



**Blue Earth Economic Development Authority
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 7:15 am
Official Proceedings**

Minutes:

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Rosenau 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, Bill Rosenau, Rick Scholtes, and Peggy Olson

Members absent: Jamie Jones and Dan Ristau

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

Also present: Chuck Hunt, Faribault County Register; Emily Davis, Community Workforce Coordinator

A quorum was determined to be present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2022.

Motion by Brandt, second by Olson, to approve the meeting minutes of December 8, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND FINANCIALS

Bills and Financials December 2022

Loan/Grant Updates

Motion by Laehn, second by Brandt, to approve the bills, financials and loan updates presented. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Ag Center Demo Quotes

Kennedy indicated that Greenside has finished cleaning out the old clinic space in the Ag Center with the next step being to hire a contractor to restore it to usable office space. Kennedy brought forth the quotes included in the packet for the remodel work from United Builders and Ankeny Builders, noting that the electrical work from Tvedten Electric will need to be done in addition to whichever contractor is chosen. Kennedy explained that Deibel Labs is interested in the space for storage, a breakroom, and possibly an office, but if that does not happen the space will be office



ready for another renter, with the approximate rent being \$1,500 per month. Kennedy also relayed that the cost of any extra cosmetic work beyond the basic remodel would be the responsibility of the tenant. Kennedy suggested ideally, with Deibel Labs four current leases expiring the end of February, her hope would be to get the new lease to reflect all their spaces and the new remodel ready by March.

Motion by Scholtes, second by Laehn, to accept the Ankeny Builders and Tvedten Electric quotes to finish the Ag Center remodel. The motion passed unanimously.

Kennedy also explained there is not much to update on the former space used by Center for Specialty Care, indicating that there are still things such as equipment in it, and the bankruptcy paperwork continues to be sent to the attorney.

Kennedy also explained that she has directed Greenside to paint and replace baseboards to the front breezeway, as it was not looking good and needed attention. They are also looking at the cost of flooring to be added to next year's budget, as she is hoping for a real refresh of the Ag Center, making it a building to be proud of.

Producer Meeting

Schaefer indicated that the next step in searching for a veterinarian is a meeting with local producers with a meal included. The meeting would take place at the Senior Center with around 58 producers invited and include a locally sourced and produced meal. Schaefer explained that the Compeer grant application was denied. Schaefer proposed that the EDA pay half the cost, up to \$1,500 for postage, materials, and the meal, contingent on approval from the Faribault County EDA to approve the same. Kennedy noted that GreenSeam and the U of MN Extension have been involved to help ask the right questions and identify the major needs for the producers. Rosenau suggested it is a great idea and would be the reasonable next step.

Motion by Scholtes, second by Olson, to approve funding half of the producer's meeting, up to \$1,500. The motion passed unanimously.

Succession Planning Course

Schaefer shared that after the Board agreed to pay half of the cost of a succession planning course for up to five businesses, the Faribault County EDA has agreed to pay the other half, making it free for Blue Earth businesses. Schaefer indicated that there has been one business that showed interest so far. Kennedy inquired if it would be a good thing to market through banks and financial advisors. Brandt confirmed that it is very relevant, and he could pass on the information. Schaefer noted that it is a great, worthwhile class and there are 4 more openings for a free class.

NEW BUSINESS

Business Spotlight-Student Entrepreneurs

Schaefer reminded the Board that next month the Business Spotlight will focus on student entrepreneurs with three so far committed to attending next month's meeting.



2023 EDA Workplan

Schaefer noted that a work plan was completed a couple of years ago and it has been working well. After adding some priorities and goals for the 2023 workplan draft, including highlighted suggestions she received from Board members, Schaefer presented the draft. After a short discussion on some of the ideas, Rosenau directed the Board to review the draft and get back to Schaefer with any other suggestions or thoughts.

KEYC

Schaefer explained the proposal from KEYC with a start date of February using digital advertising with audience targeting and continuing to run the commercials as is through May, then backing it to 20 times per month through November. The digital advertising would be easier to track as it would run through the city website and the EDA Facebook page. The quote was based on a \$10,000 budget. Last year the commercial cost was split, with the HRA contributing \$4,000 and the EDA contributing \$6,000. Schaefer shared that the HRA was interested again in splitting the cost. Kennedy explained that the 2023 budget for advertising is at \$5,000, but the leftover budgeted funds from the year before do not carry over or show on the line item, making the budget guideline deceiving. Rosenau inquired if the package can be cut back at all. Laehn expressed her concern if the EDA and HRA would want to spend their entire advertising budget on this one project. Brandt noted that he would like to see the digital advertising start by February. Scholtes voiced that advertising benefits and promotes the whole community, not only the EDA and HRA. With that in mind he suggested the EDA, the HRA, and the City split the \$10,000 cost in thirds. Kennedy was agreeable to make that work.

Motion by Laehn, second by Scholtes, to allocate one third of the expenses, with a cap of \$10,000 collectively, for the commercials and digital marketing done by KEYC. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

STAFF REPORTS

EDA Specialist Update

Schaefer's update was provided in the packet.

Schaefer also brought forth the feature article about Mary Kennedy in the Connect Magazine. Congratulations to Mary Kennedy.

City Administrator Update

Kennedy's update was provided in the packet. She extended an invitation to the Board members to the retirement party at the Legion, 5:00 Monday, to honor the outgoing Council members.

Chamber of Commerce Update

Poetter's update was provided in the packet.



Workforce Coordinator Update

Davis reported a partnership between Tafco and the students from Metals class. The students worked on projects at Tafco for the entire class period. She has received good feedback and would like to expand on this in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Rosenau adjourned the meeting at 8:03 am.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 7:15 a.m.