

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
Regular Meeting
March 23, 2010 – 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 Affrunti, Feddersen, Fowler, and Viger were present. Members Bawolek, Johnson, Riley and Haleblan were absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present from staff. Gary Reece, President of Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce, Sue Dobbe with Dobbe Marketing, Chief James Moore, Deputy Chief Paul DeRaedt, and Fire Prevention Bureau Chief Jerry Larsen with the Crystal Lake Fire/Rescue Department were also present.

Approve minutes of the February 23, 2010 EDC Meetings

Mr. Richter stated that since there was no quorum for this meeting that they will place the approval of the minutes on the next agenda.

Public participation and comments

There was no one present who wished to comment.

Presentation by the Crystal Lake Fire/Rescue Department

Chief Moore thanked the EDC for their interest in the life safety inspections that are being held for current businesses within the City limits. These inspections are to reduce risks and correct hazards. The department wants to be sure that the business, their employees, and the customers are safe.

Chief Moore said there are 3 E's of Fire Prevention – Engineering, Education, and Enforcement. He said they do everything they can before they give a citation to the business. The priorities of the inspection are the Fire suppression and detection system, storage/housekeeping, exiting and emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, accessibility, and address. He said when they go into a business they look only at the existing conditions or if the business is making changes they will make recommendations.

Chief Moore said the inspections started in 2007 after the department received a grant for training and the staff was trained. The problem they have is the scheduling of the inspections. These inspections are after their primary duties so there is no prior arrangement of times for the inspections. Ms. Viger asked if there could be a phone call made prior to the inspection. It is difficult sometimes to get into the area the inspection needs to be done in because of classes, etc. It also would minimize the “fear factor” when the firemen walk into the building. Chief Moore said they will try to include a phone call but sometimes they get an emergency call which would take precedence. Mr. Affrunti said he recalls inspections being done prior to 2007. Chief Moore said they were done only voluntarily and usually it was requested by the insurance company. Ms. Feddersen asked if the inspections are done with vacant buildings. Chief Moore said they will only be doing the occupied spaces. Deputy Chief DeRaedt said when a new

business goes for occupancy that is when they would do that space.

Chief Moore said they completed 970 inspections in 2009 with 249 follow-ups and no citations. The follow-up inspections usually take place between 15-18 days after the initial inspection. Addresses are very important to have both on the front and rear of the building. They recommend the address be 6 inches tall but the requirement is 4 inches. Mr. Richter said he has had several opportunities to go along on the inspections and the crews have been very professional.

Chief Moore said the fire code is the minimum requirement and good practice. It is for a reasonable level of life safety. They also look at what the other communities are using as well. We want safety but we don't want to have the requirements so overwhelming that the business will move to another community in the area. Chief Moore said Crystal Lake's ISO rating is "3" which puts us in the top 3.4%. That translates into insurance savings. He added that sprinklers in a business give off 17 gallons of water per minute while a fire hose gives off over 100 gallons per minute. Sprinklers also will reduce the business' insurance costs. Deputy Chief DeRaedt said a new office building over 5,000 square feet are required to be sprinklered. Chief Moore said it is a hard decision to make but it is not outside of what is normal practice. The cost is about 1% of the total cost of construction.

Chief Moore said the fire codes need to be changed to include new construction materials and practices. With the new materials being used, there is less time for people to evacuate a space. All of the materials including the glue acts as gasoline for the fire.

Mr. Reece asked when single family residences will be required to have sprinklers. FPB Chief Larsen said it is currently in the international residential code but not in the Fire Code. Mr. Reece asked if it the requirement could possibly be in effect by 2013. Chief Moore said it would probably be some time after 2011. FPC Larsen said the cost of a residential sprinkler system is approximately \$1.15 per square foot which is less than a granite countertop.

Mr. Richter asked how a business could comment in the future on proposed Fire Code changes. Chief Moore said they hold multiple workshops for the community.

The members of the EDC thanked Chief Moore, Deputy Chief DeRaedt, and Fire Prevention Bureau Chief Larsen for their time and information.

EDC Projects

I Shop Crystal Lake Restaurant Videos

Ms. Dobbe said 8 restaurants were chosen for the free 30 second video. They will be on the website, Channel 17 as well as being used by the restaurant. They will also be creating a You Tube site for the videos. Mr. Richter showed the videos from the 8 restaurants.

Mr. Fowler said these videos would be good for hotels. Most hotels have a channel for local activities, restaurants, etc. Mr. Richter said there were no other takers for the special price on the videos. Mr. Fowler said now that these are completed, others might change their mind.

Ms. Viger and Ms. Feddersen left the meeting.

Mr. Richter had given the members copies of possible survey questions for both the shoppers and businesses. The shopper survey will help us determine where they heard about the certificate program as well as if they decided to shop Crystal Lake because of the certificate. He said the business survey will help they shape the program for next year. Mr. Fowler said they are battling the image that Crystal Lake isn't business friendly. Mr. Affrunti said that attitude is changing. Ms. Dobbe suggested that the recap be put on the City's website and I Shop website. Mr. Fowler said it should be put in the City's newsletter so the residents see what this program is doing for them. He doesn't believe that information should be on the City's website or I Shop website because people from other communities might realize that they should spend their money in their community and not ours.

Mr. Richter stated that the UDO revisions were approved at the last City Council meeting.

Mr. Richter said because the meeting is running long, the e-marketing discussion and commercial financing matters will be placed on the next agenda.

Comments from the Committee

Mr. Fowler stated there should be an attendance requirement for this committee. Mr. Richter said there are also two vacancies that need to be filled.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.