

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
December 6, 2011 – 7:30 a.m.
Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room

Call to Order

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

Roll Call/Attendance

Members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Hymes, Reece, Riley, Saidler, and Fowler were present. Mr. Halebian was absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present from staff.

Approve Minutes of the October 25, 2011 EDC Meetings

Mr. Riley moved to approve the October 25, 2011 EDC minutes as presented. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On roll call, members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Reece, Riley, Saidler, and Fowler voted aye. Mr. Hymes abstained.

Public Participation and Comment

There was no one present who wished to speak.

I Shop Crystal Lake Gift Certificate Contest Update

Mr. Richter said at last count the City has received over 200 applications for the 31 prizes. He reviewed the comments and suggestions by participants. The majority of the comments were regarding providing original receipts. People have been asking to provide copies of receipts. If they ask – we have been allowing it.

Mr. Reece asked if the City Attorney cared if we receive the original or copy of the receipt. Mr. Richter said he had not asked him. Mr. Saidler said allowing copies would give the participant the ability to return the items for cash or credit without really purchasing anything. They do have until the end of the month to turn in their receipts which would be after a reasonable return time. Mr. Fowler suggested they change that requirement for the next contest. Mr. Riley suggested that there be one entry per person.

Mr. Hymes noticed that the article in the paper states that this is a holiday promotion but it is going to be continuing. Mr. Richter said the City's press release stated that this was not just for the holidays but would be continuing with the New Year and Spring contests, but this was omitted by the paper. He said most people know it as the Holiday certificate program so that is probably why they went with that.

Mr. Richter said there is a map on the website showing a number of retailers' locations within the City. There was some concern from the employees regarding them or their immediate families not being able to participate. He said the City does not want this contest to be perceived as having bias.

Mr. Reece said he will be happy to provide the Chamber's brochure for businesses that are members. He said the majority of the businesses shown are within the City limits but it is not every business.

Mr. Richter asked if the members felt that enough advertising was done for this contest. He said that over \$1200 was spent on the Thanksgiving Day wrap. Mr. Saidler asked how many forms have been downloaded from the website. Mr. Richter said he had not checked on it. He added that the Northwest Herald and Star 105 have been contacting him to do more advertising. Mr. Dalzell suggested that James contact the newspaper and say we have \$400 to spend and what can they do for the City. Do a little negotiating. Mr.

Fowler also suggested that with the next contest they do posters for the stores who want them. Mr. Dalzell said they have copied the application form and put it in the bags.

Incentive grant programs update

Mr. Richter said the modifications to the program were approved by City Council with very little discussion. He said the information was brought to the Chamber's business committee and they made suggestions. Mr. Reece said retail is important to the community but service providers feed retail.

McEDC Economic and Revenue Impact Modeling Software

Mr. Richter said McEDC is looking into purchasing software that measures the economic impact of any company entering or exiting the market. Staff will be attending a webinar on Thursday at 10 a.m. here at City Hall if anyone wants to attend. He asked if the EDC would want to send a letter to McEDC regarding the software.

Mr. Dalzell asked how the City gets the information to be entered. Mr. Fowler said that depends on the relationship the business has with the City which is why the tours are so important. Mr. Riley said that is a nice perk to being a member of the McEDC. Mr. Richter said he will get more information on the software.

Mr. Richter added that the McEDC office will be moving to Crystal Lake.

EDC Business Visitations/Tours

Mr. Richter said they have visited Knaack Manufacturing, General Kinematics, Covidien, Alpha Star, Camfil Farr, Boltswitch since the tours started in fall of 2010. He would like to work with McEDC to continue the tours and also include the Chamber's business committee who attended the last tour. Mr. Fowler agreed that the tours should continue and the Chamber's committee members should also attend. He added that if the Mayor and Council members are available that would be great.

Mr. Hymes said there are several new employers in Crystal Lake. He feels that a phone call to the new business would be a plus and a tour may not be necessary. One company is AL-RO which is a metal forming business. They are bringing jobs that went to China back here. The other is RW Technologies which is behind Target. He said that business is like Millennium Electronics and it was started by former employees.

Mr. Richter said there are a few businesses that are in the County that we would like to see annex into the City such as ChemTool and Mathews Company. He will send the members an updated list of possible businesses to tour and/or contact, and include any businesses, specifically major employers, that are suggested by committee members.

Business Retention and Expansion Update

Mr. Richter said Covidien is moving forward and he has been working with several staff members to help with their expansion. Aptar has moved in and is now occupying their new space. He added that they have contacted Food Warming Equipment to Mr. Reece and said the owners have all but signed for moving their manufacturing portion of the business to Tennessee. He said the Action Plan has been put into place. If they knew about this 6 months ago they may have had more time to help retain them. Mr. Richter said most of their business comes from companies in the south so the manufacturing will be closer to their clients. The office, which is leased, will remain in Crystal Lake. Their lease is up in 3 years.

Organization Reports

Downtown Crystal Lake (Brian Fowler)

Mr. Fowler said the Holiday Lights Parade was well attended and the area is busy with holiday shopping. Mr. Dalzell said the traffic is starting to pick up in downtown. Mr. Reece said there was a letter that was received that most of the items in the downtown stores are not made in the USA. He said there was a response from Diana Kenney of the Downtown Main Street which stated that there are many unique items in the downtown stores that are made in the USA.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (Brian Fowler)

There was no report.

Chamber of Commerce (Gary Reece)

Mr. Reece said The Community Harvest was a huge success this year and far surpassed last year's totals. There was over 98,000 pounds of food donated as well as \$4,800 in cash.

Mr. Reece said Leaders in Action has been active for more than 30 years and they have up to 10 scholarships available. The deadline has been extended and the forms are available on the Chamber's website.

Mr. Reece said there are 140 booths available for the Expo and 90 of them have been sold already. Last year at this time there were only 70 sold. Also membership is up from 900 at the beginning of the year to 945 currently.

Mr. Reece said the Chamber offers a smart-phone app that has a business directory, calendar of events, etc. and it's free.

Monthly Report to the City Council

Mr. Fowler said he will again create the bullet point report for the City after he receives the draft EDC minutes. Mr. Riley asked that the monthly report be sent to the EDC members as well.

Comments from the Committee

Mr. Richter said Fresh Market is now open and our HH Gregg location is one of the top stores in the Chicagoland area. Also Anderson Motors has purchased the former Conlon and Collin Ford site on Route 14. They will be moving their VW line to this location and will maintain the other site on Route 31 for their other lines. Mr. Reece asked if this was within the vision the Council had for this area. Mr. Richter said the original vision was for restaurants to overlook the Three Oaks Recreation Area. He is certain that the Council will support this upgrade of the property. Anderson Motors will be using only a portion of the property they purchased. Mr. Richter added that recently there was an architect looking at the site and the project should be rolling in a month or two. This addition to Route 14 will help the other dealerships in the area.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 a.m.