

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee**  
**January 22, 2019 – 8:00 a.m.**  
**Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Mr. Fowler.

**Roll Call/Attendance**

Members Affrunti, Rainwater, Saidler, Schroll and Fowler were present. Mr. DeHaan arrived at 8:05 a.m. Members Leech, Maule, and Reece were absent.

Heather Maieritsch, Economic Development Manager, and Katie Cowlin, Assistant City Planner, were present from staff. Bobbie Bache and Jenna Ehrhardt with Think Big Go Local were also present.

**Approve Minutes of the October 23, 2018 Meetings**

Mr. Saidler moved to approve the minutes from the October 23, 2018 EDC meeting. Mr. Affrunti seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, Rainwater, Saidler, Schroll, and Fowler voted aye. Mr. DeHaan had not arrived yet. Motion passed.

**Approve Minutes of the December 4, 2018 Meetings**

Mr. Saidler moved to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2018 EDC meeting. Mr. Affrunti seconded the motion. On voice vote, members DeHaan, Saidler, and Fowler voted aye. Members Affrunti, Rainwater, and Schroll abstained. Mr. DeHaan had not arrived yet. Motion passed.

**Approve the 2019 EDC Meeting Dates**

Mr. Schroll moved to approve the 2019 EDC meeting dates. Mr. Affrunti seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, Rainwater, Saidler, Schroll, and Fowler voted aye. Mr. DeHaan had not arrived yet. Motion passed.

**Public Participation**

There was no one present who wished to speak.

**I Shop Crystal Lake Presentation and Introduction by Think Big Go Local**

Ms. Maieritsch introduced the City's new consultant for the I Shop Crystal Lake program, Bobbie Bache and Jenna Ehrhardt with Think Big Go Local (TBGL). Ms. Bache said they have been working on this account for approximately three months and have put together reports for each month. The growth in the social media has been approximately 9%.

Mr. DeHaan arrived at this time.

Ms. Bache said they sent e-mails to all of the business contacts from Ms. Maieritsch to reach out to them and ask that the business contact TBGL with items to be shared on social media. She said they have been using "Stories" to share content. That content lasts for 24 hours and it is at the top of the apps. The downside to using Stories it is harder to track results. She said they plan to use Facebook and Twitter, as well as, Instagram which is growing for businesses. They will be starting to use theme items for each week such as the Super Bowl or National Restaurant Week. If a business is featuring or holding a special event, they will be able to add that to the Stories portion of social media. That will encourage people to tag their favorite business or leave reviews of that business. They will also use trivia questions and story videos to engage people. In the future when the weather is warmer, they will be targeting the social media posts for people

outside of Crystal Lake to encourage them to come to Crystal Lake, specially the downtown area since it is so close to the Metra station.

Mr. Affrunti noted that TBGL posts twice a day. Ms. Bache said they frequent posts to keep things moving forward. They typically post in the morning and again at night so it is the first posting you see. Mr. Rainwater asked if Facebook is still considered the #1 social media. Ms. Bache said yes but growth has been seen in Instagram.

Mr. Rainwater said they have both Facebook and Instagram pages and have over 1,500 followers. They post twice every day and have noticed they don't have as much response from Facebook. Ms. Bache said the postings on Instagram are not easily shared. Mr. Schroll asked how Mr. Rainwater knows the postings impact their business. Mr. Rainwater said they hear verbally from customers. He said it really works and creates noise about the business.

Mr. Affrunti asked about the paid advertisements. Ms. Bache said they typically run advertisements simultaneously and can target communities, age groups, etc.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Bache and Ms. Ehrhardt for attending the meeting. Ms. Bache asked the members to please reach out to them if they have any ideas or questions.

### **Business Investment Awards and Business Tours**

Ms. Maieritsch said staff is in reaching out to BBC Innovation Corp., NuMetal Products, Sequoia, Zip Specialties, and Ridgefield Flooring for possible future tours of their facilities. She said BBC Innovation relocated to Crystal Lake last year. Mr. Fowler asked if there has been any luck contacting Autotrol. Ms. Maieritsch said they met with staff to discuss their aging workforce. They preferred to meet with a few key organizations, including the State, that could assist with hiring efforts.

Mr. Fowler said he has some contacts with several businesses and he will be sure to supply staff with the information.

Mr. Affrunti said Camfil is a major success story. Ms. Maieritsch said the members had mentioned at their last meeting about nominating Patricia for the Woman of Distinction award. Mr. Fowler believes that Camfil would be able to help with getting the information needed for the application.

Mr. Schroll asked how the City would help the new company fill their employment needs without hurting existing businesses. Ms. Maieritsch said the timing worked out well since there were several larger employers in the area such as Dean's that had recently closed. Also, the State has worked with Camfil to help funnel potential employees to them. Camfil has contacts throughout the country to help with their search.

Mr. Rainwater added that he has been in contact with the Chicago Wolves AHL hockey team regarding a future event for veterans. They give the tickets to the game to the veterans and prior to the game there are booths set up by various businesses who are looking for employees. This is a big opportunity for the veterans to find employment and possibly even in the field they had performed in before their military career. Ms. Maieritsch said McHenry County is also finding employment for veterans and reformed criminals to fill vacant positions.

Mr. Affrunti asked if we know where the people who work in Crystal Lake live. It would be interesting to know where we draw from. Mr. Schroll said there have been studies on the number of people who leave McHenry County for their job.

Mr. Saidler said they are looking to hire and all of the applicants they have received are from Crystal Lake, Cary, and Woodstock. More people are wanting a shorter commute. Mr. Affrunti said traveling is an issue.

**Organization reports:**

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Rainwater said there is a special City Council meeting tonight regarding the hotel/motel tax. He said they are trying to hire a part time event planner. They did hire one and she left. He added that there is a new Downtown Association Board and he is the new Vice President.

Mr. Rainwater said Aroma Café is finally opening in a few weeks.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Maieritsch said the GEM awards will be February 4<sup>th</sup>.

MCEDC

Ms. Maieritsch said the MCEDC is reaching out into the community and they are in the process of creating an image and marketing campaign.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Maieritsch said the end of the year Economic Development Report was included in the packets and there is a lot planned for 2019. There will be many new businesses opening by the end of January and staff is trying to keep that momentum going. Mr. Rainwater said the downtown business owners have commented that business was up for 2018 and most had their best December yet. Ms. Maieritsch said the downtown area is still a regional draw for shopping and dining.

Mr. Saidler asked about Barnes and Nobel. Ms. Maieritsch said there have been many discussions with them on other space available in the City. Staff is also reaching out to other book stores to locate in Crystal Lake.

Ms. Maieritsch said there are several business that will be opening soon including Steinhafels Furniture whose Grand Opening will be on Friday, February 15. Mr. Fowler asked if the Mayor will present the Community Investment Award to them at that time. Ms. Maieritsch said they typically wait and give it at a later date.

**Comments and suggestions from the Committee**

There were no comments from the members.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.