

ECDC: Economic & Community Development Committee

Tuesday November 1st, 2022, 5:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Mike Glenn, Don Griffin, Phil Lehmann, and Terry Schuster.

Also, present: Darin DeHaan, Cheryl Hilton, Chris Manheim, and Mayor Ken Williams.

Present via Zoom: Tom Mahoney and Liz Vos.

Absent: Erin Folk and Rebecca Hazzard.

Don Griffin called the meeting to order and called roll at 5:00 pm.

Tom Mahoney moved to approve minutes from October 4th, 2022, Seconded by Terry Schuster.

Motion carried. No nays.

Tom Mahoney moved to approve a Façade Grant for John Ebens/Tipsy Hog, Seconded by Phil Lehmann.

City Administrator Darin DeHaan said John Ebens has made improvements to the front of the building such as signage, windows, masonry, and an awning. He also plans to update the windows on the upper level as well. There is approximately five thousand seven hundred and ninety-five dollars remaining in the budget. Commissioner Terry Schuster said this façade grant will be for five thousand dollars, leaving seven hundred and ninety-five dollars left in the budget. He also asked if there have been any other businesses interested in applying for a façade grant yet this fiscal year. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said yes, Vicarious Style may have interest in applying. Commissioner Terry Schuster stated the City Council and Economic Development Committee can approve an additional façade grant. He also stated funds for façade grants would be available again in May of 2023.

Motion carried. No nays.

Consulting Services-County ECDC-Manheim: Chris Manheim said he is continuing to work on marketing for an urgent care facility and reaching out to contacts. He stated the IEPA report at the Dayton Superior location could take about four more weeks. He is also working on another grant from DCEO. The Ogle County Economic Development retreat will be held the 17th of November. He said the main goals are to put together a structure, private public partnerships, and how to sustain the program long term. Commissioner Terry Schuster asked if the Dayton Superior testing has been completed. Chris Manheim said yes, just waiting on the report.

Update on Comprehensive Plan: City Administrator Darin DeHaan said he has put together a steering committee consisting of fifteen members. The first meeting will be held on November 20th or 21st. He also just pushed out a news release on social media. Resources will be shared on social media and a website with interactive tools will be available for the public to access. Ideas and comments can be submitted on this website.

TIF and Enterprise Zone Updates: Mayor Ken Williams said there are no TIF or Enterprise Zone requests at this time.

Chamber News/Oregon Together Report/Schools/Community Events: Liz Vos said there will be an interim office manager at the Chamber until they can find a replacement. She has asked the interim office manager to join the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Chamber just hosted the Trick or Drink event. Don Griffin thanked Liz Vos for all she has done for the community. The committee applauded Liz Vos.

Mayor Ken Williams said Oregon Together is still active and are planning spring downtown beautification projects.

Tom Mahoney stated the closing for the DLR property in Mt. Morris was held and Fred Kenney purchased the property. He said the Illinois State Report Card showed the Oregon School District having a significant increase in achievement and growth when much of the state was stagnant. He also said the summary average was higher than the rest of the state as well.

Any other business or discussion: City Administrator Darin DeHaan said AOP seemed to be successful. He has also been in contact with Chris Davis who is the owner of Rockford Auto glass. They are looking at the old Dixon Autobody building by Pines Road and 7th Street. Chris has the money and willingness to do things within the community. He would like to put a facility here and his employees would rather work in a community like Oregon than Rockford due to safety concerns. Chris also stated to City Administrator Darin DeHaan that he gets involved with struggling businesses and he will influx cash and business ideas into these businesses. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said he would like to invite Chris to a meeting to introduce everyone. He said Chris could be a useful resource for development with either new businesses or struggling businesses. Chris has seven businesses and is looking to expand. Mayor Ken Williams said when you think about a company like Rockford Auto glass you think of a company that puts windshields in, but they are more than that. They do a huge amount of commercial work and have replaced window fronts in some of the downtown businesses. They also work hand in hand with Dixon Glass. Commissioner Terry Schuster asked if Chris had some investment properties located in town. City Administrator Darin DeHaan stated that Chris is familiar with Rebecca Hazzard and has purchased homes. Don Griffin stated it is nice to have him willing to help other businesses, which is what we need. Commissioner Terry Schuster said the location on Pines Road and 7th Street is not a completed deal yet.

Mayor Ken Williams said the company who applied for the solar farm is looking at the property located to the West of the previous property. A variance will be submitted to the Planning Commission at the end of the month. The project assesses at about a million dollars. Commissioner Terry Schuster stated the property would require annexation. Mayor Ken Williams said yes. The annexation agreement has been reviewed by the City Attorney and the city is ready to move forward. Don Griffin said this is a wonderful opportunity for another tax base.

Don Griffin said bids for the demolition of the old jail will be coming in tomorrow at 1 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 5:28 PM.

Submitted by City Clerk Cheryl Hilton