

**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 13, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Scott Wiyninger
 Member Rachal Johnson
 Member Brittany Lindahl
 Member William MacLennan
 Member Chris Riley
 Member Shanna Stewart

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Sean Sullivan, Economic Development Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Lindahl, to approve the agenda.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wiyninger, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated February 13, 2025

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Lindahl, to approve the February 13, 2025, minutes as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wiyninger, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Consider Loan Application for Restaurant Subsidy Program: King Baguette

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Chairperson Wyingner invited the restaurant owner to speak.

Thao Do, King Baguette, commented that Economic Development Manager Sullivan has been great to work with throughout this process. She recognized the growth in Ramsey and the lack of restaurant choices offered in this market. She stated that this is a new concept she discovered while on vacation in Florida, bringing Vietnamese food to Ramsey. She stated that her husband has worked in Ramsey for 15 years, at Diamond Graphics, and their home is only 14 miles from this location. She provided additional information on the food that will be offered (bánh sandwiches, pho, boba tea and other bakery items), noting that she will add items as they go and explaining that they will offer breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Member Stewart asked for more information on the customer experience.

Mrs. Do stated that they would like to provide the most convenient service for the customer, offering quick drive-thru service, to go orders at the counter, as well as service at the tables with servers.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that this location is a little over 1,600 square feet and asked if the business plan envisions expansion and growth.

Mrs. Do replied that originally, she desired 2,000 square feet, but in negotiation for the space they decided on 1,600 square feet for now with the option to expand.

Chairperson Wyingner stated that he feels a little torn on this as this concept is not a true full-service restaurant, but it does speak to the spirit of what is desired in the community to have more options for food service. He stated that he would feel comfortable with the 50 percent SAC and WAC Loan option.

Member Johnson stated that she feels that this concept is the way restaurants are today when people are more on the go. She stated that people often order food to go or have it delivered. She stated that this location would still offer sit-down service and also incorporates a drive-thru. She stated that this concept adds more options for consumers, which is a great thing and therefore she can support the 70 percent option.

Member Stewart stated that she would agree that while the case may not hit all the boxes, there is a desire to potentially expand in the future. She stated that she could support 55 percent option.

Member MacLennan asked the hours of operation.

Mrs. Do replied that she would be open seven days per week and would be open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Member MacLennan stated that perhaps the drive-thru makes up for the smaller seating area as they will be able to service more people with both options. He stated that a ten-year lease is a big commitment, which is good for Ramsey. He stated that he could support either option.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Lindahl, to recommend to City Council for contingent approval of a \$13,881 (70%) SAC and WAC loan to King Baguette; subject to underwriting, project qualification, and City Attorney review.

Further discussion: Member Riley stated that EDA has been called on to do what it can to bring in restaurants. He recognized that this is a policy to be interpreted by the EDA and while this request may not hit all the requirements, he believed that it is close and is an amenity desired by the community, therefore he will be supporting this.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wyingner, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4.02: 2025 Business Network Breakfast Summary and Approval of 2026 Business Network Meeting Budget

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Member Lindahl commented that the keynote speaker was kicked up a notch and believed they should aim to stay at that level. She asked what the savings that would be gained through food.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan estimated a cost of \$10 to \$12 per plate. He noted that they budgeted \$2,340 for food when the actual cost came in at \$2,755 which pushed the event over budget. He stated that the EDA does have funds to cover that, so it is not a huge issue to have ordered too much food.

Member Riley commented that he approves of what staff did this year, trying to minimize while ensuring there is enough food. He commented that staff did the right thing. He stated that while he likes the idea of having a speaker, there are some speakers in the governmental area that could speak on off years, perhaps for free. He suggested alternating between a governmental-type speaker and a motivational/business speaker. He stated that if there is no charge for the governmental speaker, that could then provide \$5,000 for the motivational/business speaker without impacting the budget.

Member Johnson asked if it would be considered to have police and fire speak about what is expected of a business, or perhaps the Economic Development Director for Anoka County, and asked if staff believe that would be well received by businesses.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that if they alternate years for speakers as Member Riley suggested, those would be good options for those years.

Chairperson Wyingner asked if there would be an opportunity for a local business to sponsor a speaker for the event, which would allow for a higher-quality speaker each year.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that the City has only asked for donations for the golf event as businesses have requested to donate to the raffle. He stated that one business asked to sponsor lunches for that event, noting that was an ask of the business not a solicitation by the City. He stated that he would be leery of asking businesses for sponsorships or donations for City events. He stated that the EDA is the marketing arm of the City and therefore they should not be afraid to spend EDA dollars on events that support and encourage the business community.

Chairperson Wyingner stated that while updates on Highway 10 can be helpful, there is a desire from businesses to have leadership development and to gain something they can bring back to their business.

Member MacLennan agreed that there is value in providing something that attendees can take back to their business. He recognized that there is a cost to do that, but believed that it is value gained in return. He stated that he could also support the every-other-year model. He believed that most businesses will attend if they feel there is value provided.

Chairperson Wyingner stated that a 27 percent drop-off on the register to attend numbers is typical for any event. He stated that he would suggest that they go with option two, noting that would leave the option for staff to find a speaker for \$2,500 or choose a free speaker and leave the \$2,500 in the reserve to add to the budget for a speaker for the next year.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Lindahl, to select LaFontaine Event Center as the event venue with a late January/early February date for the 2026 Business Network Meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wyingner, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Motion by Member Johnson, seconded by Member Lindahl, to adopt 2026 Business Network Meeting budget Option Two, up to \$6,500 with the discretion of staff to choose a paid or unpaid speaker as discussed.

Further discussion: Economic Development Manager Sullivan clarified that the direction from the EDA would be to pursue a good speaker for \$2,500 and if he does not find one at that level, he should then choose a free speaker option for the event in 2026.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wyingner, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided an update on the planning for the Business Expo, development activity, and other items of interest to the EDA.

Chairperson Wyingner commended staff for their great work on the Business Network Meeting. He noted that he recently went along with Economic Development Manager Sullivan on a business visit and commented that he does a great job out in the community.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Wyingner, Members Johnson, Lindahl, MacLennan, Riley, and Stewart. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 8:21 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.