

**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, September 9, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Scott Cords
 Member Chelsea Howell
 Member Rachal Johnson
 Member William MacLennan
 Member Michael Olson
 Member Chris Riley
 Member Jim Steffen

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Sean Sullivan, Economic Development Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Cords, Members Riley, Steffen, Howell, Johnson, MacLennan, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 12, 2021

Motion by Member Steffen, seconded by Member MacLennan, to approve the August 12, 2021, minutes as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Cords, Members Steffen, MacLennan, Howell, Johnson, Olson, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Consider Purchase Agreement for Lot 4, Block 1, Riverside West; Case of Windows and Doors USA (Portions may be closed to the public)

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member Riley stated that he would like to hear from the applicant.

Frank Serna, applicant, stated that he has been working with staff for the past year. He stated that he has been in business since 2000 and is currently located in Ham Lake. He stated that he has had a hard time finding a property that would work for his business and believes that this would be a good location. He stated that he owns four businesses and is working to grow the windows and doors business and provided additional details on the Weathershield products they will highlight in the showroom.

Member Steffen asked the number of employees.

Mr. Serna replied that he did have 17 employees at one time but that was reduced to seven and now down to three. He stated that he would look to bring in ten employees with the expanded location in Ramsey.

Member Olson thanked him for his service and stated that it sounds like this is well thought out and he is excited about it.

Chairperson Cords asked if all the businesses would be run out of this location.

Mr. Serna replied that two of his businesses are home-based. He stated that the general contracting company that he owns is kept to a minimum, with 12 customers perhaps per year. He provided background information on how his general contracting business led to him starting the window and door business.

Chairperson Cords commented that it sounds like a good opportunity and a good fit for Ramsey.

Member Johnson commented that she knows the applicant's wife and asked if she should abstain from voting. She confirmed that it is just a personal relationship.

Member Riley commented that because it is just a personal relationship, he did not believe she would need to recuse herself.

Member Steffen stated that this will be a great project for Highway 10, and he will be excited to never again call this property the old bookstore.

Member Riley asked if there have been negotiations on the property price.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that the hardest part was finding a property that would be suitable for the use. He stated that the offer provided by the applicant was fair and therefore he did not push back. He stated that the asking price was \$4 per square foot, while the offer was around \$3 per square foot in addition to what this development would bring to the site. He noted that this site would have great visibility from Highway 10.

Mr. Serna commented that staff had been great reaching out to him and following up. He noted that the main reason for the length of time was that he was trying to find a site that had a structure that would work for him. He noted that because he was unable to do that and Economic Development Manager Sullivan continued to reach out to him, he decided to pursue this site and build.

Member MacLennan asked if there is a timeline for construction.

Mr. Serna replied that he would like to begin as soon as possible. He stated that they are working on the blueprints and Weathershield will do the inside build out.

Motion by Member MacLennan, seconded by Member Steffen, to recommend that the City Council approve the Purchase Agreement for Lot 4, Block 1, Riverside West, subject to City Attorney review.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Cords, Members MacLennan, Steffen, Howell, Johnson, Olson, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4.02: Consider First Amendment to Purchase Agreement for Outlot B, COR Stone Brook Academy; Case of Stories Foundation (Portions may be closed to the public)

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member Johnson asked if the entity will be able to secure financing.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan commented that the City is not providing financing and therefore he only has the information the applicant has shared. He stated that the applicant is working with a local bank in attempt to secure the financing.

Chairperson Cords stated that he would assume the request to pay \$1,000 per month rather than the \$3,000 up front would be due to cash flow as this is a nonprofit entity. He asked if the applicant would not have to pay the \$1,000 for one of the months if they were to close prior to that month.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that all of the money goes towards the purchase price, so that does not really matter.

Chairperson Cords stated that he supports the action.

Motion by Member Steffen, seconded by Member Olson, to recommend that the City Council approve the First Amendment to Purchase Agreement for Outlot B, COR Stone Brook Academy, subject to City Attorney review.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Cords, Members Steffen, Olson, Howell, Johnson, MacLennan, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

Economic Development Manager Sullivan thanked everyone that participated in the business appreciation event and provided a recap on the event. He stated that Happy Days will be held this weekend and the Business Expo will take place on October 16th. He reviewed the development update he provided via email. He also advised of an upcoming joint meeting between the Planning Commission, EDA, and City Council.

Member Riley stated that people always want to know what is being developed and stated that perhaps the EDA could put signs out such as “future site of” in order to alert the public. He stated that the signs would provide good information and would also be a form of advertising.

Member Johnson noted that perhaps a local company could make the signs.

Member Riley stated that Public Works has the ability to make street signs and that type of signage as well.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that sometimes the company wants to announce that its coming to the site. He asked if the sign would be given to the business when construction is done, or whether the sign would be reused. He was unsure if the business would have a use for the sign long-term.

Member MacLennan stated that he would be interested in reuse of the sign.

Member Johnson commented that she could support either option.

Member Steffen commented that the Village Bank sign on the GiGi’s site is nice and perhaps staff reach out to the bank to see who makes their signs.

Member Riley agreed that perhaps direction be given to staff to reach out to the bank and find out more information.

Member Olson stated that he would be more interested in the sign style Village Bank used rather than a street sign.

Member Cords stated that in terms of economic development, he likes the idea of having a sign that would educate the public on what is coming to the site.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that he likes the idea of a reusable sign and noted that perhaps they have three signs that could be reused and recirculated for projects. He stated that he can gather additional information.

Chairperson Cords stated that he had a preliminary discussion with members of the Anoka Ramsey Athletic Association Board. He stated that the association is interested in finding a site close to The COR where they could put up a facility for practice and sport space. He stated that type of facility would help to drive economic development in The COR.

Member MacLennan stated that he was a member of the ARAA Board for many years and that is a good step towards indoor space, such as an indoor gym.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that he will continue to follow up and work with ARAA on possible locations.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Olson, seconded by Member Johnson, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Cords, Members Olson, Johnson, Howell, MacLennan, Riley, and Steffen. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Sullivan
Economic Development Manager

ATTEST:

Wendy Schlueter
Economic Development Administrative Assistant

Draft by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.