

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
October 26, 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, Riley, and Haleblian were present. Members Bawolek, Viger, and Johnson were absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present from staff. Also in attendance were Jim Moore, Fire-Rescue Chief, and Jerry Larsen, Fire Prevention Bureau Chief.

Mr. Richter asked that they skip directly to the legislative items by the Fire-Rescue Department, and resume with the agenda as scheduled afterwards.

Legislative

Chief Moore stated the wireless fire alarm system was approved by the City Council thanks to the businesses support. They hope to have the first transmitter installed by December 1. He said some of the Chamber members received an e-mail from a company with a very low price for what the company describes as a similar product to what we will be supplying as well as stating the City can raise the rate at any time. Chief Moore said the program shown in the e-mail will not directly connect to SEECOM, and business owners will need to purchase and maintain a radio. With these units, SEECOM may not be contacted for up to 15 minutes. He said if a radio is not maintained by any business owner, the system could jam up for everyone. The price for the City is guaranteed until 2013 and the City got a great price from the bid process which was lower than the price he had originally noted. Chief Moore said any revenue generated by the system will go back into the system. He said direct connect to SEECOM is essential and if there is a problem with the radio, etc. the City will repair it and not the business owner.

Mr. Haleblian asked what the City's concern is with the e-mail to the Chamber. Chief Moore said he wants them to be honest. He will be attending the next Chamber meeting to explain the differences in the systems and costs.

Chief Moore said the City has completed a new system for addressing. The proposed ordinance covers new businesses not existing businesses. This creates a standard for addressing which will help customers find the business as well as Police and Fire. Mr. Richter said the current system allows a combination of various things – addresses and unit numbers as well as addresses and units with letters. Chief Moore said the new system will have addresses for the buildings and letters for the units. They won't be asking current businesses to change their addresses unless they want to. He said this ordinance will clear up some issues.

Mr. Richter said the Commons Shopping Center units each have an address number but in Crystal Point they all use the same address. Chief Moore said now the Fire Department will address new buildings. Ms. Feddersen asked about the mess on Route 14 – Northwest Highway – Virginia. Chief Moore said they will be leaving that alone. Bureau Chief Larsen said the exception will be the new O'Reilly Auto Parts building. They will have an address in the new system.

Mr. Richter said the members could provide their comments electronically to him and he will forward them to the Chief. Chief Moore said this will be going to the next Council meeting so he will need their comments by tomorrow.

Mr. Haleblian thanked the Chiefs for their information and appreciates all of their efforts.

Approve Minutes of the August 24th and September 28th EDC Meetings

Mr. Affrunti moved to approve the August 24, 2010 EDC minutes as presented. Mr. Riley seconded the motion. On roll call, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Affrunti moved to approve the September 28, 2010 EDC minutes as presented. Mr. Riley seconded the motion. On roll call, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Public Participation and Comments

There was none at this time.

Staff updates

Committee membership

Mr. Richter said he contacted all of the potential members and there was a lot of interest in the Committee. He asked if the members would like to invite all of those interested in the EDC to the next meeting in November and after attendees can confirm if they are still interested in becoming a member. After receiving their letter of interest and resume, the members can recommend 4 people for approval by the Mayor to be confirmed by the Council. There isn't room for everyone who is interested as we have 4 spots open with 9 possible candidates. Mr. Haleblian said this is a great list.

Mr. Fowler said he would prefer that the I Shop program be peeled off from the EDC and run by retailers. Mr. Richter said that could be a subcommittee.

The members decided to invite all who are interested to the next meeting. Mr. Richter said he will send a letter to all of them from the Chairman.

I Shop Crystal Lake

Mr. Richter said a demonstration of the new website will be given today at 8:30 by the website consultant to see how it functions. The rewards cards will be ready next week but not sent out until mid November. That will give the businesses time to enter their information on the website. Postcards will be sent to businesses and staff will also go to talk with them about the new website.

Mr. Haleblian said it would have been a good idea to have a Chamber mixer to present the website. Mr. Fowler said it was a timing issue. He has received feedback from businesses that we keep changing websites. He added that they should go to Council to get a financial commitment and then let the retailers run the program. Mr. Haleblian said this is retail driven and he fears that it will lose its "legs" because there isn't any dollars behind it. Mr. Richter said he will check into how much money they have remaining in the budget for advertising. Ms. Feddersen feels that an e-mail blast is the cheapest way to go.

Mr. Fowler said he would like to see someone from the Northwest Herald or STAR 105 on the Commission. Also he suggested that staff visit large employers in the area such as Knaack and make a presentation there about what the City has to offer retail customers.

Mr. Richter said they need to have people with energy and he felt that possibly a group of business owners who are not on the EDC be a sub-committee for the I Shop. There needs to be structure to that sub-committee.

Mr. Riley suggested that it be mentioned at the webinar for the SHOP QA website.

Incentives

Mr. Richter received the status of the matching grant program for retailer commercial tenant improvements.

Attraction

Mr. Richter said O'Reilly's Auto Parts will be opening in spring of 2011. He said we are reviewing their plans and turning them around in less than 10 days and they are taking weeks to get revisions back to us.

Mr. Fowler asked if M'Lady has locked down a temporary location while their building is being renovated. Mr. Richter said he was not sure that the decision was made by M'Lady at this time.

Mr. Richter said he and Ms. Rentzsch will be attending the ICSC in Chicago the end of this week. They will have a double booth. Half of the space has been offered to several local real estate brokers who want to present their properties at the convention. Their only cost is to get their materials and pay to access the conference.

Retention

Mr. Richter said there is nothing new. He said General Kenamatics has agreed to host a tour of their facilities for the Mayor, Council, and EDC. Mr. Haleblian said he will contact the Mayor about the date.

Organization Reports

The organizational reports were not given in the interest of time.

November Meeting Date

Mr. Richter asked if there was any interest in moving the November meeting which is scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday because of Thanksgiving to the week after Thanksgiving – November 30. It would be a short turnaround for the agenda. Mr. Riley suggested that it be moved a week later and cancel the meeting in December. The consensus was to hold the November meeting on November 30th. Mr. Richter said they will publish to cancel the regularly scheduled meeting and reschedule it for November 30.

Comments from the Committee

Mr. Fowler asked if the I SHOP was going to be in the Holiday Parade this year. Mr. Richter responded that there were no plans to have an entry in the parade this year. Ms. Feddersen suggested a float. Mr. Fowler said possible a horse drawn wagon with the signs on the sides.

I Shop Crystal Lake Website – Training Session

Ms. Cara Allard with GovQA went through the new website for both businesses adding information as well as administrative approvals for the revisions. There were several things noted that needed to be checked into such as misspellings, and functions not working properly.

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Mr. Richter said there will be a webinar for businesses here at City Hall on Friday, October 29th at 9:00a.m. If there are businesses who can't physically attend the City Hall presentation, it will be available on a webcast.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.