

**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, March 11, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Jim Steffen
 Member Brian Burandt
 Member Scott Cords
 Member Chelsee Howell
 Member Chris Riley

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Sean Sullivan, Economic Development Manager
 Tim Gladhill, Deputy City Administrator
 Brian Pankratz, CBRE

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Chairperson Steffen suggested reversing the order of cases 4.01 and 4.02.

Motion by Member Cords, seconded by Member Burandt, to approve the agenda as amended.

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

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated February 11, 2021

3.02: Receive Update on Bunker Lake Boulevard Improvement Project

Motion by Member Burandt, seconded by Member Cords, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

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

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Select 2021 Business of the Year

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member Cords commented that when he reviewed the list, he preferred Do All Printing as his first choice and B & F Fastener as his second choice based on community interaction and plans for the future.

Chairperson Steffen commented that his first consideration was tenure and length of time in the City noting that Armstrong Kennels has been in Ramsey since 1926 and has brought so many to Ramsey through the Game Fair and therefore he will vote for that business.

Member Burandt stated that he always values the length of time in the City and recognized that Armstrong Kennels has been a flagship business for the community and brings so many to the community through the Game Fair, therefore he also selects that business.

Member Riley commented that all of the businesses on the list are great and he could support either Do All Printing or Armstrong Kennels. He commented that the City has recently renamed Central Park to recognize the Armstrong/Delaney family and selecting Armstrong Kennels would go along with that.

Member Howell agreed with the comments of Member Riley.

Motion by Chairperson Steffen, seconded by Member Burandt, to select Armstrong Kennels as the 2021 Ramsey Business of the Year.

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

4.02: Consider Updates to City Pricing Strategy for City Owned Land (Portions of meeting may be closed to the public)

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that the purpose of this case is to discuss the pricing strategy for City owned land and recommended that the group go into closed session for that discussion.

Motion by Member Cords, seconded by Member Burandt, to recess the meeting to Closed Session at 7:38 a.m.

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

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:10 a.m.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan reported that during the closed session the EDA discussed the price strategy for City owned land and came to a consensus on that topic.

Motion by Member Cords, seconded by Member Burandt, to recommend to City Council to change the pricing strategy for City owned property as proposed in the handout materials provided by staff.

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

4.03: Discussion About 2021 EDA Events

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report beginning with the recommendation for the Business Expo.

Chairperson Steffen asked for input on what the decisions would be based upon, whether that would be a decision of the City or based on State guidance.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that in terms of event planning staff needs time to setup for those events, therefore it is not possible to host the event in April. He explained that as it stands, those types of gatherings are not allowed under Executive Order and therefore those events of that nature are being delayed or moved. He recognized that additional changes may be coming from the Governor, which is encouraging.

Chairperson Steffen confirmed that the event could not be held in April and therefore the group could host the event in the fall or delay until April 2022.

Member Riley asked if the Business Expo could be combined into the craft fair and Happy Days events.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan commented that while that is possible, the EDA has structured its events to be standalone EDA events. He stated that hosting the event at Adrenaline provided the most successful outcome and helped a Ramsey business.

Chairperson Steffen asked if the Happy Days Committee is also on a wait and see pattern.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that group is proceeding with the framework that the event could be held in the fall, of course dependent upon guidance at that time.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan commented that he will begin planning for a fall Business Expo event. He then moved on to the Business Appreciation Day event, highlighting the modified event that took place in 2020 and the hope to hold it in a more traditional format in 2021.

Chairperson Steffen confirmed the consensus of the EDA to support the staff recommendation to plan for a traditional Business Appreciation Day event format for both golf and banquet.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided background information on the Business Networking Breakfast event and the staff recommendation to hold the event in person. He asked for input on the discussion topics, noting that Highway 10 continues to be an item of interest.

Chairperson Steffen asked and received confirmation that the group should think about ideas for the keynote speaker. He recognized that Highway 10 continues to be something of interest but noted that it seems every event involves Highway 10.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that Highway 10 continues to be a topic but noted that the City has already secured \$91,000,000 in funding and by the time of the event the final design layout will be known therefore that update will be important. He stated that will lead into the “Anoka Solution” project and related schedule and planned closures.

Member Riley agreed that while Highway 10 continues to be discussed, a lot has changed, and it is an important topic for the businesses. He stated that they are beyond the plan they would like to have and are making great progress.

Chairperson Steffen stated that perhaps three or four new businesses could be chosen to speak to highlight their business and why they came to Ramsey.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan agreed that having Ramsey Businesses Speak would be a good idea.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that he would like to set the date for the Business Appreciation date as August 17, 2021 at Northfork to begin planning efforts. He noted that staff can work on securing dates, speakers and venues for the other events. The EDA confirmed consensus with selecting that date and Venue for the 2021 Business Appreciation Day.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

Economic Development Manager Sullivan indicated that he has received more inquiries from businesses related to industrial development. He stated that this topic may come back to discuss potential options for additional industrial areas. He stated that there are also a few existing businesses that are looking to expand, and staff continues to work with those businesses. He noted that both GiGi’s and Java Properties have received recommendations of approval from the Planning Commission and are moving forward to the City Council with the hopes to break ground in April or May. He stated that Storyteller Café is earlier in the site plan process running about a month behind Gigi’s and Java and may go to the Planning Commission at its April meeting.

Chairperson Steffen asked if staff is still in communication with Cobblestone Hotel.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that staff remains in communication with the group, but banks are not actively financing hotels at this time. He noted that there is not an active PA with that business.

Chairperson Steffen asked for an update on electronic billboards.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that per the direction of the EDA staff developed an RFI to request information on dynamic display billboards. He noted that three groups submitted RFI's. He stated that there is interest in the area and staff is working to summarize each of the proposals to present to the EDA.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that Congress passed another COVID relief package that would include an allocation to the City that could be used for City reimbursable expenses or business grants. He noted that the topic will come to the EDA to determine whether another round of business grants would be appropriate.

Chairperson Steffen recognized Member Burandt as this is his last meeting, recognizing his contributions over the past six years and thanking him for his service. He also welcomed Councilmember Howell as the newest Member of the EDA. He confirmed that there are two vacant positions.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan noted that interviews for the EDA vacancies are forthcoming and believed the positions should be filled for the April meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Burandt, seconded by Member Cords, to adjourn the meeting.

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

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:33 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.