

ECDC: Economic & Community Development Committee

Tuesday January 7th, 2025 5:00 PM

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

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

Present via Zoom: Mike Delaney, Mike Glenn, Chance Munroe.

Absent: PJ Caposey, Erin Folk, and Rebecca Hazzard.

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

Don Griffin called roll call. A quorum was present.

No public comment.

Phil Lehmann moved to approve the October 1st, 2024 minutes, Seconded by Terry Schuster.

Motion carried. No nays.

Terry Schuster moved to approve the December 3rd, 2024 minutes, Seconded by Phil Lehmann.

Motion carried. No nays.

Oregon and County Economic Development: Chris Manheim referred the committee to his report. He said he has been gathering data and updating information. The city has also been invited to attend the 2025 Brownfields Conference. City Manager Darin DeHaan said the second home in the Trestle Ridge subdivision has also been sold. They also discussed riverfront properties and potentially helping to complete phase one brownfield land assessments to one property along the riverfront. City Manager Darin DeHaan said at the last OCEDC executive meeting he asked Charlene Coulombe to help put together a strategic plan for 2025. Each community is providing a list of locations to Charlene, so she has a good inventory of available development locations. The treasurer is also sending out invoices for second year payments to those municipalities who allocated funds.

Business Development Update: City Manager Darin DeHaan said an existing business in New Milford is looking for a second location. They specialize in cotton candy and something similar to Build a Bear.

TIF and Enterprise Zone Updates: Mayor Ken Williams said a public hearing is being held on January 9th, 2025 for upcoming projects in the area. There will also be three amendments to the TIF maps presented to the City Council.

Chamber News/Schools/Community Events/CMAAA: Chance Munroe said the Chamber of Commerce is working on streamlining communications with members, membership renewals, and becoming more involved with businesses in Mt. Morris. He also said the video from Candlelight Walk is available. Mike Glenn said CMAAA continues to hold classes at the coliseum and has ten artists from Freeport who have artwork set up for viewing. In February they will start to hold regular art shows with judges and awards. A business after hours is also scheduled for the end of February. Terry Schuster said at the last meeting, PJ mentioned a lack of restaurants open after events at the school. He said an opportunity for sales is being overlooked. Creating a QR code to be handed out at the events with local businesses willing to stay open later could be provided to event attendees. Mike Delaney said the extension office will be running a poverty simulation in February. He

stated about eight percent of Ogle County is living at this level. He asked anyone interested to reach out to him.

Forming a Vision Advisory Committee: Terry Schuster said he would like to take action on one of the goals from the workshop, recruiting and retaining young people. He asked for each member of the economic development committee to provide three names of young people who would be interested in participating in a one-time focus group. This group would be asked questions such as what brought them to Oregon and what would make Oregon more welcoming/valuable to citizens. He would like the group to be about fifteen people but if more are interested, a second focus group meeting could be held.

Other business/discussion: Phil Lehmann said interest rates continue to go up. The committee discussed letters of credit for developers to build entry level homes and what those homes would look like. Mayor Ken Williams said he has no new information regarding Taft Campus. He also said the City Council passed a resolution regarding a potential solar farm on the south end of town. He said the City Council is not against solar, just does not want a solar farm on riverfront property.

Meeting adjourned at 5:51 PM.

Submitted by City Clerk Cheryl Hilton