

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
January 24, 2017 – 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, Leech, Maule, and Fowler were present. Mr. Dalzell arrived at 7:40 a.m. Members Affrunti, Reece, Saidler, and Schroll were absent.

Heather Maieritsch, Economic Development Manager, was present from staff. Haig Haleblan, Councilmember, was also present.

Approve Minutes of the October 25, 2016 Meetings

Mr. Fowler stated the minutes could not be approved at this time due to a lack of a quorum.

Public Participation

There was no one present to speak.

I Shop Crystal Lake Update

Ms. Maieritsch said the packet includes an I Shop summary from November and December. They will be meeting with the consultant to come up with more marketing ideas for the future. The “now and then” segment has been very successful in drawing in new people, especially the McDonald’s train.

Mr. Fowler asked when the contract with the consultant is up. Ms. Maieritsch said she was not sure and will check into it.

Ms. Maule said the Chamber does gift certificates which is not specific to a particular store. They sell about 500 a year. The City also has gift certificates for I Shop through the Finance Department and they sold 12 this year. She said the Chamber loses money on each certificate due to the cost of the check and the employee’s year. Ms. Maule said there is a problem with the businesses where the employee is not aware of this type of certificate and doesn’t want to accept it. She would like to see the City and Chamber collaborate about the certificates and how to process them. Ms. Maieritsch said she will check into it and added that we could do something with Instagram or Facebook. Ms. Maule said they were offered a line item on the water bills but that is not what they were looking for. Mr. Fowler said that most employees would think of them as fraudulent checks because they are not aware of them. Ms. Maule said they are looking for \$4,500 from the City to create educational materials for the vendors and to educate the public. It is easier to have a poster in the break room. Mr. Fowler said the employees are doing what they need to do which is checking for fraud. Mr. Leech said education is important. Mr. Haleblan asked what the dollar amount of their certificates that they sold last year. Ms. Maule said she did not have that information. She added that they could also do videos for the businesses.

Mr. Fowler said that since there was a quorum at this time, they could approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

Approve Minutes of the October 25, 2016 Meetings

Mr. DeHaan moved to approve the December 6, 2016 EDC minutes as presented. Ms. Maule seconded the motion. On voice vote, Members, Dalzell and DeHaan voted aye. Members Leech, Maule, and Fowler abstained. Motion passed.

Business anniversaries and tour updates

Ms. Maieritsch said she is trying to set up business tours in late February, as well as, March and April. There are several businesses who have not responded to her inquiries. She added that they are checking into a tour of Boltswitch later in 2017 as they will be celebrating a major anniversary. Mr. Fowler suggested that the Mayor attend this tour since their last tour there was a large sign welcoming the Mayor and he did not attend.

Mr. Fowler asked about the businesses who received McEDC awards at the recent annual dinner. Ms. Maieritsch said they hoped to set up tours of the businesses and then present the plaque at that time. They recently presented Rita Corporation their plaque. She added that they are in discussion about a possible expansion in the next year.

Mr. Fowler asked about the business anniversaries to be presented at the February 7 City Council meeting. Ms. Maieritsch said they will be HoneyBaked Ham – 25 years, and John Behrens Architect – 25 years. She added that we have not heard back from McGrath Printing and will push them back to another meeting. We have been contacting the companies previously suggested and are finding that their anniversaries don't match up with our starting date and others have passed on being recognized. The Mayor has asked that there be only 2 businesses at a time and no more than on one meeting a month.

Mr. Leech added that The Cottage will be celebrating 30 years this year. He said there are many people who asked why Pablo's was recognized when the owners have only owned it for 3 years. Mr. Fowler said it is based on when the business started and not the ownership.

Ms. Maieritsch asked if the members had any suggestions regarding future business tours to please let her know.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Fowler said the annual Downtown meeting will be held on February 6 at Town Hall. Also last weekend was "slidewalk" sales in downtown Crystal Lake.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Maule said the State of the Community will be held on February 3 and today is the last day to register. Also State Representative Allen Skillicorn, who replaced Mike Tryon, will attend. This will be the first event in our area that he will be attending.

Ms. Maule said there will be an honor banner program in the City. They will be on 16 poles on Virginia Street. The honor banners should go up in May and be changed every 6 months. When the banner is removed, it will be presented to the family of the service member.

Ms. Maule said Leaders in Action will take place in March and Mark Tebbe who is with 1871 Bunker in Chicago will be there. It will be held on April 16.

McEDC

Ms. Maieritsch said she has reached out to Pam Cumpata to attend a future EDC meeting.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Maieritsch said there is an interactive story map for restaurants. The City's GIS group is working on other interactive maps which will include one for available properties.

Mr. Dalzell asked how much the gaming machines are bringing in for the City. Ms. Maule asked that the numbers be available for the next meeting.

Ms. Maule said she was trying the app on her phone for the interactive restaurant map and it was not working. Ms. Maieritsch said she would check into it with our IT group. Ms. Maule said it needs to be easily accessible through the phone since people use their phones to look for restaurants.

Mr. Leech said he is concerned with the Raue Center not having the number of programs/concerts that they should. There was a concert there recently and every restaurant in the downtown had a 2 hour wait. Mr. Dalzell said some contracts such as with Ravinia have a clause that restricts where that band can play so it doesn't hurt their ticket sales. Mr. Leech asked if anyone knew if there was a quota for certain types of entrainment – a certain percentage for ballet, or comedy. He added that the center in St. Charles has 20+ weekends a year with various programs and we have maybe 3. Also the merchants downtown are not aware of when events will be taking place at the Raue so they can plan their staffing and ordering food. They need to work together.

Mr. Haleblian said there is a new Civic Center Board who is looking into the workings of the Raue Center. They too want to increase the use of the Raue. Mr. Dalzell suggested that even businesses work together to put acts in the Raue. Ms. Maule said they don't have to be national bands. Mr. Leech said he had found the David Bowie tribute band and gave his information to the people at the Raue and they didn't do anything with it. The band went to St. Charles and is selling the place out.

Mr. Fowler believes there are budget issues and suggested that staff invite Richard from the Raue Center to come to a future meeting.

Mr. Dalzell said there is a sign at the Chamber building on Virginia Street that is run by the Lions Club. It has been slow to get the word out that the sign can be used for birthday, anniversary, graduation, etc. announcements but not for a specific business.

Mr. Haleblian suggested a tour of the food pantry's new location. He said it is great. The members agreed.

Mr. Dalzell suggested to bring people to the downtown area that a "Grand Prix" be held with go carts similar to the Cardboard Cup Regatta. Each person would need to build their own so there would be little to no cost to the City. Ms. Maule said she will bring that up to the Chamber and not-for-profit groups.

Mr. Leech asked about Three Oaks Recreation Area and how the restaurant is going. Ms. Maieritsch said they hope to be open in the spring. Mr. Haleblian said they are working on it.

Ms. Maieritsch said they hope to announce a tenant for the former Sports Authority space at Crystal Point. They are also working on other potential tenants.

Mr. Leech asked about the former Hines Lumber site. Ms. Maieritsch said they presented a conceptual plan to both the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as City Council. It was well received. She added that they are working on revising the plans based on the comments that they received. Mr. Haleblian said this developer

has completed several developments like this one including one in Arlington Heights. Ms. Maule said there are not many apartment options in not only Crystal Lake but also the County.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

There were no additional comments from the Committee members.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.