

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 17, 2015 MEETING MINUTES**

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Stroot

ALSO PRESENT: Chris Lindholm, School Superintendent; Jenna Crawford, Chamber of Commerce; Dan Frank, Initiative Foundation; Dawn Bittner, Planning and Zoning Administrator; J.P. Gillach, MnDOT Communications Expert; and Sandy Peine, City Clerk

1. Call Meeting to Order

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

2. Approval EDC Minutes

**COMMISSIONER MERRITT MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 20, 2015, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES. COMMISSIONER REICK SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

3. Highway 371 Project - MnDOT Communications Expert – J.P. Gillach

Mark Jurchen explained that the EDC is beginning to look at how Pequot Lakes can become more of a destination while dealing with the Highway 371 construction project. He noted that some businesses rely on the highway while others do not.

G.P. Gillach, MnDOT Communications Expert, explained that his background is in communications, advertising and marketing. He can assist the City with the issues relating to the Highway 371 construction. It is beneficial that the City has already involved the Initiative Foundation and identified the need to communicate with Pequot Lakes' businesses about the Highway 371 project.

Mr. Gillach explained that MnDOT can help integrate the process by working with the City in several areas such as maintaining a website with current information on the project, assisting with distributing information via an e-mail list, providing a weekly or monthly updates on project, assisting with press releases, newsletters, etc. The City can use the project as a launching pad for a marketing campaign to create excitement about the project. The City could also work toward bringing the businesses together regarding the Highway 371 project.

Dan Frank, Initiative Foundation, explained that the University of Minnesota has a program to review data based on change. This information could help people identify the new opportunities that will be available due to the alternative route.

Dawn Bittner questioned how the City can get people to engage and express their thoughts on the Highway project. Dan Frank stated that the Initiative Foundation will assist the City to engage the community. The City needs to find a champion or core group that is motivated and who will lead the cause.

J.P. Gillach stated that the City needs a marketing campaign, resources, and a public relations team. Some of these players could include the EDC, the Chamber, DEED, and the Initiative Foundation.

Dan Frank suggested that the City engage with the Minnesota Design Team which may be a good opportunity for Pequot Lakes to receive professional input on the design of the City's gateways and center-of-town park. The Design Team can assist a community who is anticipating a major change such as a highway realignment. Dan Frank explained that the earliest availability for this program is the spring of 2016.

Dan Frank suggested another program that could be beneficial called Thriving Communities Initiative (TCI). The program is sponsored by the Initiative Foundation and engages local leaders and citizens in planning for the future. Dan Frank suggested that the City could blend the two processes. With either method the City will need to set up a core team of champions.

Dan Frank stated that he will contact the University of Minnesota, The Minnesota Design Team, and the Initiative Foundation regarding the TCI program and have them work with the EDC.

Chair Jurchen stated that the March meeting should be focused on coordinating the Minnesota Design Team and the TCI Program. The EDC should consider drafting an action plan at the March or April EDC meeting.

4. Identify Roles of Chamber, EDC, Business, and City Regarding the Highway 371 Project

These issues were covered in Agenda Item #3.

5. School Update

Chris Lindholm spoke about the Creating Entrepreneurial opportunities (CEO) - program. This program was started by the Initiative Foundation and launched in Staples/Motley. The purpose of the program is to build an improved partnership between K-12 and the business community. The students will tour businesses and

study business models. The classes will be held at a host site, not at the school. Currently the Brainerd and Pequot Lakes School Districts are working on this program.

6. Chamber Update

Chow is coming back and will be called Chamber Current. The Chamber is looking for funding of the Pequot Lakes July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks.

7. BLAEDC Update

No report.

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Adjournment

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, COMMISSIONER RIECK  
MOVED TO ADJOURN. COMMISSIONER MERRITT SECONDED THE  
MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED 4-0. THE MEETING AJOURNED  
AT 9:20 A.M.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra A. Peine  
City Clerk