

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
February 26, 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, DeHaan, Maule, Rainwater, Saidler, Schroll and Fowler were present. Members Leech and Reece were absent.

Heather Maieritsch, Economic Development Manager, was present from staff.

Approve Minutes of the January 22, 2019 Meetings

Mr. Affrunti asked that “JEM” should be changed to “GEM” in the minutes.

Mr. Schroll moved to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2019 EDC meeting as amended. Mr. Saidler seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, DeHaan, Rainwater, Saidler, Schroll, and Fowler voted aye. Ms. Maule abstained. Motion passed.

Public Participation

There was no one present who wished to speak.

Business Investment Awards and Business Tours

Ms. Maieritsch said staff visited Bio Bidet along with representatives from MCC, McHenry County Workforce, and the Illinois Department of Employment Security. They previously relocated to Crystal Lake from Algonquin and added 25 employees. They are now looking to expand their existing facility and add employees again. She said they will be expanding their business to include touchless faucets. Mr. Fowler asked if they possibly had discussions with the proposed senior housing and hotel. Ms. Maieritsch said there have been discussions with the company.

Ms. Maieritsch said if there are any businesses that are having difficulties finding employees to please let her know so we can connect them to agencies that may be able to help. Ms. Maule asked about National Gift Card. Ms. Maieritsch said they have their own process for hiring employees.

Ms. Maieritsch said there will be a Grand Opening for Cut It Out Scrapbook store in the Crystal Lake Plaza on March 15th at 10 a.m. and all are welcome to attend.

Ms. Maieritsch said that typically the City Council makes a presentation for business anniversaries in the spring. She has not heard of any business anniversaries for over 25 years. If the members know of any, please let her know.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Rainwater said the Downtown Board will have a new member – Mary Barrens. There is also a new Events Coordinator whose main focus will be the Farmers’ Market. They will also be working on new events for the downtown area to spark more interest in the area.

Mr. Fowler said that he has served as the representative on the EDC for the Downtown Area. He would like to have Mr. Rainwater be the official Downtown Area representative and he will move to a member at large on the Committee. Ms. Maieritsch said she needs to receive a letter for the request from the Downtown Board and then the request will be formally approved by the City Council.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Maule said the recent State of the Community went well and Lakewood was included this year. Also they held an event for business owners about the possibility of legalizing marijuana and what business can and can't control. She said that Woodstock, McHenry, and Lakewood have all approved marijuana dispensaries in their communities and she is not sure what will be needed for recreation dispensaries. Ms. Maule stated that the minimum wage bill was also passed and signed. She was disappointed as to the lack of opposition by small businesses.

Ms. Maule said Leaders in Action is in full swing and it is a good program for those who seek professional development.

Ms. Maule said the Independence Day parade is open. Last year there were 128 entries and this year there will be a hard cut off. Last year's parade was very long.

Ms. Maule stated the Community Cleanup day will be in April. The Chamber will collect fiber, athletic shoes, offer document shredding, and electronic recycling. There is no charge for the electronics recycling which includes tube TVs.

Ms. Maule said the Visit McHenry County is trying to organize a bike share program. They have commitments from McHenry, Woodstock, and Algonquin. Ms. Maieritsch said they would like a rack in Crystal Lake by a train station. Mr. Schroll commented that this initiative fits in with the City's efforts with bike lanes and paths throughout the community.

Mr. Schroll moved that the EDC express their support for the City's participation in the bike sharing program. Mr. Saidler seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Ms. Maule informed the committee that this was her last meeting as the representative of the Chamber. Her last day will be March 7. They hope to have her replacement in place by March 15.

Mr. Fowler stated that Ms. Maule does not have to be a member to attend these meetings and she is always welcome.

MCEDC

Ms. Maieritsch said she was selected to be on the Board for MCEDC.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Maieritsch said the current projects have been slowed by the weather. The property at the southwest corner of Crystal Lake Avenue and Main Street will be auctioned again. The former Boston Market may be divided into retail store fronts. She said that Barnes and Noble will be closing in August and Binny's will then start work on the building. Barnes and Noble said they are interested in staying in this market.

Mr. Fowler asked about the former Walmart site. Ms. Maieritsch said they have been working with a party to develop a mixed use development. There is a contract pending on the former Colonial restaurant for two smaller casual restaurants but this requires sign off from all of the property owners in the shopping center.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Rainwater said the GEM awards were well attended and there is a push in the downtown for membership. Aroma Wine and Coffee is open and has been very busy. Mr. Affrunti asked about the possibility of café seating on the sidewalks in the downtown area. Mr. Rainwater said that would be nice but he is not sure how that can be accomplished. Ms. Maieritsch said it was previously brought up by Mr. Leech who met with staff. She is not certain what the outcome of that discussion was but she will check into it.

Ms. Maieritsch said the next meeting in March will be during spring break. She suggested the meeting be cancelled. The member present agreed.

There were no other comments from the members.

Adjourn

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