

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

Present: Nelson French  
Beth Smuk  
Richard DeRosier  
Shane Hoff  
Steve VanHouse  
Katelyn Goutermont  
Alex Truax

David Drown, Economic Development Director  
Carolyn Hudyma

French called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**Appointment of Board Chair** – Motion by DeRosier, second Smuk to appoint French as Board Chair. MOTION CARRIED.

**Appointment of Alternate Chair** – Motion by Hoff, second VanHouse to appoint Smuk as alternate chair. MOTION CARRIED.

**Agenda** – Motion by DeRosier, second Truax to approve the agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

**Minutes** – Motion by Smuk, second Truax to approve the minutes of the December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular meeting. MOTION CARRIED.

### **COMMUNICATIONS-**

**Silver Bay MPR News-** Board reviewed the recent article published by MPR regarding Silver Bay and the planned developments.

Member Smuk expressed she has received public feedback regarding the feeling that everything is changing and Silver Bay isn't the same anymore.

Member Goutermont stated she isn't sure if it is a result of the article but has seen an increase in business since published.

Member VanHouse expressed that Silver Bay had changed when plant filed for bankruptcy years ago.

Member Hoff stated he felt it was good information although felt there were negative jabs taken that were unnecessary-residents took offense to the title "Sleepy Silver Bay" and the need to be careful how publications are made, possibly reviewed prior to publish to allow managing how Silver Bay is in the news.

Carolyn Hudyma stated that she felt the article alluded to the controversy in the city and feels more individuals should have been interviewed by MPR. Mrs. Hudyma is currently drafting an

editorial and will provide it to papers and Council regarding her concerns that projects are not focusing on the working class and she would like to see a town meeting held regarding the changes on the North Shore with a broader view of the effects of development and tourism and concerns of development pushing families out.

Member DeRosier expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Hudyma for attending city and community meetings.

Carolyn Hudyma also addressed the rumors regarding John Anderson given first priority in the Business Park area. EDA Director Drown advised her that rumor was false, Chair Member French stated Anderson has owned the property and wanted to develop it for many years.

Chair French stated that since the MPR article was published, social media has been very active and he would like people to read the whole article which covers many projects within the city and not just Boathouse Bay Development. He feels MPR has sparked interest in Silver Bay.

Member Hoff stated that many years of planning regarding what business would be a good fit for the business park and capitalizing on tourism.

Carolyn Hudyma asked who and how does the development help the city with only part-time seasonal, low paying employment. She is not ok with public monies going to private development. Will Boathouse Bay contribute to the workforce?

Member Smuk doesn't see a large company coming into Silver Bay and tourism is needed, Boathouse Bay will need local workforce for management, maintenance, etc.

Member DeRosier stated his opinion is that there are two different issues regarding the Boathouse Bay development; it wasn't asked how many jobs will be created and the focus has been on the importance of creating the tax base needed to build new streets within the city. Part of the EDA's mission is to draw people into the city and overcome the stigma of "sleepy town" by new projects.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None at this time.

### **NEW BUSINESS-**

**2024 Priorities and Work Plan Development-** Chair French provided handouts to the board to discuss creating a five-year workplan based upon what the EDA feels the vision of Silver Bay should be. There was discussion regarding the mission of the EDA to enhance the overall quality of life by attracting and retaining businesses, creating partnerships, fostering employment opportunities, promoting workforce housing, business growth and expanding the tax base through development and redevelopment.

Member DeRosier recommended adoption of mission statement Chair French provided. Member Hoff expressed support in the mission statement.

Carolyn Hudyma feels there is a lack of high-quality jobs and should be part of the mission statement.

EDA Director Drown explained that Silver Bay is a retirement community, when the mining company went bankrupt years ago people came to purchase inexpensive housing and stayed.

Silver Bay has a few large employers and the tourism jobs provide good living wages for the families who own them. There are many good things in the city that nobody wants to see destroyed, Drown does not believe the projects are destructive to Silver Bay lifestyle. He also provided reasons why large companies build where they do; location, labor, proximity to materials, all reasons why a large company would likely not be interested in Silver Bay.

Member Truax explained why he, as a business owner, would pay a higher wage for help and questioned if Silver Bay could look into higher education like Cook County offers to their residents. Consensus of board is for Truax to contact Kelsey Kennedy at Cook County Higher Ed and gather information. Member VanHouse stated the school has tried to provide programs and mentors in the past and once the construction is complete, he will be pushing for continuing education and mentorship opportunities.

Member VanHouse stated he was born and raised in Silver Bay and feels if any large company were going to build in the city it would have already happened. Silver Bay is what it is, and realistically only have Northshore Mining and the Veterans Home as large employers and the city should enhance tax base thru tourism and development.

Discussion regarding Artificial Intelligence and how it will change the future of employment with more jobs becoming electronically based and more remote work available. Silver Bay is a prime location to attract families who are able to work remotely. MPR is interested in doing another news article regarding remote work possibility in Silver Bay. Further discussion on creating a marketing video/advertising campaign, contacting Best of the Northshore for development dollars and to bring people to Silver Bay not for a weekend but for a lifetime.

Board reviewed the five-year plan handout that Chair French provided. There was discussion regarding geographic locations, housing, business development, entertainment, infrastructure, marina expansion possibility, and what each board member felt the top priorities are-

Member VanHouse- setting groundwork for attracting remote workers to community and Golf Course housing project.

Member Hoff – marketing to bring remote workers to community, continue to move forward with current projects, and Golf Course housing project.

Member Smuk – Silver Pointe II apartments to free up homes which would help to provide a location for remote workers to live, housing, and recycling of houses.

Member Truax – workforce housing, Silver Pointe II apartments, and marketing for remote works.

Member Goutermont – workforce housing/apartments and recycling housing.

Member DeRosier – affordable housing and remote worker marketing.

Chair French – workforce housing, Golf Course housing project, Silver Pointe II, and attracting remote workers.

Discussion followed regarding local residents purchasing in the Golf Course project which will open up smaller homes within the city, large amount of hiring at Northshore Mining but few homes available for sale meaning employees are commuting from outside the area, timelines, numbers

of people within the city already working remotely. Consensus of board is to spend money to create a lifestyle marketing/advertising campaign targeting families who are able to work remote to promote life in Silver Bay. Further discussion regarding benefit of having a developer instead of the city develop and sell housing in the Golf Course Housing project, houses would potentially be built and sold faster by hiring developer. Although the city would not earn profits from sales it would gain additional tax base. Motion by DeRosier, second Truax to recommend to Council to work with EDA to create a marketing campaign to bring remote workers to live in the city. MOTION CARRIED.

Carolyn Hudyma requested that focus be on small business workforce and affordable housing for seniors.

Motion by DeRosier, second VanHouse to accept Mission Statement provided by Chair French, also have complete Mission Statement on the EDA webpage. MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by DeRosier, second VanHouse to adjourn at 3:38 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes taken by Lisa Christenson