

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JANUARY 20, 2015 MEETING MINUTES**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jurchen, Commissioners Rieck, Stroot, and Merritt

ABSENT: Commissioner Roggenkamp

ALSO PRESENT: Sheila Haverkamp, BLAEDC; Chris Lindholm, School Superintendent; Jenna Crawford and Matt Killian, Chamber of Commerce; Amy Sjoblad, Chris Quisberg, and Corky Ladeaux, Chamber of Commerce Board Members; Dan Frank, Initiative Foundation; and Dave Sjoblad, Mayor

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jurchen at 8:00 a.m.

2. Approval EDC Minutes

COMMISSIONER STROOT MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 21, 2014, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES. COMMISSIONER RIECK SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

3. Elect Chair for 2015

COMMISSIONER RIECK MOVED TO RE-ELECT MARK JURCHEN AS CHAIR OF THE EDC FOR 2015. COMMISSIONER MERRITT SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

4. Update on Border to Border Broadband Conference – Bill Stroot

Bill Stroot updated the EDC on the Broadband Conference which he attended on behalf of the EDC. He explained that there are many areas in rural Minnesota that do not have high speed internet. He stated that broadband at this point in time is a necessity. Employers need broadband as well as employees. Fiber is the ultimate and CTC is a fiber based provider. Pequot Lakes is using copper version and has adequate high speed internet. Our focus should be on education and how to use broadband. Many people don't know that it is available. Mr. Stroot stated that there is fiber in the industrial park but no one is connected. TDS could provide the broadband but no one has requested it.

Mark Jurchen thanked Bill Stroot for attending the conference and stated that this is a topic the EDC should continue to monitor.

5. Highway 371 Project

Mayor Sjoblad updated the EDC and those present on the Highway 371 project and timeline. He reviewed the new map that the City recently received from MnDOT. He explained that the timeframe has moved up and that much of the design cannot be changed after June 1st of this year. MnDOT will put the project out for bids in June. Mayor Sjoblad explained that the biggest problem the City is facing is having to make changes to its sewer system because the highway will run through the land that is spray irrigated.

Matt Killian stated that the communities that are proactive in dealing with this type of change are successful. He explained that the Chamber of Commerce wants to engage the business community in any aspect of this project that may need business influence. He explained that because Pequot Lakes is a destination community there is a concern that the downtown area businesses don't miss out on unintentional tourism traffic. The City needs to decide how to market and sign the entrances to the City. The Chamber may be able to assist with this. We want to make certain that the downtown businesses are unaffected as possible.

Matt Killian stated that Commissioner Zelle will be holding a meeting at the Chamber in February. He suggested that the City have representation at the meeting. He also noted that Senator Ruud has been very vocal about the project and the support that she can give.

Chris Quisberg stated that with the alternate route, the City has to do whatever is possible to get people to realize that Pequot is still there. Discussion was held on signage. Mayor Sjoblad stated that MnDOT will pay for the construction of one entrance sign. The EDC discussed the importance of welcoming signs and visual aesthetics at the City entrances.

Dan Frank, Initiative Foundation, stated that the City is fortunate to have a park in the center of town. The City should concentrate on exterior and interior signage and marketing.

Chris Lindholm stated that there is a need for green space for soccer, football, and baseball fields. He suggested a baseball complex on the west side of the spray irrigation field. He indicated that there is a lack in baseball fields and that the School and City could partner in this endeavor. This would draw many people into the area.

Dan Frank stated that Pequot Lakes is better positioned than other communities who have gone through going through this. The City should identify the main components that need to be addressed and identify the primary stake holders.

Commissioner Merritt questioned whether the money the City will receive from the road turnbacks will be used for the downtown plan. She stated that she would like to see the downtown upgraded. This will make the town look good so that people want to come to Pequot Lakes.

Chair Jurchen reiterated the main issues and concerns with the Highway 371 project.

- 1 Physical signage and gateway (Council)
- 2 Stakeholders (Engagement of a Vision)
- 3 Marketing
- 4 Technology
- 5 Downtown Plan
- 6 Customer Service/Training (Chamber)
- 7 Land Opportunities (EDC should explore opportunities that exist with the City's property)
- 8 Lakes Gas – work with them to look for a different location
- 9 Vision
- 10 How to engage the business community

It was the consensus of the EDC that the following be addressed at the February EDC Meeting:

- Identify stakeholders
- Identify a method of contacting the stakeholders
- Identify components for the stakeholders to work on
- Draft a document to send to stakeholders explaining purpose of committee
- Schedule a timeframe and work schedule for the stakeholders

6. EDC Membership

Mark Jurchen stated that Cindy Roggenkamp has submitted an application for reappointment to the EDC which will go to the Council in February.

7. BLAEDC Update

Sheila Haverkamp invited those present to the BLAEDC Annual meeting on Friday, February 6th, at 11:15 a.m. at Arrowwood.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Adjournment

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, CHAIR JURCHEN
AJOURNED THE MEETING AT 9:30 A.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra A. Peine
City Clerk