



**Blue Earth Economic Development Authority
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 7:15 am
Official Proceedings**

Minutes:

CALL TO ORDER

President Laehn called the meeting to order at 7:15 a.m. in the Blue Earth City Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Members present: Lissia Laehn, Chase Brandt, Wendy Cole, Bill Rosenau, and Rick Scholtes

Members Absent: Peggy Olson and Jamie Jones

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

Also present: Fiona Green, Faribault County Register; Shellie Potter, Chamber (arrived 7:34)

A quorum was determined to be present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Scholtes added Three Sisters to New Business.

Motion by Brandt, second by Rosenau, to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT ITEMS

The following items were included under Consent Items for approval.

Regular Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2022.

Bills and Financials November 2022

Loan/Grant Updates

Motion by Rosenau, second by Brandt, to approve the consent items as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Business Spotlight

Schaefer presented a list of all 36 businesses that have been featured in the Spotlight since the inception of the program in 2018.

Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan Requests

Schaefer presented the application from Arron Kalis for OPS Clinics to complete a lighting update project. The estimated cost to replace the 29 fixtures is \$4,885.00.

Motion by Brandt, second by Cole, to approve the Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan in the amount of \$2,442.50 to OPS Clinics, LLC. The motion passed unanimously.



Rosenau inquired about the cap on the programs indicating that the max of three Forgivable Loans was given this year along with many Commercial Business Improvement loans. The 2022 cap of \$50,000 for all grant programs excluded the Forgivable Loans. Rosenau suggested a cap for all programs be set at \$75,000 so as not to deplete the funds. After a short discussion on the cap amount for next year, the Board was agreeable to a total cap of \$75,000 including all programs together.

Motion by Rosenau, second by Scholtes, to cap the total of all grant programs at \$75,000 per year. The motion passed unanimously.

Schaefer presented the application from Zachary Walters, owner of Blue Earth Locker, to install a security system with a proposal for an estimated cost of \$7,733.00.

Motion by Rosenau, second by Cole, to approve the Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan in the amount of \$3,866.50 to Blue Earth Locker. The motion passed unanimously.

Schaefer presented the application from Lissia Laehn of Heartland Rentals to update the lights in the H&R Block business office. This would include installing a drop ceiling and LED lights. The estimated cost for the project being \$3,952.50.

Motion by Brandt, second by Rosenau, to approve the Commercial Business Improvement Forgivable Loan in the amount of \$1,976.25 to Heartland Rentals. The motion passed unanimously with Laehn abstaining from the vote.

Facebook

Schaefer communicated that she would like to do a “Meet the Board Members” Facebook post for next year if the Board is agreeable in participating. The Board agreed it is a good idea to let the community know who is involved with the Board.

Three Sisters

Scholtes referred to the letter to the Editor in last week’s newspaper written by Janie Hanson, in which he was very disappointed in the discrepancies and nonfactual information included.

Schaefer voiced that the EDA was not represented fairly in Hanson’s letter. Scholtes explained that he had directed Kennedy to gather information and facts from the City and EDA meeting minutes in response to that letter and its content. Scholtes handed out the document with the compiled information so the Board could take time to read it thoroughly before discussion.

The discussion started with a suggestion to publish the entire document in response to the letter, but to avoid editorial war, the group decided to take a more professional approach by creating a short statement to publish. The document with the compiled information, as well as meeting minutes, are public documents. Scholtes advised Kennedy to put together a shorter more concise written statement for the newspaper, with all Board members stopping at City Hall to sign it if they approve. Brandt reiterated that he wants to focus on the positives that the EDA has done for the many businesses in town and give continued support to those that need it.



OLD BUSINESS

Veterinarian Update

Schaefer reported that she toured the Blue Earth Locker while meeting with the owner regarding how the business would be affected if Blue Earth was to ever lose a veterinarian. Schaefer indicated that she is a part of a group that has formed to work on an economic and sustainable business plan. Kennedy and Schaefer noted that they have written a grant to Compeer Financial for hosting a producer meeting and are hoping for the grant approval to move forward with that event featuring a dinner with locally produced food.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

STAFF REPORTS

EDA Specialist Update

Schaefer's update was provided in the packet.

City Administrator Update.

Kennedy's update was provided in the packet.

Chamber of Commerce Update

Poetter gave a short update mentioning two December promotions, including The Sprout on the Shelf, with participation from 15 businesses and the school, and the Lighting Contest, in its 3rd year. Poetter indicated she is working on membership dues renewal, next year's events and budget and noted that the annual banquet has been moved from January to March.

Scholtes communicated that this was Cole's last EDA meeting and thanked her for her service on the EDA Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Brandt, second by Rosenau, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Laehn adjourned the meeting at 8:08 am.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 12, 2022, at 7:15 a.m.