential issue.

The EDA agreed with the suggestion of Member LeTourneau.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated they are currently meeting customer service demands and are not failing. There are no issues and staff is able to work on all projects.

Member Riley wondered if this should be a future case when Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama cannot handle the work anymore.

Member LeTourneau thought they needed to discuss where they are at before it gets to that point.

Acting Chairperson Skaff agreed.

Member LeTourneau noted the Council will be discussing in a Work Session planning for future needs.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama reviewed the second and third items with the Commission as follows:

Item 2 – Business Retention & Expansion is about developing and maintaining relationships. Putting together EDA events and going to network events. This is part of the EDA that most people understand and expect of the Commission.

Item 3 – Future Business Park, there are a number of specific work items with deadlines and completion times with some items that have phases.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama suggested adding one item to the list, which is RFQ that has been pushed out to Engineering Firms for cost analysis. He stated staff needs to dive in and address the possible implications of nearby train tracks and if they would hinder businesses from coming into Ramsey.

Acting Chairperson Skaff wondered if there was a way to do a seismic study on the implications of train vibrations near the proposed business park.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated this can be done if the Commission and Council decide it is needed.

Member Williams thought it was important to find out first what the cost is and then what benefit it would be for the City.

Member Riley stated a perspective user would probably want to do their own study so a study done by the City may have limited value and not worth the time or money. He stated if the prospect business is concerned about it, the business would probably want to move elsewhere.

Member Riley stated they are not trying to focus on warehouse businesses with very few jobs.

Member LeTourneau stated the City needs to balance this out, look at the market, at what is needed, and what can be handled.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama reviewed the fourth through seventh items with the Commission as follows:

Item 4 – Old Municipal Center Redevelopment, they are looking to redevelop this parcel.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama did not think this needed to be reviewed at this time.

Item 5 – 167 Avenue/Highway 47 Redevelopment, this has been reviewed a number of times and a statement of goals has been put together. They have received a second request from Rum River Hills, which is seeking assistance and a partnership with the City.

Item 6 – Sell Surplus City-Owned Land, is a catchall item. They have a large surplus of City-owned land they are trying to develop.

Item 7 – Performance Measurements, try to tie in with the Council’s strategic plan. Staff would like to bring forward a specific matrix.

Member Riley thought Performance Measurements was a spot to note the number of new businesses that have moved into the City, the value of property, the number of jobs, and the businesses visited. Those are the measurable things. He noted there are other non-measurable things and staff always needs to make sure they keep a running total of the businesses moving in and number of jobs.

Member LeTourneau thought the information could be put into some kind of measurable format. A net promoter score.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama reviewed the Second Priority items with the Commission, as follows:

Item 1 – Workforce Issues continue to be a concern for the City. There is a workforce issue right now and manufacturers are having a hard time getting machinists to do the work.

Item 2 – Perception of Ramsey, staff has received comments from businesses and prospect businesses and this group may want to take on that project.

Item 3 – Transportation Improvements need to evaluate on how to improve transportation in the City.

Item 4 – Marketing Materials & Community Profile, there may be an opportunity for the EDA to get involved.

Item 5 – Updated COR Sign Plan and Policy and a financial plan for all of the monument signs required in the COR. Tenants within the COR are very passionate and charged about their signage. They are getting a lot of feedback from existing users within the COR. There is a tentative plan that the previous project manager put together.

Member Riley asked if there is a legal agreement with the businesses where the City is required to put up signage.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated they are not obligated to put a sign for any of the businesses other than McDonalds but there is an expectation and demand for having monument signs within the COR.

Acting Chairperson Skaff indicated he was impressed and thought a lot of effort and work was put into the EDA workplan.

4.02: Consider New Policy for the Sale of City Owned Land

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama presented the staff report and noted with the recent dissolution of the Ramsey HRA, it was recommended by the Council that the City consider a new policy for selling City-owned land. This policy outlines the Ramsey EDA's role in the sale of City-owned land. He presented the staff report to the Commission. Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama noted the plan is very flexible and is intended to be that way.

Member Riley thought it was really important the Commission understand the Council has pushed to have the EDA review cases before it comes to the Council but there will be times where the timing of the offer may not work for the EDA so they are putting a policy in place to address this. Time may not permit them to wait for EDA review so it will take a while for them to make a process for this. Time becomes an issue and could become problematic. This may potentially conflict with their policy often.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated he would be willing to meet a couple times a month to review something for the City Council if needed. He thought EDA involvement would be important.

Member Hardin suggested sending out an email with a twenty-four hour notice of comments.

Member Riley stated he would not necessarily want information sent via email.

Member LeTourneau was not sure if they could send out emails because it could be construed as an open meeting violation.

Member Hardin wondered if the City Attorney had a suggestion.

Acting Chairperson Skaff thought Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama should look into possible ways to have the EDA review the information.

4.03: (Example Case) Consider Offers to Purchase City Owned Property Located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama presented the staff report and explained the City has received two offers to develop this property. Staff considers both offers to be informal and in concept-format. The purpose of this case is to receive general/preliminary direction from the Council.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama explained the offer from D.R. Horton is unique--they are requesting that a portion of the deal include a land swap. The City would receive about 4.86 acres of D.R. Horton owned land located within The COR in exchange for a discount on the purchase of City owned property.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated he was going to review how the offers are the same and different. He noted this item is just an example case for the EDA to go through a case and Closed Session and practice the routine that will be asked of them as the new EDA/HRA Commission.

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member Williams, to move to Closed Session to discuss acquisition negotiations.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Acting Chairperson Skaff, Members Riley, Williams, Hardin, and LeTourneau. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Steffen and Member Brunt.

The EDA moved into Closed Session at 8:28 a.m.

The EDA reconvened in Open Session at 8:36 a.m.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama recapped the closed session.

Development Services Manager Gladhill recapped the residential redevelopment opportunity with the Commission.

The Commission did not have any further questions.

4.04: Review Resident Survey Results

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama presented the staff report and reviewed the City survey results with the Commission.

Acting Chairperson Skaff stated what stood out to him is that twenty percent of the people who live in Ramsey, work in Ramsey and he thought their goal is to get more businesses in the City to create local employment.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated a web page has been created for performance measurements at: www.cityoframsey.com/performancemeasurements. The City is trying to be a more transparent and this web page is one step in that direction.

4.05: Consider Payment of Building Permit Charges for Single-Family Home; Case of Homes for Our Troops

Development Services Manager Gladhill presented the staff report with the Commission.

Member LeTourneau asked if there are other organizations the City has partnered with and if this is a normal City function.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the City is involved in charities and in the past was involved with Habitat for Humanity where staff gave of their time. He was not sure whether

or not they charged for the building permit but he figured they probably did. He stated if the City waives the building permit fee, there is no revenue source to cover the cost for staff.

Member LeTourneau stated it does lend itself to see if this is an appropriate thing to do. He asked what some of the normal funding sources are.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated there are a number of different charities that the City donates to where they do not charge for services. He is not sure that Home for our Troops was looking for donated staff time and there is the potential for large projects at the beginning of the next year.

Member Riley clarified that the City would not be writing a check for \$4,000 but the City would waive the fee.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated that was correct, he stated it is a matter of transferring funds between departments.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated there are some left over HRA revenues this year that could potentially be targeted to pay for the loss of revenue.

Acting Chairperson Skaff wondered if they could put the funds into escrow for 2015 for this.

Development Services Manager Gladhill did not think that would be possible.

Member LeTourneau wondered if they could look to the Anoka County HRA for dollars for this cause. He stated there are a lot of different sources they could look to and if they did waive the fee, it would gain the City a positive image by co-partnering with the County. Member LeTourneau thought it might be worthwhile to contact Anoka County Veterans Services and ask if they have funds to help with this.

Member Riley thought for \$4,000, staff would have to figure out how the budget and funds would get used but he believed they could use HRA fund dollars.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama stated the surplus from the HRA budget was slated to supplement the growth in the EDA budget over the next couple of years.

Motion by Acting Chairperson Skaff, seconded by Member Williams, to recommend that the City Council use the HRA funds related to the building Permit for a new single-family home proposed by Homes for Our Troops.

Further discussion: Member Hardin asked if they could do this with the caveat that they contact the Anoka County Veterans Services to ask if they would donate \$4,000 to pay for the permit fee.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Acting Chairperson Skaff, Members Williams, Hardin, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Steffen and Member Brunt.

4.06: Updates

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama presented project updates to the Commission.

Member LeTourneau would like to add a future case for Dollar General and he was also curious with what is going on with Highway 47 reconstruction.

Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama explained Highway 47 reconstruction is not moving forward because of too many conflicts within the community.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

None.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Acting Chairperson Skaff, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Acting Chairperson Skaff, Members Riley, Hardin, LeTourneau, and Williams. Voting No: None. Absent: Chairperson Steffen and Member Brunt.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Patrick Brama
Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager

Draft by Sue Osbeck
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.