

**BIG LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2015**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

President Doug Hayes called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present: Raeanne Danielowski, Jim Dickinson, Greg Green, Doug Hayes, Norm Leslie, Steve Pflerhaar, Darek Vetsch, and Mike Wallen. Commissioners absent: Dave Gast.

Also present: Economic Development Manager Heidi Steinmetz, Police Chief/Interim City Administrator Joel Scharf, and Administrative Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

**2A. 2015 APPOINTMENTS BY COUNCIL**

Economic Development Manager Heidi Steinmetz reported that after receiving letters of interest from many qualified applicants for the four (4) open seats on the BLEDA, the City Council, at their January 14, 2015 meeting, re-appointed Jim Dickinson, Dave Gast, and Greg Green to serve another 6-year term on the BLEDA and appointed Darek Vetsch, of Russell's On The Lake, to his first 6-year term on the BLEDA.

**3. ADOPT AGENDA**

Commissioner Wallen motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**4. APPROVE BLEDA MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2015**

Commissioner Dickinson motioned to approve the December 11, 2015 BLEDA minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Wallen, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**5. BLEDA BUSINESS ITEMS**

**5A. 2015 BLEDA OFFICER APPOINTMENTS**

The four newly appointed Commissioners were sworn in as members of the BLEDA by Steinmetz.

Steinmetz stated that each year, the BLEDA is to elect a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary and asked for volunteers or nominations for these positions for 2015. She recommended Dave Gast to serve as Treasurer again and also suggested herself for the position of Secretary as she also serves as the BLEDA's Executive Director. Commissioner Dickinson stated that he would be open to serving again as Vice-President if no others were interested in the position.

Commissioner Wallen nominated Doug Hayes to serve as BLEDA President for 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Dickinson, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Commissioner Green nominated Jim Dickinson to serve as BLEDA Vice-President for 2015. Seconded by Commissioner Danielowski, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Commissioner Dickinson nominated Dave Gast to serve as BLEDA Treasurer for 2015 and Heidi Steinmetz to serve as BLEDA Secretary for 2015. Seconded by President Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

## **5B. EDA BUDGET**

The BLEDA briefly discussed the budget. Commissioner Dickinson stated that he believed that when the sale of the BLEDA property on Highway 10/County Road 5 is finalized, it would be important that those dollars be moved into the funds that have been borrowed from in the past to make them whole.

This item for information only; no action required or taken by the Board.

## **5C. DISCUSS 2015 BLEDA GOALS / AUTHORIZE STAFF TO REQUEST QUOTES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

Steinmetz reported that at the beginning of each year, the BLEDA reviews the goals from the past year, discussing and re-prioritizing the list to assure the BLEDA is moving forward effectively in the new year. She stated that the BLEDA was being asked to review the goals and determine if the four (4) current goals, and/or the action items below each goal, should be reprioritized.

Steinmetz stated that the BLEDA has never had an Economic Development Strategic Plan and, although the City itself has created annual strategic goals which have included Economic Development-related items, the BLEDA has never developed their own Plan. The Commissioners briefly discussed the County's Strategic Plan, which was provided in the meeting packet. Steinmetz noted that staff was asking the BLEDA to consider authorizing staff to obtain quotes from consulting firms that assist cities in creating strategic plans. She also stated that staff would propose asking the County to contribute funds towards a strategic plan for Big Lake.

Commissioner Wallen stated that there is no cost in asking for quotes and, if there are quotes that prove to be reasonable, the BLEDA could invite the company to present their proposal at a future BLEDA meeting.

Commissioner Dickinson noted it would be important to determine what the BLEDA is looking for, the current goals, the inventory of the City, and how we can best utilize resources. Steinmetz reported that in 2013, the EDA hired the Decklan Group to provide analysis and recommendations for the City's economic development, marketing, social medial, and website; and that all of those reports could help this strategy move forward. She stated that staff will send electronic versions of the Decklan Group reports to the BLEDA for their review.

After discussing the goals and action plan, it was the consensus of the BLEDA to direct staff to re-order the Goals and Action Plan as follows:

- Goal 1 – Retain and assist the expansion of existing Big Lake businesses;
- Goal 2 – Secure new business investment in Big Lake (recruitment);
- Goal 3 – Housing: enhancement of neighborhoods;
- Goal 4 – Identify and address unique development challenges/opportunities.

Steinmetz asked that the Commissioners forward any additional comments/suggestions to her for compilation and for review at the February BLEDA meeting. It was also suggested that staff include their comments/suggestions as well for review in February.

It was the consensus of the Board to authorize staff to request quotes from consulting firms that assist cities in creating strategic plans for presentation/consideration at a future meeting.

Mike Wallen left the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

## **5D. PROJECT/PROSPECT STATUS REPORT**

Steinmetz reported on the following:

- 1) BR&E Visits: The most recent visit was to Flour City Bending on 01-22-15. The next scheduled visit is with the Encompass Group on 02-01-15. The BR&E Committee (Steinmetz, Danielowski, Leslie, Pflughhaar, and Tricia Skodje of the Chamber of Commerce) will continue visits throughout 2015 and update the BLEDA accordingly.

Commissioner Green asked if a representative from Sherburne County has participated in any BR&E visits. Steinmetz stated that staff will extend an invitation to future visits to Dan Weber, who is the County's Economic Development Specialist.

- 2) Lupulin Brewing (570 Humboldt Drive, #107): The build-out is continuing with hopes of opening in March/April 2015.
- 3) Farmer's Market: Applications are now being accepted for vendors of home grown vegetables/fruits and crafts. This event was very successful in 2014 and will begin on June 3, 2015 at Lakeside Park.
- 4) Sherburne County EDA: On 01-14-15, the City Council passed a resolution requesting that the County to allow the City to have a permanent seat on the County's EDA; this resolution will be presented at the County EDA's 01-29-15 meeting. Attendance by BLEDA Members at this meeting would be very helpful.
- 5) Sherburne County Broadband Coalition: The first meeting of this Coalition is scheduled for 02-01-15 at 2:00pm at the Sherburne County Government Center. The Steering Committee members representing Big Lake (George Wallin and Kevin Thompson) will attend this meeting along with City staff.
- 6) Former ShadeTree Building (575 Humboldt Drive): The anticipated sale of the building did not take place. This is the only vacant large manufacturing building available in Big Lake at this time.
- 7) Northern Star Apartments (19591 Station Street): The C.O. has been issued for the building and tenants have moved in.
- 8) Big Lake Industrial Park: A special meeting of the City Council, BLEDA, and Big Lake Township will be held on February 9, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. (at the normal BLEDA meeting) to discuss the future of Phase II of Big Lake Industrial Park.

Commissioner Danielowski briefly discussed the proposed River Woods Park Master Plan, noting that this is part of growing the community that helps contribute to economic development and attracts people to Big Lake. She noted that the ultimate goal would be to get the City's trail system connected all the way to the Sherburne County Wildlife area.

#### **5E. SCHEDULE A SPECIAL BLEDA GATHERING FOR 03-01-15 BIG LAKE BUSINESS EXPO EVENT**

As there may be a quorum of BLEDA Members in attendance at the upcoming 2015 Big Lake Business Expo, Commissioner Dickinson motioned to schedule a Special BLEDA gathering on Sunday, March 1, 2015, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Big Lake High School (501 Minnesota Avenue). Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**5F. RESCHEDULE OCTOBER 2015 BLEDA MEETING DATE**

Due to the BLEDA's October 2015 regular meeting date falling on the Columbus Day holiday, staff was asking that the meeting date be rescheduled.

Commissioner Dickinson motioned to reschedule the October 12, 2015 regular BLEDA meeting to Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Vetsch, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

**6. OTHER**

Steinmetz reported that the City Council contracted with Springsted, Inc. to perform an executive search to fill the open City Administrator position and then the open Finance Director position, which could take approximately six (6) months to complete.

Commissioner Vetsch stated that he was excited about joining the BLEDA and is also looking forward to working on a strategic plan.

**7. ADJOURN**

Commissioner Vetsch motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Leslie, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.