



**Blue Earth Economic Development Authority
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, November 10, 2022, at 7:15 am
Official Proceedings**

Minutes:

CALL TO ORDER

President Laehn called the meeting to order at 7:16 a.m. in the Blue Earth City Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Members present: Lissia Laehn, Chase Brandt, Peggy Olson, and Wendy Cole

Members Absent: Jamie Jones, Bill Rosenau, and Rick Scholtes

City staff present: Mary Kennedy; City Administrator and Amy Schaefer; Economic Development Specialist

Also present: Shellie Potter; Chamber of Commerce, Fiona Green; Faribault County Register, Angie Kopplow; CEDA, Sheryl Eckhardt and Margaret Brandt; St. Lukes.

A quorum was determined to be present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Kennedy added a closed session (pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.03; 13D.05, subd. 3) to the agenda under Old Business.

Motion by Cole, second by Olson, to approve the agenda with the addition. The motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

The following items were included under Consent Items for approval.

Regular Meeting Minutes of October 20, 2022.

Bills and Financials October 2022

Loan/Grant Updates

Motion by Brandt, second by Cole, to approve the consent items as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

November Business Spotlight

Sheryl Eckhardt and Margaret Brandt, representing St. Lukes, were present for the Business Spotlight. Brandt shared that the facility is licensed for 64 beds and currently have filled approximately 55-57. In addition, Southview Estates consists of 24 private units with 4 open, New Life Manor has 24 units, which are presently full, and the assisted living, Friendship Court, has 28 units, of which 7 are open. Eckhardt explained that they have 150 staff members, of which about 125 are on the payroll regularly. They have hired quite a few employees recently and have had a



good number of applicants. She explained that the Board has been very generous and active in recruiting, while trying to accommodate workers with things like shift differential and letting workers pick shift hours. Kennedy inquired about volunteer opportunities they may have. Eckhardt shared that they could really use a volunteer to attend to the locked doors, letting people in and out, as well as answering the telephone. She added that they are very open to volunteers and can use them in many ways.

Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan Request

Schaefer brought forth the application from Napa Auto & Farm Parts. Napa would like to add metal siding and insulation to the building. The project is estimated at \$23,958.00 and they are requesting the \$5,000 Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan.

Motion by Brandt, second by Cole, to approve the Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan in the amount of \$5,000.00 to Napa Auto and Farm Parts. The motion passed unanimously with Olson abstaining from the vote.

2023 Business Spotlight Program

Schaefer explained her idea for the 2023 Business Spotlight being that each month would be focused on a specific category of business, for example: women owned business, student entrepreneurs, veteran owned business, etc. One month would be spent identifying them, learning about them, exploring programs available to them and the next month they would be highlighted as the spotlight, with spotlights every other meeting, instead of every month. The Board agreed to try this idea for a year.

OLD BUSINESS

Commercials

Schaefer shared an email she received from a CEDA employee interested in doing commercials, after viewing the Blue Earth commercials. This is an example of how the commercials have been getting attention and have been great for the City of Blue Earth.

Veterinarian Update

Schaefer included an update in the packet, but also reported that on Monday she met with Haley, a woman that is gaining recognition in Agriculture, as she runs a 100 head cow/calf operation in Martin County. Haley had some very good ideas to think about, including expressing to the community the value and importance of local food production and how losing a vet will have a trickle-down effect on so many things in the local economy. Dr. Bogan has 58 local producers as clients, which would be a great source of input. Hosting a clinic with producers and veterinarians and holding workshops on local foods is one way to get the community involved. Schaefer shared that she would like to apply for a Compeer grant for a producer meeting and try to explore some of the ideas Haley shared. Schaefer added that the problem is much more far reaching than just getting a vet. Brandt agreed that the trickle-down effect goes onto meat lockers, restaurants, stores, jobs, and food prices, as it is all interconnected.



Closed Session

Motion by Brandt, second by Olson, to go to closed session at 7:47 am. The motion was passed unanimously.

Motion by Brandt, second by Cole, to end the closed session at 7:59 am. The motion passed unanimously.

Kennedy reported that the closed session was for discussion of a real estate transaction. No decisions were made.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

STAFF REPORTS

EDA Specialist Update

Schaefer's update was included in the packet. Laehn inquired about the Day of The Dead Festival with everyone in agreement that it was a huge success. Laehn also inquired about a VISTA update. Schaefer reported that the VISTA that was chosen, has now pulled her application and they are still looking.

City Administrator Update.

Kennedy's update was included in the packet.

Chamber of Commerce Update

Poetter's update was included in the packet and added that her focus right now is a shop locally campaign, including a fun holiday program called "Sprout on the Shelf" with those small businesses.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Brandt, second by Cole to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Laehn adjourned the meeting at 8:09 am.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 7:15 a.m.