

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
December 3, 2019 – 8:30 a.m.
Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room**

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Mr. Reece.

Roll Call/Attendance

Members Affrunti, and Reece were present. Mr. Fowler arrived at 8:40 a.m. Members DeHaan, Leech, Rainwater, and Saidler were absent.

Heather Maieritsch, Economic Development Manager, and Jodi Hartman, Director of Finance, were present from staff. Haig Haleblian, City Councilman, and Jackie Ruiz, Acting Chamber President, were also present.

Approve Minutes of the October 22, 2019 Meetings

Ms. Maieritsch said there is no quorum present. The minutes will be approved at the next EDC meeting on February 25, 2020.

Public Participation

There was no one present who wished to speak.

Mr. Fowler arrived at this time.

I Shop Crystal Lake Update

Ms. Maieritsch said the campaigns are going well and the consultant is constantly adding posts on various media. She said that recently Instagram is growing faster than Facebook – at least for now.

Mr. Haleblian suggested there be a “Men’s Night Out” especially around the holidays to help the guys who have no clue what to get for presents. Ms. Maieritsch said she will pass on that suggestion.

Business Anniversaries and Business Tours

Ms. Maieritsch said she is holding off contacting businesses regarding tours until after the holidays. She asked if anyone had any suggestions for possible tours to let her know.

Mr. Fowler asked if plaques were given to the businesses that were nominated for the Business Awards. Ms. Maieritsch said she did except we are still waiting for the MCEDC for the corrected Chicago Plastics plaque.

Mr. Fowler asked about the Gulgren’s anniversary. Ms. Maieritsch said the City presented a plaque and proclamation during a Council meeting for their 55th anniversary. She did reach out and sent them a letter of congratulations on the City’s behalf.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Reece said the Festival of Lights Parade was great and well attended. Ms. Kenney and her staff of volunteers always do a wonderful job.

Ms. Maieritsch said the next event for downtown will be the Slidewalk Sale in January.

Mr. Haleblian asked how the Christmas Tree Lane was. Ms. Maieritsch said she had not heard.

Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Ruiz said the Chamber announced the new President yesterday. He is from Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. They will hold an open house on December 19 to welcome him.

Ms. Ruiz said the State of the Community will be held on February 6. The communities involved will be Crystal Lake, Lakewood, and Prairie Grove.

Ms. Ruiz said the Expo this year will be one day only, on March 28. There will be various prizes to win and they will hold a pet adoption as well.

Ms. Ruiz said there was a Meet and Greet with legislators on December 19. This is cancelled since they were recalled to Washington.

MCEDC

Ms. Maieritsch said the revamped look is complete. Also the Business Champion Awards were recently held at the newly remodeled banquet area of the Holiday Inn. Camfil won in their category and Autotrol, Chicago Plastics, and BioBidet were nominated.

City of Crystal Lake

Ms. Maieritsch said the Holiday Inn will be working on additional renovations. They are looking for a tenant for the night club space. Mr. Haleblan asked about the Fairfield Inn. Ms. Maieritsch said they are planning to break ground spring of 2020. They have submitted plans for building permits. Mr. Haleblan asked if there is a completion date for the Fairfield Inn. Ms. Maieritsch said nothing has been announced.

Mr. Maieritsch said the former Sports Authority which will be Express Fitness Center is moving forward. Also Binny's hopes to be open before Christmas. The outbuilding next to the new Binny's will be Freddy's and McAlister's with an additional retail space in the center of that building. Mookies will be taking a portion of the former Plum Garden building, and the former Jaster's will be Vine and Plate, a small plate and bar establishment. Mr. Haleblan said there will be concerns with the parking. Mr. Reece indicated that there is parking along the public streets.

Ms. Maieritsch said the City Council will discuss the Restaurant and Retail Grant for Jude's on Williams Street. The owner is Paul Leech and it will be a small plate and drinks establishment.

Mr. Haleblan asked about the former Pauly Toyota site on Route 14. Ms. Maieritsch said the owners were given notice about the buildings and they submitted demolition applications. Staff is working with Raising Cane's restaurant to move to the portion of the lot adjacent to the existing auto repair building. That would allow the other land to possibly be developed with a larger user. Mr. Reece asked if this is a PUD which requires going before the Planning and Zoning Commission with final approval of the City Council. Ms. Maieritsch said yes.

Ms. Maieritsch said the bike share program – Zagster – was successful in Crystal Lake. It is a two year program. Crystal Lake's 2-year program was funded by Visit McHenry County. This spring Visit McHenry County will determine if the project will be continued. If the program is continued it is not likely Crystal Lake will have the station paid for by Visit McHenry County. Mr. Reece asked why the communities have

to pay a fee when the riders of the bikes pay a fee and there is advertising on the bikes. Ms. Maieritsch said the rentals don't cover the cost of the program.

Ms. Maieritsch said there will also be a new deli shop – The Crave which will be in the Commons of Crystal Lake shopping center.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Fowler said John Green represents property owners who are purchasing the former WalMart site on Route 14. He asked if the City could research TIF bonds and if the City would consider them. If they do purchase all of the property, the City's original intention was to eliminate the Three Oaks Recreation Area entrance on Route 14 and move it onto this property so it has the use of the traffic signal. That is a very expensive proposition for the property owner. Ms. Maieritsch said the conceptual plan showed retail in front and a residential development in the rear.

Mr. Affrunti inquired about the strength of Crystal Lake's sales tax. Ms. Hartman said the commercial market is shifting. There is an influx of service-based businesses which charge minimal sales tax. Ms. Maieritsch said Crystal Lake's market is strong and we continually work to retain our existing business. Mr. Affrunti suggested a tax on food – not groceries. Mr. Reece said there is an article in Crain's Chicago Business indicating the restaurants in Chicago are having a difficult time. It's hard for them to get employees due to minimum wage. Adding a tax may not be a good idea. Ms. Hartman said restaurants are having a hard time getting employees. Teens don't want to work and their parents aren't making them.

There were no other comments from the members.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.