

City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
December 10, 2013 – 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 DeHaan, Haleblian, Reece, Saidler, and Fowler were present. Members Affrunti, Dalzell, Hymes, and Leech were absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, was present from staff. Erin McElroy with Lakeside Legacy/Dole Mansion was also present.

Approve Minutes of the October 22, 2013 Meeting

Mr. Haleblian moved to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2013 EDC meeting as presented. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Public Participation and Comment

Ms. McElroy said they are again this year working on the Art Place Grant. Last year's application did not get through the first level and they hope to get to level two this year. Part of the process is to reach out to government bodies such as the EDC. She said they are requesting \$175,000 with a focus on daytime senior and young family programs. Ms. McElroy said they would also like to use some of the grant money to improve the building itself such as repairing the studios and possibly adding a lift for handicap accessibility.

Mr. Fowler asked if a letter of support is needed for this level of the application. Ms. McElroy said not at this time but if they get to the next level she will contact Mr. Richter. The members were very supportive of the grant request for Lakeside Legacy/Dole Mansion.

Business retention visits update

Mr. Richter said he has contacted Mr. Good with Rita Corporation for a tour of their facilities. The tour could possibly be the end of this month or in January. Mr. Reece said it would be better in January because of the holidays. The members agreed. Mr. Richter said he will contact Mr. Good about possible dates.

Manufacturer attraction update

Mr. Richter said staff and several EDC members recently met with Cortech in Carol Stream. The owners of the company are looking at a 105,000 square foot building here in Crystal Lake and they are interested in the IRB bonds that the City has available. Mr. Fowler said Crystal Lake is competing with West Virginia and Iowa. The owners of the company have continued their conversations with Mr. Richter and the building they are looking at would be perfect for the equipment they have. Mr. Richter said they would be expanding from 30 to 50 employees in the first year and almost doubling their manufacturing square footage. He had offered the marching grant, the Targeted Development for Fee reduction, IRB and phased permitted to the owners. Mr. Richter said he will keep the members posted on any future activity. Mr. Reece thanked Mr. Richter for his hard work on this.

Mr. Richter said the McEDC has outlined their strategic vision and Ms. Rentzsch is on the MCEDC Board and attends meetings related to their vision.

Business Anniversaries

Mr. Richter said the recognition will be at the second Council meeting in January so we have an opportunity to gather information on the companies for their proclamations. He added that Alpha Star is celebrating their 25th anniversary this year and asked if the members would like to include them in the recognition. The members agreed to add Alpha Star to the list of businesses to be recognized.

2013 New Business Development Summary

Mr. Richter said this has been a good year for Crystal Lake. He provided a summary of business development activity.

Mr. Fowler asked about Anderson VW on Route 14. Mr. Richter said he spoke with the owner and Corporate has asked for several changes to the design of the building's interior and exterior.

Mr. Fowler asked about Jasters. The bar portion is open but the restaurant is not. Mr. Richter said they are still moving forward and should have the restaurant open soon.

Mr. Richter said there is a proposal for a micro brewery in the former Grand Rental Station building. He added that he spoke with Mariano's about the Dominick's store in Crystal Lake. Mariano's has handpicked the first 11 locations they will be moving to and it's possible we will be considered in the future. Mr. Saidler noted that the locations they chose are either in or very close to Chicago. There were no locations on in the far suburbs.

I Shop Crystal Lake updates (Keith Saidler/Staff)

Mr. Saidler gave a summary of the Google Ad words links and the website is visited by 15 to 20 people a day. He said there was a jump right before Thanksgiving.

Mr. Richter asked if anyone has seen the ads in the Herald. The members saw the craft wrap that was in the Northwest Herald. Mr. Richter asked if anyone heard the ads on Star 105. The members had not heard to ads. Mr. Richter said they will be targeting Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Mr. Fowler said there was a concern raised regarding our gift certificate program on a McHenry County blog. That information has been turned over to the attorneys to review and respond.

Incentive Updates

Mr. Richter said \$50,000 of the \$80,000 for this fiscal year available have been spoken for. He thanked Mr. Reece for his help to bring several businesses to our community.

Mr. Richter said on the Council's next agenda will be to rescind three of the previously-approved grants. One is unable to obtain financing; the others are not responding to our letters. Mr. Fowler said he can understand the large national chain not providing the paperwork but the small business that opened should. He suggested that Mr. Richter contact them again since all they need to give us is the paperwork.

Mr. Haleblan asked if that money would be available again. Mr. Richter said yes and stated that he would be requesting that the money be available in the next fiscal year if it is not used in this current year.

Comments and suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Haleblan said he spoke with the new business owner, Shay, next to Sweat Pea Cakes and they loved working with the City.

Organization reports:

Downtown Crystal Lake (Brian Fowler)

Mr. Fowler said the majority of the downtown area is filled except for the former furniture store which had roof issues. The Committee briefly discussed the status of the Public House.

Mr. Fowler said the Holiday parade was well received and the Downtown Board is very concerned with the child that was hurt by one of the vehicles in the parade. Mr. Reece said he knows the boy's family and he is responding well after surgery.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (Brian Fowler/Staff)

Mr. Fowler said the MCEDC annual dinner was good and the speaker was nice.

Chamber of Commerce (Gary Reece)

Mr. Reece said he submitted his resignation as Chamber President effective January 17. His business is doing well and it is very hard to do both the Chamber and another business. Mr. Reece said he would like to continue on the EDC. Mr. Richter said great things have happened with the Chamber under Mr. Reece's direction and that he could continue to serve as the Chamber's representative.

City of Crystal Lake (Staff)

Mr. Richter said the list of meeting dates for 2014 is in the packet. He asked that they make a note of the dates.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.