

BRAINERD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Thursday, September 2nd, 2021, 7:30 a.m.

City Hall Council Chambers

WebEx Teleconference Meeting

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

Upon roll call Commissioners Marie Kirsch, Michael O'Day, Toni Bieser, Kelly Bevans, and Wayne Erickson were noted as present. Also, present were City Administrator Bergman, Community Development Director Chanski, Finance Director Hillman, Eric Charpentier, HRA Director, and Tyler Glynn, BLAEDC.

Approval/Amendment of the Agenda- Approved

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

Approval of Minutes- Approved

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS JOHNSON AND BEVANS, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 5TH, 2021 MEETING.

Financial Report- Approved

Finance Director Hillman stated that the City Council met for a budget workshop on August 30th, 2021. The City Council will set the preliminary budget on September 20th, hearing no issues with the EDA's request for maximum levy.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BEVANS AND BIESER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED.

Updates

Executive Director

Administrator Bergman updated the commission on the street light policy that staff and Safety and Public Works committee is working on and the PEG channel for broadcasting the City Council meetings that will be in partnership with CLC.

Communications Intern Jessie Ernster updated the authority on the Sesquicentennial events. The major advertising in the Brainerd Dispatch will be on September 11th. There are 25 events that community partners have created. Ms. Ernster also updated the commission on the new resident packet that she has been working on to welcome new residents and provide information to current residents.

Community Development Director Chanski updated the EDA on the 2025 Highway 210 project. The project team hosted the first business open house for those

businesses that will be affected. They are also hosting an online open house until September 13th for citizens to give feedback on the proposed changes.

HRA Update

Eric Charpentier, HRA Director, updated the commission on the NorthStar Building boiler improvement. The project is scheduled to be completed at the end of September. He echoed the need to provide input in for the highway 210 project, the HRA intends to apply for a small cities grant to be used during the improvement for city scape and small business improvements. The Chamber and BLAEDC are hosting a housing focus group for which he will be speaking about the Housing Trust Fund and the need for housing in the Brainerd Lakes Area. Crow Wing County needs 4,800 units of housing with 1,500 of those units needed in Brainerd. The HRA met with Crow Wing County HRA to discuss the levy from the county, it is expected to be a flat levy. Some of the dollars from the county levy go toward the Housing Trust Fund and staffing the HRA.

BLAEDC Update

Tyler Glynn, BLAEDC, updated the committee on the Unified Fund, two more loans were awarded to projects in Crosby. The outstanding loan balance is \$620,000 with zero delinquencies. The database and visits to Brainerd businesses is still ongoing, hoping to be completed this fall. Mr. Glynn spoke to the Highway 210 project and the work they are doing with the businesses in connection to the project. The new BLAEDC website is expected to be launched, it will link to MNDOT for the project updates, and link to the new resident packet developed by Communications Intern Ernster. The Residential Recruitment focus group that Mr. Charpentier spoke to is sponsored in part by BLAEDC, it is expected to be well attended and hoping to get good input to form a plan for hiring and retention for local businesses. The Initiative Foundation gave support and assistance to the YMCA to the Mainstreet Revitalization application, which was submitted on time, to receive funding for their project that would open 85 daycare spots in Brainerd. Finally, BLAEDC is in the process of doing a benefits study with the Lakes Area Manufacturer's Alliance to identify the key areas and concerns that employers/ employees in the area have.

Old Business

Consider Options for Economic Development Services

Administrator Bergman stated that she and Mr. Glynn had a conversation on this topic previous to the EDA meeting after having heard conversation about contributions to BLAEDC over the years in EDA meetings. Staff posed three options to the EDA in terms of economic development services: continue to contribute to BLAEDC and handle services administratively, take 50% of Community Development Director's time to devote to economic services, or request for proposals (RFP) to the public for economic services. Staff recommends going out for an RFP which would not preclude BLAEDC.

Commission discussion took place.

Community Development Director Chanski stated that in choosing to go out for proposals it would not bind the EDA to choosing any of the proposals received.

Mr. Glynn stated that he was thankful to Jennifer for having a meeting about this topic prior to the EDA meeting. The BLAEDC Board commented that it will go out for RFP on this matter. BLAEDC will continue to support the City as the epicenter of the county. The City of Brainerd has been traditionally the largest contributor to BLAEDC, the HRA and County HRA is now the largest contributor to BLAEDC.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS JOHNSON AND BEVANS, DULY CARRIED, TO REQUEST PROPOSALS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND FORM A SUB-COMMITTEE OF 3 MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AND STAFF.

The Chair appointed Commissioners Johnson, Kirsch, and O'Day to the subcommittee.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY JOHNSON AND BEVANS, DULY CARRIED, TO APPOINT COMMISSIONERS JOHNSON, KIRSCH, AND O'DAY TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE.

American Rescue Plan Discussion

Community Development Director Chanski stated that the City Council will have a workshop determining priorities in how to use the ARPA funds. The EDA will have the opportunity to make recommendations to the Council.

Commissioners will bring back ideas to the October EDA meeting, any research that needs to be done commissioners can reach out to staff.

New Business

Consider Proposal from Region 5 to Lease the City Hall Annex

Administrator Bergman stated that Region 5 is proposing to lease the Annex with an agreement to improve the building and for a determined amount of time the cost of those improvements would be in lieu of rent. The annex requires improvements in order to continue functioning as a building. The Minnesota Department of Driver's Safety License Exam Office has about 1/3 of the building rented until October 2022. Region 5 would improve the rest of the space prior to the vacation of the License Exam Office in order to easily transition into the space. Staff will pursue other spaces for the License Office to consider if they would like to take the out clause of the lease.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS O'DAY AND BIESER, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL TO PURSUE REGION 5 LEASE TO THE CITY ANNEX BUILDING.


Comments/Questions

Commissioner Bieser requested that the EDA place Social Media on the agenda for the next meeting because it is important to engage younger citizens.

Adjournment

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

The Authority adjourned at 8:35 a.m.


Secretary/Treasurer