

**City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
Special Meeting
July 19, 2010 – 8:00 a.m.
Municipal Complex – Police Department Training Room**

Call to Order

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

Roll Call/Attendance

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

Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Planning and Economic Development, James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, and Rachel Palya, Planning Department and Economic Development Intern, were present from staff.

EDC Projects

I Shop Crystal Lake Program

Review website options

Rewards program update

Mr. Richter said he planned to present the four (4) templates from other websites but explained there was another option that came to light within the past few days. He explained the City uses a program called GovQA which is used by both residents for inquiry tracking, such as to inform the City of various items to be taken care of such as street light out, problem with sidewalks, trees that need to be trimmed. The company who created that program is in the process of developing a SHOP QA which may be a better option for the City's use. Currently this program is being developed and we were asked if we wanted to participate in a pilot testing program.

Mr. Richter said the site branding can be designed to whatever we want it to be. The SHOP QA website includes a directory of businesses as well as maps. He added that each business would have its own page and they will have more flexibility in what they can put on the site themselves. Staff will still have the ability to review what is posted. We would not get notification for every change as we do now but that can be very time consuming.

Ms. Rentzsch added that with this website (SHOP QA) the resident can sign up to receive coupons via e-mail for the businesses they sign up with. Ms. Feddersen said it seems very customer friendly and focused on the shopper.

Mr. Richter said there are approximately 300 businesses that have signed up for I Shop Crystal Lake and some we have entered and sent information on how to update their portion of the website. With SHOP QA we can provide a list of businesses and the web designer will enter the information for us. This directory will be more complete. Also with this website we could use the City's header or a new header can be created. On our current ishopcl.com website there are pages that are not being used. Most people go to the website for a list of businesses and/or coupons. Mr. Richter added that the videos we have for the restaurants would need to be "hosted" on the City's website but there could be a link to it from this website. He added that this website would save staff a lot of time.

Mr. Fowler asked if this isn't a "yellow pages" type of website. Mr. Richter said it is more than a yellow pages website – it's everything we have now and more. Mr. Haleblian is concerned with businesses that are not within the City limits using this website. Mr. Richter feels they may be able to restrict the business zip codes using the website. Mr. Fowler asked if a report could be generated to check on the addresses of the businesses using the website. He believes the abuse of the site will be minor.

Mr. Affrunti asked if the featured business will remain. Mr. Richter said he didn't believe so, but we can ask.

Mr. Richter asked the members what direction they wanted to take – to gather more information about the SHOP QA site, etc.

Mr. Fowler asked who would be contacted by the businesses if they have a problem with the site – the company or staff. Mr. Richter said he wasn't sure, but he would look into it. Mr. Fowler asked where the "help desk" of the company is located.

Mr. Affrunti asked approximately how many hours per month staff spends on the current website. Mr. Richter said approximately 20 to 30 per month. He added that the SHOP QA contract would lock the company into \$395 per month for 3 years and then it can be negotiated. Ms. Rentzsch said the functionality of the site offers more. Mr. Affrunti asked since this is a pilot program, can they pull the plug on it. Mr. Richter said yes but then we would go back to what we have.

Ms. Viger said this website seems to be more for shoppers which is what we are looking for. She said the design should be different from the City's website and the Chambers.

Mr. Richter reviewed the options.

Mr. Affrunti moved to continue the process with Shop QA with the recommendations made during this meeting. Ms. Viger seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Richter introduced the Planning Department intern, Rachel Palya. She has been gathering information on the cost of the rewards cards.

Comments from the Committee

There were no additional comments from the Committee members.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.