

BRAINERD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Thursday, August 3rd, 2023, 7:30 a.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, President Yeager called the regular meeting of the Brainerd Economic Development Authority to order at 7:30 a.m.

Upon roll call Commissioners Kelly Bevans, Toni Bieser, Justin Grecula, Gabe Johnson, Marie Kirsch, Mike O'Day, and Kevin Yeager, were noted as present. Also, present were Executive Director Bergman, Finance Director Hillman, Community Development Director Kramvik, and HRA Director Charpentier.

Approval of Agenda

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BEVANS AND O'DAY, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

Consent Calendar

Approval of Minutes

Financial Report

DDBC Report

Swanson-Haskamp Consulting Report

Visit Brainerd Report

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS JOHNSON AND BEVANS TO APPROVE THE CONSENT CALENDAR.

Upon roll call Commissioners Bevans, Bieser, Grecula, Johnson, Kirsch, O'Day, and Yeager voted "aye". No Commissioner voted "nay". The Chair declared the motion carried.

New Business

Update by DDBC

Commissioner Kirsch gave an update on the work to date for 2023 that the DDBC has conducted. The organization is volunteer lead that encompasses 94 businesses. The goal of the DDBC for 2023 is to engage with more business owners in downtown, build up organizational committee, and leverage all of the talents to move the organization forward. She highlighted the promotion, special events, and economic vitality efforts of the DDBC. On August 28th RETHOS will be doing a visit downtown, EDA members will be invited to the tour.

Update on YMCA Childcare Facility

Shane Riffle, CEO Brainerd YMCA, gave an update on the childcare facility and funds that have been raised to date to support the new facility. The facility has been funded to about \$1.2 million through various fundraising efforts, with \$440,000 left to fundraise through their capital campaign. There will be a groundbreaking ceremony on September 8th. The facility will utilize 32 new teachers for 66 new spots.

Commissioner Bevans asked why daycare is so hard to find.

Mr. Riffle stated that there is no profit margin considering the space, teachers, food, and regulations. Home care providers have left the market due to the regulations.

Set the 2024 Preliminary EDA Tax Levy Request

Finance Director Hillman stated that the EDA historically requests the maximum levy amount set by State statute. For 2024, the amount is \$186,812 which is an increase of \$33,951 due to a significant increase in City market value. How the EDA determines how to spend the funds by line item can be determined in the upcoming months.

Commissioner Bieser stated that the taxes have increased with the increase of market value. The EDA should be able to operate at the same amount as 2023 to reduce the burden.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he would be comfortable requesting the maximum. The Council can deny that amount. The EDA could also reduce their actual levy prior to December 31st when the budget is being determined. If all of the consultant contracts stay the same, which he doesn't think will happen, this creates another \$34,000 to create initiative programs like the EDA has discussed at its workshops.

Commissioner O'Day stated that he would push for the maximum levy for the EDA as he believes it is some of the most important funding that the City has.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS O'DAY AND BEVANS TO REQUEST THE MAXIMUM LEVY AMOUNT FOR THE EDA FROM THE CITY COUNCIL.

Commissioners Bevans, Grecula, Johnson, Kirsch, O'Day, and Yeager voted "aye". Commissioner Bieser voted "nay". The Chair declared the motion carried.

Update on Framework Progress

Community Development Director Kramvik gave an overview of the deliverables. The consultants met on July 11th. Visit Brainerd would like to schedule a workshop to present the draft website, logo, and slogan. The Planning Commission has agreed to hear considerations for Washington Street Mixed-Use. Staff attended the BPU Coordination meeting to discuss waiving SAC and WAC along Washington Street, there will be an update on this at a future meeting.

Set Workshop for Website Review and Discussion of EDA Vision

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that the workshop will discuss the branding and consultants agreements/ long-term vision of EDA. Staff will send out a poll.

Staff Reports

Tyler Glynn, BLAEDC, gave an update on the DEED Mainstreet Grant funds. Most projects have been paid or are close to being invoiced to DEED. Mr. Glynn deferred to HRA Director Charpentier to discuss the funding for DW Jones. BLAEDC's staff has also made contact with 25 of the businesses on Washington, 7 surveys have been returned.

Chair Yeager asked if the subcommittee should schedule a meeting to have a backup plan in case DW Jones does not incur costs.

Commissioner Johnson stated that it would not be a bad idea for the subcommittee to meet. DW Jones attended the last HRA meeting, it was indicated to them that the only thing they need to do to

quality would be to engage with architects and start incurring costs. He also knows that the next two projects on the list are already under way as well.

Chair Yeager stated that at the last Planning Commission meeting Mr. Stangler's project that was awarded DEED Mainstreet Funds was questioned whether it properly qualified for funding.

Mr. Glynn stated that they have not heard back from DEED on this.

HRA Director Charpentier stated that DW Jones will be getting the project started with architectural aspects. The Planning Commission reviewed the project and City Council approved the HRA to establish the Redevelopment TIF District with DW Jones. This will be helpful for DW Jones to continue pursuing other funding streams. The HRA approved and dispersed the grant for Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity in the amount of \$20,000.

Executive Director Bergman stated that she and Community Development Director Kramvik toured the "Just for Krypto" site, it was fascinating. Any EDA members wishing to tour, she strongly encourages it.

Commissioner Comments/Questions

Commissioner Johnson stated that he attended the DDBC downtown businesses visits, they visited Dragon Forge Games and Fancy Pants Chocolates. It was informative and fun. There is a new business downtown, creating forever jewelry.

Commissioner Bevans stated that he also attended the downtown business visits, very interesting in reference to the challenges that they will face in the future for location. He went to the Parlor to the DDBC Business Social it was very interesting.

Commissioner Kirsch stated that Knotty Pine participated in Street Fest. It was the best attended that she's seen. The vendor market seemed to bring a lot of traffic downtown, that was a very positive addition to the event. Hopefully, coordination with the Jaycee's and DDBC can happen in the future to encourage movement through shops.

Adjourn

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BEVANS AND JOHNSON, DULY CARRIED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The Authority adjourned at 8:23 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Toni Gage

Approved on 10/05/2023