

**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, April 14, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Olson
 Member Chelsee Howell
 Member Rachal Johnson (via Zoom)
 Member William MacLennan
 Member Chris Riley
 Member Shanna Stewart
 Member Scott Wiyninger

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Sean Sullivan, Economic Development Manager
 Brian Hagen, Community Development Director/Deputy City Admin

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Johnson	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Wiyninger	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Howell	aye

Motion carried.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated March 10, 2022

Motion by Member Riley, seconded by Member MacLennan, to approve the March 10, 2022, minutes as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Howell	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Wyinginger	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Johnson	aye

Motion carried.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Elect Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Economic Development Manager Sullivan opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member MacLennan, to appoint Michael Olson as Chairperson of the Economic Development Authority through March 31, 2023.

There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Johnson	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Wyinginger	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Howell	aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Olson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chair.

Motion by Member Olson, seconded by Member Johnson, to appoint William MacLennan as Vice Chairperson of the Economic Development Authority through March 31, 2023.

There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Howell	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Wiyninger	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Johnson	aye

Motion carried.

4.02: Consider Application for Sign and Awning Program: Allison's Petite Pastries

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member MacLennan asked the total cost of the signage.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that the cost is approximately \$8,000 for two types of signage, the sign on the building and the spot on the monument sign for the multi-tenant building.

Member Johnson asked how useful the signage has been for Kitchen Table. She stated she does notice the signage and asked if additional interest has been generated from that awning signage.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that he has not received any comments but noted that the awning does draw attention. He stated that the program is utilized for new sit-down restaurant businesses.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Wiyninger, to recommend to City Council to approve a \$1,500 grant from the Sign and Awning Program for Allison's Petite Pastries.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Johnson	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Wiyninger	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Howell	aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Olson recognized the two new members of the EDA and invited them to introduce themselves.

Members Wiyninger and Stewart introduced themselves to the group.

4.03: Consider Letter of Intent for Outlot A, Gigi Addition; Case of The Schiebout Family Limited Partnership, LLLP (Portions may be closed to the public)

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member Riley noted that the previous plan included a steakhouse restaurant, and this plan does not appear to include that feature. He stated that was a desired amenity from the community, which is why there was such support from the City for the previous project. He welcomed input from the developer.

Emily Allegra, representing the applicant, stated that her family started Delta ModTech and is interested in branching out into other industries. She stated that they enjoyed working with the City of Ramsey. She noted that they have customers that fly in and there is not a close place for those people to stay, which is how they got to the concept of a hotel. She commented that staff did bring up the idea of a steakhouse but noted that COVID changed a lot of those dynamics. She stated that restaurants included within existing hotels are currently going bankrupt and therefore that is not included in the plans. She stated that if the hotel does flourish over time, they would be interested in a freestanding restaurant but do not wish to tie the projects together.

Member MacLennan noted the reference to business travel and asked if that has been picking back up.

Ms. Allegra replied that is the reason they are requesting a three-month period in order to conduct an updated demand study of the market. She stated that they know their business has demand as do some others, but they are not yet fully confident.

Member Wiyninger asked if there has been a study on how bringing in a hotel like this would impact the surrounding area.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that a study has not been done on the impact to Ramsey, but it would be likely that people staying in a hotel would provide benefit to other businesses in the area and would also increase the tax base. He noted that there would also be ability for extended stay for construction crews. He stated that while The COR is not the only focus in the community, it is an important asset that the City has invested in.

Member Stewart asked how this hotel would be different than the existing hotel in Ramsey.

Ms. Allegra commented that this hotel would be of a higher scale which brings a higher-level product and would perhaps draw customers from other communities as well.

Member Stewart asked for more details.

Ms. Allegra replied that the demand study would confirm additional details. She stated that they are suggesting a mid to high scale hotel, providing examples. She stated that they would also like to be able to accommodate extended stay and family stays with suites and a pool.

Chairperson Olson asked for clarification on the action before the EDA today.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied if there is consensus that the EDA is willing to consider a land cost write down, that would be good for the developer to hear. He confirmed that additional work would be done at a later time to support the land cost and potential write down.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Wyingner, to recommend to City Council to enter into the LOI with The Schiebout Family Limited Partnership, LLLP as presented, subject to City Attorney review.

Further discussion: Member Riley commented that he supports this action, noting that this would be a three month hold on the land while the study is being completed. He stated that the idea of a land cost write down was similarly discussed three years ago and therefore he would also support the idea of that. He noted that the related work would then be done at a later date. Member MacLennan commented that the potential sports dome could also bring in clients to a hotel. Ms. Allegra confirmed that they have been alerted to that potential which is why they are included features attractive to families in their discussions. Member Stewart asked if the City would receive a copy of the study. Ms. Allegra stated that if they move forward, they would provide a copy to the City, but if they pull back from the project, they would like to keep the study private. Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that it was his impression that the City would be able to keep the study regardless and would require that as part of this process. He stated that there is other interest in the site and typically the City would require earnest money that would not be returned in order to hold the site. He confirmed that he would want that included in the agreement and noted that would be finalized prior to the City Council review. He noted that if the language is not included, the item will not move forward to the City Council.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Johnson	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Wyingner	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Howell	aye

Motion carried.

4.04: 2022 Business Appreciation Day Event Planning

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member MacLennan commented that the tournament was great and is always a lot of fun with the ability to network. He stated that he would really love to see a business from the city cater the event but recognized that may be difficult to arrange.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that when the City went through pricing the last year there were only two available options. He noted that Kitchen Table is not doing a lot of events at this time and the pricing was much higher than other options. He stated that there is a lot of event planning from staff and therefore he would like to use the inhouse catering available from Northfork as that will make the event run the smoothest and in the most efficient manner.

Motion by Member MacLennan, seconded by Member Johnson, to authorize EDA budget allocation of \$5,500, select Wells (Lynde) Catering as the preferred caterer and select Tuesday, August 16th at The Links at Northfork for the 2022 Business Appreciation Day Event.

A roll call vote was performed:

Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Johnson	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Member Winyinger	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Howell	aye

Motion carried.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

The EDA reviewed the Staff Update.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided updates on recent development activity and upcoming events.

Chairperson Olson asked the percentage of Ramsey businesses registered for the Business Expo.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan estimated about 60 percent Ramsey businesses at this time which is around the average of 60 to 70 percent Ramsey businesses. He stated that the event has been marketed differently this year, therefore they will be curious to see if there is a difference in attendance as well. He noted that PACT Charter School will also be doing a craft show that day and hopefully people from one event will also visit the other.

Member MacLennan referenced the planned digital billboard along Highway 10 and stated that there has been discussion as to what would be allowed and not allowed. He stated that there is an existing billboard that contains hate speech which bothers him greatly. He stated that it appears as vandalism but noted a similar sign in Blaine, which leads him to believe it is actual advertising.

He noted that both signs are outside of Ramsey but wanted the City to be very aware of what the billboard company is willing to allow.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan commented on the language included in the contract related to advertising on the billboard that will be within Ramsey. He noted that this will be the first sign for the company in this area and therefore does not believe the other signs mentioned are owned by the same company.

Community Development Director/Deputy City Administrator Hagen provided additional details on the control the City would have over messaging on the billboard. He believed that language could be added to the ordinance in attempt to thwart those types of messages. He stated that last year there was a joint meeting between the EDA, Planning Commission and City Council and noted that he is attempting to schedule another joint meeting with the focus on The COR framework and the MUSA boundary.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Howell	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Wyingner	aye
Chairperson Olson	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Member MacLennan	aye
Member Johnson	aye

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:13 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.*