



Approved

**REGULAR MEETING
Minutes
04.09.24**

Absent: Jeremy Dresel
Guests: MaryJo Wiatrak

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Kyle Peterson called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance, Marie Rivers, Marlys Dunne, Dallas Fisher, Jason Houle, and Nancy Hoffman from the County EDA/HRA was present.

Staff in attendance was City Administrator John Pechman.

2. APPROVE AGENDA: April 9, 2024.

President Peterson asked if there were any additions to the agenda. Commissioner Rivers made a motion to approve the agenda; Commissioner Dunne seconded; all ayes; motion passed.

3. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA: March 12, 2024.

President Peterson asked if there were any corrections or additions to the March 12th minutes. Rivers made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Commissioner Dunne seconded; all ayes; motion passed.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

5. COMMUNICATIONS, REPORTS AND PETITIONS

5a. City Council Liaison Report

Commissioner Rivers gave an update on the council meeting which was held on March 26th. The Board of Review was set for April 24th at 6pm. Joe Triplet attended the meeting to talk about a Jennifer Court underpass for the Highway 8 project, the cost estimate to the city came in at around 5 million dollars. The Kichisaga preliminary plat was approved. The Chisago Warehouse Liquor is under new ownership and the liquor license for the new owners was granted. The Chisago County communications radio agreement was accepted. The council approved a request from LAPD to use public safety funds for hiring bonuses and retention pay. The street maintenance plan for 2024 was authorized. Park Commission requested approval of a new fishing pier for paradise park. It will be an ADA compliant fishing dock and new path up to the dock, council approved the request, and money will be used out of Park Dedication funds. The lease for the Lokinda caretaker house at Ojiketa was renewed.

5b. County & Neighboring City EDA Updates

Hoffman spoke about some events coming up for the small business development center. May 2nd is the 3rd annual open house, there are presenters scheduled for the event. This is a great opportunity for those interested in starting a business within the county. May 3rd the small business center out of Brainerd is hosting a legacy planning session in North Branch at the HRA/EDA office. The county received local housing aid which they gave to the HRA/EDA to put into the housing trust fund. The HRA/EDA looked at their funding and they are going to allocate some funds to Chisago County Cities for housing, for example a feasibility study. The update to the housing study will kick off next month and hopefully be finished by October.

Dunne gave county updates, there was an engineering and design study done a few months ago for the lakes weir, the system needs to be updated or replaced. The county is planning on using AARP funds to take care of the engineering cost to find out what repairs need to be done.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7a. Monthly Financial Report.

Finance Director Gemuenden submitted the monthly financial report.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8a. 2024 Goals & Updates

1. Highway 8 Project

Pechman stated that Joe Triplet addressed the council last month regarding the Jennifer Court underpass and the cost to the city. Dunne asked what the city thought about the underpass, Pechman stated the council did discuss options, and the park commission will meet on Thursday. It comes down to the cost to the city and the maintenance, there may be other less expensive options. Peterson asked about a bridge rather than a tunnel, the safety of crossing Highway 8 is a concern now and in the future. He believes all options should be considered.

The Northern Long Eared Bat species that are in the project area came up, and the environmental review process to obtain proper clearances at the State and Federal level could push back the project another 8 months.

2. Land Development Activity

3. Fund 51 Update

Pechman stated that a check just went to DEED for the claw back payment. Payments are on auto pay and come in every month. Part of the Grant application is a risk assessment that needs to go to DEED. It is a look back

on previous grants to see if there is a risk. Pechman filled out the risk assessment, which is new as of January of this year, he received a call back from Jeremy at DEED who he submitted the risk assessment and grant to. He is the primary contact for the grant application, he spoke with him regarding the application and there was no mention of any issues with the risk assessment.

8b. BDPI-Grant Application- Repayment Schedule Infrastructure

Pechman gave the commission the written portion of the grant application. He wanted to let the commission know where he was in the application process. Last week Pechman received a call from LEI for an intent to purchase for Lot 3 Block 1 Kichisaga Addition. Today Pechman received a phone call from Paul at LEI, he spoke with his design team and the more they looked at the plat they are now interested in the larger Lot 2 Block 1 of the Kichisaga Addition. He submitted a concept review with three phases for three buildings. Paul does know that Kendall Howard has interest in the same lot. This information does change the information that was submitted for the grant application. The preliminary plat is done, and council is set to approve the final plat at the April 23rd city council meeting. Commissioner Houle asked about the timeline for his buildings, and if he is ready to build and purchase that is a good thing. Commissioner Peterson asked if Randy from Kendal Howard has reached out with interest to purchase. Commissioners agreed to have a closed session to discuss the LEI proposed business.

Pechman went to the council with the grant application to figure out how to pay for the EDA portion of the work. The amount after the grant money is estimated at \$307,771. The funding will come from the EDA Funds 51 and 25 along with the Capital Roads Fund and ARPA Funds. The land sales will pay back the city funds. Pechman has different tracks of funding set up dependent on the land sales, he must fund the project to receive the grant money.

9. NEW BUSINES

9a. MaryJo Wiatrack Application

MaryJo Wiatrack applied to the EDA; she gave an introduction and background to the commission. Commissioners asked Wiatrack some questions.

Commissioner Dunne made a motion to accept MaryJo Wiatrack to the EDA with City Council approval; Commissioner Rivers seconded; all ayes; the motion was approved.

9b. Forgivable Loan Resolution-LEI Inc.

Pechman provided commissioners with a Resolution for LEI regarding the Chisago County Forgivable Industrial Development Loan Fund program. The program requirements are a minimum of 10 employees within 3 years, those positions need to have a minimum hourly rate of \$25.00 per hour and LEI's

investment needs to be over a million dollars. LEI will meet and exceed all the requirements. Houle asked how much the loan amount was, Hoffman stated it was up to \$100,000.

Commissioner Dunne made a motion to approve the Resolution of support for LEI Inc. for the Chisago County Forgivable Industrial Development Loan; Commissioner Rivers seconded; all ayes; the motion passed.

10. ADJOURN

Commissioner Rivers made a motion to adjourn; Commissioner Dunne seconded; all ayes; the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Alisa Bodell
Executive Assistant