

ECDC: Economic & Community Development Committee

Tuesday September 5th, 2023, 5:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Don Griffin, Terry Schuster, and John VonTish.

Present via Zoom: Kim Ewoldsen, Erin Folk, and Phil Lehmann.

Also, present: City Manager Darin DeHaan, Mike Delaney, Cheryl Hilton, Chris Manheim, and Mayor Ken Williams.

Absent: Mike Glenn, Rebecca Hazzard, and Tom Mahoney.

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

No public comment.

Kim Ewoldsen introduced herself to the committee. She oversees the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Sauk Valley Community College. She said they provide no cost services to small business development. They can help with the start up process, state and federal licensing, expansion and growth, succession planning, business plans, websites, marketing, and many other things.

Erin Folk moved to approve the August 1st, 2023 Minutes, Seconded by Terry Schuster.

Motion carried. No nays.

Terry Schuster moved to approve a Façade Grant for A.M. Floral – Abby Martin, Seconded by Jon VonTish.

Discussion: Terry Schuster said the exterior siding of the building was made of drywall green board, which is not an outdoor construction material. They are in the process of replacing this.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Phil Lehmann moved to approve a Façade Grant for The Hunt Club - Matt Pendergrass, Seconded by John VonTish.

Discussion: Terry Schuster asked if the proposed improvements were a part of the façade of the building. He said he understands the application to be for a deck and this is not covered by the description of a façade. Mayor Ken Williams said according to city code, it is not, the façade would be facing the street. He said this may need to be resubmitted as TIF funds in the same amount. He said the improvements do create a welcoming feeling when coming into town. City Manager Darin DeHaan said Matt has made a major investment in the riverfront development. He said TIF funds would be a great way to handle this request. He said it is a huge enhancement to the riverfront development and a good investment in the community. Terry Schuster said it brings in a lot of business and is a huge investment which is what TIF funds are intended to do.

Don Griffin stated TIF funds should be used for things like this. He asked City Manager Darin DeHaan to prepare the recommendation.

Motion not approved.

Consulting Services-County ECDC-Manheim: Chris Manheim stated the information on the Moring property has been updated on the LOIS website. They are asking \$499,900.00 for the property. John VonTish asked about potential environmental cleanup of the property and who would be responsible for the costs. Mayor Ken Williams said that would most likely be negotiated with a potential purchaser. City Manager Darin DeHaan said there has been interest in the property from 3 potential developers. Chris Manheim said a food packaging company has been reviewing the website. Follow-up letters have been sent. Mayor Ken Williams said sometimes a major firm is looking to do something in a larger industrial park and will look in a 20-to-25-mile radius for homes for their employees. A copy of the article published in the paper about the County Economic Development Corporation was included in the packet. Chris Manheim also stated Oregon, Byron, and Mt. Morris all have good broadband services and work for the rural areas is needed. Terry Schuster asked if Frontier is in the process of adding fiber to the city. City Manager Darin DeHaan said Frontier is going to be working on easy access points first, such as overhead. They have not started on terraces.

TIF and Enterprise Zone Updates: Mayor Ken Williams said new owners purchased 125 S. 4th Street last month. He said there may be potential TIF projects. Enterprise zone received an additional 3,200 acres from the State of Illinois Invest in Illinois Act. There was a lot of work in planning on where these should go, the Rochelle area will receive around 1,600 acres, 650 acres around Lee County, 24 acres in Mt. Morris, leaving about 1,000 unused acres. He expects the final allocations to be decided at the next meeting.

Chamber News/Oregon Together Report/Schools/Community Events: John VonTish stated the Chamber has begun a mural project highlighting various community groups. They also have plans to bring back the Lunch and Learn and Business After Hours events. City Manager Darin DeHaan said CMAAA is working on new signage. He also asked about the use of space where the old jail was located. Don Griffin stated the plan is for the area to remain open green space with 4 or 5 benches. Mayor Ken Williams said they have been discussing short-term rentals/Airbnb's in the city. He has created a list of pros and cons and would like to receive input from Economic Development and Planning and then create a formal plan. Mike Delaney spoke about the connection between the University of Illinois and Ogle County. He said Mark White will be doing research pertaining to the Northwest corner of the state and would like him to meet with members of the commission. He also stated an Innovation Pitch competition will be held on campus for current students and recent alum for business ideas.

Meeting adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Submitted by City Clerk Cheryl Hilton