

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
February 23, 2016 – 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. Reece.

Roll Call/Attendance

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

Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Community Development, and Katie Cowlin, Planner, were present from staff.

Mr. Reece welcomed the EDC's newest member, Todd Schroll.

Approve Minutes of the January 26, 2016 Meeting

Mr. Affrunti moved to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2016 EDC meeting as presented. Mr. Leech seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, Dalzell, Leech, Maule, Saidler, and Reece voted aye. Mr. Schroll abstained. Motion passed.

Public Participation

There was no one present who wished to speak.

I Shop CL Budget for next fiscal year

Ms. Cowlin said they had received a quote from the current I Shop consultant to add Instagram to the current contract. The current contract is \$4800 and the addition would be \$225 per month which would add to the contract. Ms. Rentzsch said there is wiggle-room and asked if the members would prefer this go out to bid. Ms. Cowlin added that the current contract is up May 1, 2016. Mr. Schroll asked when items need to go out to bid. Ms. Rentzsch said we can receive quotes for items up to \$1000 but need three written quotes for anything between \$1,001 - \$9,999 and approval from the Director of Finance.

Mr. Schroll asked if they have predictability for Instagram. Ms. Maule said it is a visual tool that many people use. She would be happy to help write something up with the help of Mr. Saidler for staff to use for quotes. Mr. Schroll said it doesn't look like Twitter is used. Mr. Leech said it is mostly used by people in their early 20s. They don't use Facebook. Mr. Saidler said the only cost involved would be the cost of their time. There is no charge for Instagram. Mr. Reece suggested that Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc. be broken out in the quote. Ms. Maule believes that they would get more mileage from Instagram since the majority of women are on that and they make the majority of the purchasing decisions.

Mr. Leech asked if they were getting the results they were expecting.

Ms. Rentzsch said they are currently in the budgeting process. She added that the City is looking into a City-wide social media contract and I Shop could possibly be part of that.

Mr. Saidler suggested that they look at memories for people to post. That seems to get the most likes. Ms. Cowlin said the largest number of "likes" was for a box of Country Donuts. There were many comments about what people remembered or that they now live out of state and wished they could have one.

Ms. Maule suggested that businesses post what some people bought and the story behind it. Mr. Dalzell said that most of his clients would prefer not to let it known that they have that type of jewelry in their home.

Business anniversaries and tour updates

Ms. Rentzsch said the members were provided a list of possible business anniversaries to be celebrated. Mr. Reece said that it is a good list and we should divide the list into two groups to go to Council. Ms. Rentzsch said we will be contacting the businesses.

Ms. Rentzsch said MCC is working on putting together a tour for them of various areas such as culinary, machine tech, etc. They will be getting back to us soon. She added that even though they had toured Technipaq in the past, they are ready for them to come for another tour.

Ms. Maule suggested Sequoya Automotive. Ms. Rentzsch said they toured them a few years ago. They have a very nice internship program.

Ms. Rentzsch asked what days would be better for the tours. Mr. Reece suggested Mondays.

Welcome Packet

Ms. Maule said they have redesigned the Community Guide into chapters. They have sold over 100 ads and there will be a new map that will go along with this. She asked for the City's help and provide a letter from the Mayor. They want the guide to be a "down and dirty" list of what people should do in the first 30 days of moving in. She said they want this to be a friendly task list.

Mr. Reece said that guide could be helpful to anyone. He asked how many people move into town versus moving within Crystal Lake. Ms. Maule said they receive a list of new residents but they don't know if they are new to the community or just moved to a new home. She said employers want to use this to help recruit employees. Ms. Maule said the guide will be out soon.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake

Ms. Rentzsch said the association held their annual meeting which was the most attended. They gave out awards to various businesses. She reviewed the businesses that will be moving into the downtown area.

Chamber of Commerce (Mary Margaret Maule)

Ms. Maule said they are looking for nominations for positions on their Board. She said the State of the Community was recently held and well attended. The annual dinner is scheduled for May 26th and they are reinstating the Athena Award.

McEDC

Ms. Rentzsch said the packet includes the CEDS document. It identifies clusters and it will help to attract national and international businesses. They will be updating their strategic plan to include items from the CEDS.

Ms. Rentzsch said the first McHenry County Economic Summit was recently held. Ms. Maule said the Chambers from McHenry County were not invited. Mr. Reece said they should have invited the Chambers.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Cowlin reviewed some of the recent petitions that have been received and/or approved. She said that approval was given for a Casey's gas station and convenient store at the southwest corner of Terra Cotta and Route 176. There will be a detention area in the rear which will hopefully help some of the flooding issues in that area.

Mr. Dalzell asked about Willow Creek. Ms. Cowlin said they are currently working on their plans. Ms. Rentzsch said Willow Creek will be holding an informational open house soon to get feedback on their plan. She has not received an invitation yet but will let the members know. There was a discussion regarding the property at the southwest corner of Main Street and Crystal Lake Avenue. Ms. Rentzsch said in the past the property owner was not interested in selling the property and now they are in the process of contacting people who were previously interested in the property. Mr. Leech asked if that parcel could be used for the parking garage. Ms. Rentzsch said that parcel was determined to be too far from the downtown area for a parking garage. Mr. Dalzell asked why Willow Creek would go on the opposite corner since that is prim retail property. They should look at the vacant property a little further south. Ms. Rentzsch said Willow Creek did look at that property but they were not interested in it. Mr. Leech is concerned that Willow Creek will hurt the Raue Center since they hold concerts there. Mr. Reece said he hopes questions are asked of Willow Creek when they come before the review bodies. Mr. Affrunti said he isn't sure they know what impact this will have on the downtown area. Ms. Maule said their other sites are not in a downtown area so she doesn't believe they have any history on the impact – good or bad. Mr. Dalzell said that is taking a large tax parcel off the rolls.

Mr. Leech understands that the gas station at Main Street and Crystal Lake Avenue will be closing to have a complete remodel. Ms. Rentzsch said that was approved a few months ago. Mr. Leech asked about the former Wal Mart site. Ms. Rentzsch said there is a group of investors who are interested in the property and are in the process of acquiring more of the center. This will take some time.

Ms. Cowlin reviewed what will be going to City Council on March 1.

Comments and Suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Saidler asked how the search for the new Economic Development Manager is going. Ms. Rentzsch said they are three strong candidates they have been interviewing.

Mr. Reece again welcomed Mr. Schroll to the Committee.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 a.m.