

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 15, 2009 – 7:30 a.m.**  
**Municipal Complex – Council Chambers Executive Conference Room**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

**Roll Call/Attendance**

Members Bawolek, Fowler, Riley, Viger and Haleblian were present. Members Affrunti, Feddersen, and Johnson were absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present from staff. Pollyanna Falk with Dobbe Marketing and PR was also present.

**Approve minutes of the October 27, 2009 EDC Meetings**

Mr. Fowler moved to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2009 EDC meeting as presented. Ms. Viger seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Fowler, Riley, Viger, and Haleblian voted aye. Mr. Bawolek abstained. Motion passed.

**Public participation and comments**

There was no one present who wished to speak.

**EDC Projects**

**I Shop Crystal Lake program update**

**2009-10 Advertising & Promotion program wrap-up and 2010-11 planning**

Ms. Falk said this has been a very busy month. There are now 2 radio spots on STAR 105 and Y103 on both weekdays and weekends. The I Shop CL Holiday promotion ad is also being run in the Chicago Tribune on Wednesday-Sunday in the Northwest Zone. Mr. Richter said he also receives it out in Rockford. Ms. Falk said they are also running an ad in the Spanish magazine. She said nearly 1000 shopping bags were handed out during the Downtown Holiday Parade. There are about 100 left of those and will be handed out at a business in town. The feedback from the auto dealerships has been very positive. Ms. Falk also said the I Shop video has been edited and is on Channel 17 and the website. They are very happy to say that McHenry County Magazine did a spotlight on the I Shop program. She said the cling contest is going well and there are lots of prizes left. They will be contacting service companies to put the I Shop clings in their service vehicles. Ms. Falk said there is also the possibility to have a professionally done video produced for businesses that will be 15 to 30 seconds long. They are also checking into the live remotes from STAR 105.

Mr. Richter said he needs feedback on a few items. Regarding the promotional videos – they have received a quote from a local video firm to produce 8 different videos so there needs to be a selection process for the 8 businesses that are to be chosen. The businesses will not be paying for the promo videos and he would hope that they would be used by struggling businesses to gain additional visibility. Mr. Riley said it should be open to first come first served. Mr. Haleblian asked how you would select the businesses. Mr. Richter said he would like to send an e-mail to the restaurants since they seem to be

having a difficult time with daytime traffic. Ms. Viger suggested an e-mail be sent to the restaurants, inform them of the video and the businesses will be selected from a lottery system. She added a short response date should be given. Mr. Richter and the Committee agreed.

Ms. Falk said the live remotes would be with the Star 105.5 rolling radio which costs \$1500 for a weekday and \$1900 for a weekend. Mr. Richter said he would be contacting property owners to see if they would be interested and to share the cost of the promotion. If not he would contact the businesses. If it is held in January, it would be used to encourage people to use their gift certificates in Crystal Lake. Mr. Haleblian asked what the draw is to have the rolling radio. Ms. Falk said it is a live broadcast and usually there are special offers or even giveaways. Mr. Haleblian asked if it is effective. Ms. Falk said yes. Mr. Riley said it usually is an all day thing. Mr. Richter said it would be a good promotion for the City as well. He said Bohl Farm would be a good place. They have Panda Express opening and it could be done in January or February. He will contact both the owners of Bohl Farm and Panda Express.

Mr. Richter said the vehicle program will be ending December 31 and it won't be extended. The City has promoted auto dealerships and it has gone a long way for auto dealerships. Mr. Fowler asked where the people are coming from to purchase cars. Mr. Haleblian said there could be a press release showing where the people are traveling from to purchase a car here. He also asked if we could contact Libertyville to see where the people come to purchase from them. Mr. Fowler said that information would help when they want to get funding for next year. The requests are not just from people within the City.

#### **2009-10 Website [www.ishopcl.com](http://www.ishopcl.com) summary**

Mr. Richter said the website has been revised and the contractual obligation with Verity Three has been completed. He has met with Verity Three with a list of action items to be completed prior to final payout. The directory has been expanded, there will be more web pages available to businesses, and they have repaired minor glitches in the administrative portion of the website. Mr. Richter said they have fulfilled the contract. Mr. Haleblian said he is happy with the product. Mr. Richter said it does work well. Ms. Viger said she doesn't have a problem finding what she is looking for on the website. Mr. Richter added that businesses love that they can update their information themselves. Mr. Haleblian said they need to budget for some aesthetic changes to the web site in the future. Ms. Viger said they should not make changes to the website just to make changes.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Falk for all of the work Dobbe Marketing did for the parade. Ms. Falk said Mr. Richter did a lot of work as well.

Mr. Richter said they have started a Facebook page and twitter account for the I Shop program within the past several weeks.

#### **McHenry County Convention & Visitors Bureau**

Mr. Richter said they have a few options to be reviewed by the Committee regarding funding for the McCCVB. Ms. Viger and Mr. Fowler said they would not be part of the discussion since they are involved in other groups who will be requesting funding from the Council through the hotel tax.

Mr. Riley suggested that they could possibly suggest a percentage of the total hotel tax funding go to the McCCVB. Mr. Richter said the Holiday Inn and Country Inn and Suites are big supporters of the McCCVB. He said the Committee doesn't need to make a decision at this time but the Council will be holding their workshop in January. Mr. Riley said he would like the City to be a full member at \$12,000. Mr. Fowler suggested that a representative from the hotels that are affected be at the workshop. They could make a case for the funds.

Mr. Riley moved to recommend to the City Council that the City of Crystal Lake become full members of the McHenry County Convention and Visitors Bureau at an annual cost of \$12,000. Mr. Bawolek seconded the motion. On roll call, members Bawolek, Riley and Haleblian voted aye. Members Viger and Fowler did not vote. Motion passed.

Mr. Haleblian left the meeting at this time. Mr. Riley, being the Vice Chair, proceeded with the meeting.

### **Economic Development incentives update**

#### **Façade / Tenant improvements incentives summary**

Mr. Richter said there is \$250,000 allocated for the grants and \$93,280.06 has been approved to date. So far no money has been paid out. Recipients are completing the work, obtaining proof of payments, and seeking Certificates of Occupancy. He said this is an important program for Staff to have. This given Staff something to offer perspective businesses and has allowed us to become important parts of the negotiating process.

#### **Request to extend the Targeted Development Zone incentive to Route 176**

Mr. Richter said there was a letter in the Committee's packet explaining the Council's action. He said it will be discussed again when the program comes up for renewal.

### **Business Retention status report**

Mr. Richter said it has been challenging to get businesses to respond to our visitation requests. He has personally met with the manager as well as one of the brothers who own Walter E. Smithe. There was a rumor that they would be closing. After the discussion with them, Mr. Richter understands the businesses is doing well and will not be leaving. Mr. Bawolek and Elizabeth Maxwell met with Sam's Club. Staff also met with Catalyst. Mr. Richter said he will keep the EDC posted on the status of any visitation scheduling.

### **Staff projects**

#### **Retailer recruitment status report**

Mr. Richter reviewed several possible businesses that may be coming to Crystal Lake. Also Chen's King Wok is looking for a new site since they have sold their property to a bank. They were looking at purchasing the former Bakers Square but that may not happen since King Buffet is in the center and has objected. Mr. Richter said there are several developers interested in Crystal Court but they wouldn't

redevelop the property for 3-5 years and they are looking for the City or one party to purchase the property.

International Council of Shopping Centers Dealmaking summary report

Mr. Richter said he and Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Planning and ED, both attended the ICSC in October where the City had a booth. They have many leads and are currently following up with them.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation cooperation

Mr. Richter said there is not much to report. He attends the meetings on a monthly basis and is working to build a relationship.

**Economic Development assessment**

Mr. Richter said the ICSC membership is nominal and extremely beneficial. They receive a lot of good information and contacts through this association. Also when the City had a contract with Inland Real Estate, they created a website (crystallakeretail.com) and it is still up and running. It only cost approximately \$10 per month to maintain it and he has received several inquiries from that website.

Mr. Richter asked the Committee to think about the following items for the next meeting: What are we doing well? What are our strengths and weaknesses? What resources do we need? He reviewed the EDC's mission in the City Code and said the chairman position can be rotated if the Commission wishes or they can keep the chairman the same.

Mr. Fowler asked how many members short is this Committee. Mr. Richter said two. Mr. Riley asked if the City has been marketing the EDC membership. Mr. Fowler feels the vacancies need to be filled and then they need to work on attendance. Ms. Viger feels the next year will be more in the line of maintenance and tweaking with a few new ideas added. Mr. Fowler asked if there are any other organizations that should be represented on this Committee. Mr. Richter said possibly a McEDC staff member.

**Organization Reports:**

Downtown Crystal Lake (Brian Fowler)

Mr. Fowler said the parade went very well and the businesses downtown seem to be busy.

Committee for Business Support

Ms. Viger said the Chamber has moved back into their Virginia location. She said membership is down and thanked Mr. Richter and the City for their help with their renovation project.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (Brian Fowler)

Mr. Fowler said a McEDC member will be present at the next meeting to make a presentation.

City of Crystal Lake (James Richter II)

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No report.

**Comments from the Committee**

There were no other comments from the members.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a.m.