

BRAINERD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Thursday, April 4th, 2024, 7:30 a.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, President Yeager called the 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. Staff present were Executive Director Broyles, Community Development Director Kramvik, Finance Director Hillman, City Engineer/Public Works Director Dehn, and HRA Rehab Coordinator Schommer.

Approval/Amendment of the Agenda- Approved

Commissioner Kirsch requested that the EDA discuss the Highway 210 Project.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BEVANS AND BIESER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE ADDITION OF DISCUSSION OF HIGHWAY 210 PROJECT.

Approval of Consent Calendar

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

Old Business

Approve Brokerage Signs

Community Development Director Kramvik gave an overview of the signs.

Commissioner Johnson asked whether it was industry standard for the broker to produce the signs.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that with the scope of services and brokerage contract he is unsure whether it is the EDA's responsibility or Kamp Realty's.

Ms. Haskamp, Kamp Real Estate, was present online but the audio was not working properly. She will contact staff with details.

Commissioner Johnson stated he supports the use of funds if needed but would like staff to have a conversation with Kamp Real Estate regarding the details first.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS JOHNSON AND O'DAY, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE FINAL SIGNAGE DESIGN FROM KAMP REAL ESTATE AND DEVELOPMENT AND AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SPEND UP TO \$1,000 IN PRINTING COSTS PENDING DISCUSSION WITH KAMP REAL ESTATE.

Approve Amendment to the Brokerage Contract with Kamp Real Estate to Add the Annex Building

Community Development Director Kramvik gave an overview of the agreement. As a part of the agreement, it would be appraised. There have been a number of interested parties to purchase the building.

Commissioner Bevans questioned whether the City Council has approved selling the Annex building. The Council should clarify whether they want to sell it before being listed.

Commissioner O'Day stated that there is money set aside to make improvements to the annex.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BEVANS AND O'DAY, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE ADDENDUM TO THE KAMP REAL ESTATE AGREEMENT PENDING COUNCIL APPROVAL OF THE SALE AND OR LEASE OF THE CITY ANNEX BUILDING.

Consider Proposal from BLAEDC to Administer Grants and Revolving Loan Fund

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that the proposed program provides a 50% matching grant for actual construction costs up to \$5,000 per property on a pay-for-performance basis. Eligible projects include permanent exterior building and landscape improvements visible from a public right-of-way. Staff proposes the EDA allocate up to \$20,000 per calendar year to fund eligible projects. The allocation of funds for the grant would come from the EDA internal funds or the Downtown Revolving Loan Funds. He also stated that Staff would like to continue to refine the goals and guidelines for a potential revolving loan fund for exterior improvements. The low interest loan would provide property owners and businesses with the ability to make substantial investments to the exterior of their building with a maximum loan amount of \$20,000 to \$30,000. There are a number of items that BLAEDC would like to discuss before creating a potential revolving loan program.

Tyler Glynn, BLAEDC, stated that BLAEDC is well equipped to administer a grant and loan fund. He believes that the grant program is pretty straightforward. As far as the loan, there are many variables that the EDA needs to decide on regarding terms, default, and reporting.

Commissioner Bieser asked about the fee to administer the program. She is concerned about the budget, whether the EDA should place a not to exceed amount. She also asked about the expanded area of the River to Rail corridor.

Mr. Glynn stated that the time needed to administer the grant program would be dependent on the number of applicants, but the process would be straightforward. The loan program once the terms were decided would also be reasonable.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that Staff is proposing the expansion of the River to Rails corridor. If the property is adjacent to South 6th and Washington streets the property would be eligible.

Discussion of the Highway 210 Project (added item)

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that the EDA website will include a page on the TH 210/Washington Street reconstruction. The grant opportunities along the corridor will be included on the page.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Dehn stated that the project is still in the early stages of design. The right of way acquisition is underway. The partners including the Police and Fire Departments have been involved in conversations about detour routes. The project is slated to be a two-year project beginning in 2026.

Commissioner Kirsch stated that some of the feedback from business owners was that signage or other pieces of their businesses will be affected by the construction. Will there be a specific grant program to help those businesses to replace signage. It is not clear who is taking the lead on advertising or campaign to keep people aware that businesses are open. Is the EDA going to be heading this effort.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Dehn stated that MnDOT has come a long way on community engagement in the last years in coordinating efforts. The City will be responsible for determining how much effort put into community engagement. MnDOT would be open to sharing some of the cost. He stated that the City could do research on the options that they have for the scope of the community engagement.

Commissioner Kirsch has concerns about funding for these efforts.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that staff could do research for an upcoming EDA meeting.

Commissioner Johnson stated that some of the research should include looking for a group who wants to take the lead on these efforts.

New Business

Consider Expansion to the River to Rails Incentive District

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that the EDA has previously discussed additional incentive programs. Further expansion of the River to Rails District. The Community Development Director spoke with the Public Utilities Director to determine whether the utilities could support the forgiveness of SAC/WAC and some of the permit fees. With the new project, staff did not see an issue with the expansion of the district. The Planning Commission will be reviewing whether mixed use could be utilized in the commercial corridor. He presented the proposed expansion area.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the reasoning of leaving out general commercial district.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that that district has been seeing development and may not need an incentive.

Commissioner Bieser stated that she would like to see the general commercial district included.

Commissioner Johnson would like to see west of the river included.

Commissioner O'Day would like to see South 6th Street included.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that at the next meeting he could provide a new map and a new name of the program.

Commissioner Johnson stated that when it is brought back to project potential revenue loss.

Review 2023 EDA Measurables and Activities

Community Development Director Kramvik gave an overview of the measurables. A total of \$170,395 in permit fees have been forgiven since the start of the River to Rails incentive program.

Staff Reports

Community Development Director Kramvik stated that the website is live. Provide any feedback to Visit Brainerd about the website. Tours to Giovanni's and Lakes Printing are in process of being scheduled. The Planning Commission will discuss further Eight05 Laurel and getting funding through the workforce housing grant.

Executive Director Broyles has had the pleasure to meet most of the EDA commissioners.

Adjourn

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BIESER AND O'DAY, DULY CARRIED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The Authority adjourned at 8:28 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Toni Gage