

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
July 28, 2015 – 7:30 a.m.
Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Mr. Fowler.

Roll Call/Attendance

Members DeHaan, Haleblan, Leech, Maule, Reece, Saidler, and Fowler were present. Members Affrunti and Dalzell were absent.

James Richter II, Planning and Economic Development Manager, was present from staff. Vanessa Baker with Fast Forward Marketing, and Ann Viger representing the Chamber Ambassadors were also present.

Approve Minutes of the June 16, 2015 Meeting

Mr. Reece moved to approve the minutes from the June 16, 2015 EDC meeting as presented. Ms. Maule seconded the motion. On voice vote, members DeHaan, Leech, Maule, Reece, Saidler, and Fowler voted aye. Mr. Haleblan abstained. Motion passed.

Public participation

Ms. Viger was representing the Chamber Ambassadors to invite the EDC members to the Summit on August 13th. The mission of the Summit is to connect the community with public officials and it is meant to be a fun two hours. There will also be a short program. If anyone will be attending, she asked that they RSVP so they have a better idea of the amount of food and beverages that will be needed. The groups that have been invited are Crystal Lake City Council, Lakewood Village Board, McHenry County College Board, Prairie Grove Village Board, the Economic Development Committees from each municipality, Crystal Lake Library Board, United Way, Chamber Ambassadors and the Chamber Board. Ms. Maule asked that people please RSVP for the event.

Manufacturer tour update

Mr. Richter said that a tour of John Crane has been scheduled for Tuesday, August 4th at 3:30 p.m. He said that John Crane is proposing to expand their facilities and the City would like a better understanding of not only what the company does but what happens at the Crystal Lake facility.

Mr. Richter asked for other suggestions for tours. He added the TC Industries is not ready for them to take a tour since they are still moving into their facility. They have toured Rita Corporation and even though they will be expanding in the future, there is really no need to re-tour the facility.

Ms. Maule suggested Knaack Warner. There will be a tour for the Chamber on Monday, August 3rd if anyone would like to come with. They still do not have a time for the tour but she hopes it will be in the morning. She will keep everyone posted as to the time of the tour.

Mr. Fowler asked about Covidien. Mr. Richter said they were just purchased and they have not “rebranded” themselves yet. Mr. Fowler said they need to keep an eye on them.

Mr. DeHaan suggested Althoff Industries. Mr. Richter said he will reach out to them.

Mr. Richter said Ms. Baker had not arrived yet and asked that they move onto the next agenda item.

Business development update

Mr. Richter said there is a company currently located in Palatine that is looking to expand and possibly move their business to Crystal Lake. They would possibly need a rail spur. He is working on contacting someone from the Union Pacific regarding the spur line. Mr. Saidler, who used to work for the UP, suggested that Mr. Richter contact the real estate division or possibly the marketing division that handles plastics. The main office is in Omaha and he is not sure if there is an office in Chicago.

Mr. Richter said the owners of the company are not sure if their current workforce would be making the move from Palatine and they asked about the labor pool in this area. Reports from the McHenry County Workforce Investment Board states that it is similar to their current location in Palatine and the pay ranges are lower here. There are also training grants available. Mr. Fowler suggested that they would possibly go to Palatine to view the current operation and to meet with the business owner.

Ms. Maule said the training grants through the Workforce Investment Board are run like a paid internship. It eliminates the risk for small businesses. The grant pays for the employee for 6 months. If it doesn't work out, the business isn't out anything. Mr. Reece suggested that they ask a representative from the McHenry County Workforce Investment Board to come to one of their meetings to discuss their program.

Mr. Richter discussed an industrial company that is for sale in another community. The potential purchasers are interested in moving the business to Crystal Lake. There are a few issues with the site including the bank that owns the property is reluctant to do a Phase 2 Environmental study. Mr. Haleblian asked if there are other buildings that this company could move into. Mr. Richter said he is not sure.

In response to a question from a member, Mr. Richter confirmed that Willow Creek is interested in the property at the southeast corner of Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street – the former Oak Industries building.

I Shop Crystal Lake update (Vanessa Baker)

Ms. Baker said she does daily social media management for the I Shop Crystal Lake program. She said they have big plans for engaging both business owners and customers asking them to post photos of Crystal Lake. Mr. Richter asked about the reasoning behind requesting the photos from followers. Ms. Baker said they will post a few of the photos, people "like" them and they get engaged with our I Shop information. Ms. Maule said if people "like" the photos or posts, it expands the user base.

Ms. Baker said they would like to have photos, videos using the Police and Fire/Rescue thanking people for shopping Crystal Lake. Also people can submit videos of why they shop Crystal Lake. It also could be a contest and the winner could win prizes.

Ms. Baker handed out information showing the number of users, shares, postings, etc. Mr. Richter asked if there was an ad budget, what could be done with that. Ms. Baker said it would promote postings. Mr. Leech said they used that for the Cardboard Cup Regatta and it worked very well. Ms. Baker suggested \$100 a month.

Ms. Baker said there are a lot of good things about the I Shop Crystal Lake page. People share stories and postings. She would like photos of people at businesses in Crystal Lake not just photos of the business owners. Ms. Maule suggested taking photos at the Girls Night Out on Thursdays in downtown Crystal Lake.

Mr. Richter thanked Ms. Baker for coming to the meeting.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Fowler suggested a Community Investment Award be given to the movie theater for their recent remodeling of the entire building. It is very nice. Mr. Richter said as a side note that a representative came before the City Council at their last meeting to discuss the possibility of a specific liquor license to allow them to serve beer and wine at their venue.

Mr. Reece suggested giving a Community Investment Award to Martin Chevrolet on Route 14 and Exchange Drive.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake (Brian Fowler)

Mr. Fowler said the sidewalk sales went well last weekend. He is selling raffle tickets for Dinner in the Gazebo. The drawing will be held August 7th and the dinner for the winner and 7 guests will be August 20th.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (Staff)

Mr. Richter said Ms. Compata is on vacation this week but will join them for the next meeting in August.

Chamber of Commerce (Mary Margaret Maule)

Ms. Maule said the Summit was discussed earlier by Ms. Viger. There will be a small Town Hall meeting in September. This is the first and it will include the School Districts, MCC, and others. It will be at Park Place instead of MCC because of the road construction by the College.

Ms. Maule said there will be a breakfast with Congressman Roskam on August 26th and Congressman Hultgren in September. They are waiting for things to settle down in Springfield before they schedule dates with the State representatives.

City of Crystal Lake (Staff)

Mr. Richter said a conceptual plan for Bryn Mawr subdivision was presented to both the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. He showed the conceptual plan for the project. The lots shown on the conceptual plan are smaller than originally approved for this subdivision. They would be more of a typical "R-2" lot size which is 8,400 to 10,000 square feet instead of the original 20,000. The developer said the market wants that size lot.

Mr. Haleblian said he received a very nice phone call with G & M Manufacturing with positive comments regarding the City.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.