

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2:00 P.M.

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Present: Nelson French
Shane Hoff
Richard DeRosier
Steve VanHouse
Beth Smuk
Katelyn Goutermont
Donny Thompson

David Drown, Economic Development Director
Cole Ernest, Chief of Police
Marcia Oates
Casey Goutermont

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

Agenda – Motion by VanHouse, second DeRosier to approve the Agenda with removal of Code Review. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Minutes – Motion by DeRosier, second VanHouse to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2025 regular meeting. **MOTION CARRIED.**

EDA Chair French welcomed new member Donny Thompson to the EDA board.

COMMUNICATIONS/Public Comments-

Donny Thompson stated he felt he was misquoted in the April 9th Planning & Zoning and EDA minutes. He stated “he felt the city should sell the land to a developer and have them develop the course, leaving all the risk on the developer and not the city.”

Economic Development Director- Drown reported he had received an email from owner of the Adventure Park stating the park is for sale. Discussion regarding property and reason for sale.

EDA Vision & Mission Document- Board reviewed the minor modification approved at a previous EDA meeting.

Boathouse Bay Update Video Link- Board reviewed a video created by Phil Huston showing the progress of the Boathouse Bay development.

OLD BUSINESS –

Golf Course Residential Development Project- Drown stated the preliminary plat has been approved/adopted by Council. The next steps are to direct engineers, under existing contract, to finalize plat, close final construction drawings, and finalize feasibility study prior to starting, then the City would begin working with real estate firm. Discussion regarding real estate companies in the area. Consensus of board is to contact realtors and invite interested realtors to next EDA

meeting to present their proposals. Discussion regarding the purpose of freeing up housing within the city, number of homes currently on the market, tax payer liability, competition between golf course and Boathouse Bay project, promotion of golf course by offering free passes to experience golfing at Silver Bay course. Further discussion followed regarding limiting risk to taxpayers, approach development in phases, and bidding project out versus using Sourcewell. Member Thompson expressed that he is not anti-development but has concerns regarding the risks to taxpayers, EDA acting as developer, asked what happens if a developer comes in and offers the city a sum to purchase the property, and expressed the city has many things going on right now and suggested waiting to see how the Boathouse Bay project works out. Drown stated the EDA board previously voted EDA to act as developer, if Thompson wishes to make a motion to rescind that motion and have the board start over he may do so.

Motion by Thompson to rescind previous vote allowing EDA to act as developer and research sale to developer. MOTION FAILED for lack of a second. Member Smuk expressed that a lot of discussion has been done on project and it is time to move forward. Drown expressed that there is merit to Member Thompsons concerns, and that current trends for housing along the North Shore warrant profitability to the city and that if lots do not sell then the EDA could sell to a developer if needed.

Discussion followed using Sourcewell for a contractor to clear roadway path, have lots staked, drill well, and budgets. Additional discussion regarding selling lots designated for VRBO's across the river first as part of Phase 1, Member Thompson stated he felt VRBO lots would sell quickly which would allow funds to be available for Phase 2. Member VanHouse expressed that if realtors sell to developers, they will jump on the project if the developer feels there is profit, that the city already owns the land so the profit would be the city's. Member Hoff expressed that the goals of the city are not just economic and to stay with the main purpose of the project as residential, he feels people do not want VRBO's. Chief Ernest suggested asking a realtor if selling to a developer or EDA acting as developer is better.

Motion by DeRosier, second Smuk to authorize Drown to contact Rasmussen and McKeever Well Drilling companies for a proposal on cost for well drilling and tree removal for access. MOTION CARRIED.

City Center Park & Amphitheater- Discussion regarding the role of Rocky Wall in the city center park and donations being raised by Rocky Wall to pay for the proposed plan. Member Smuk stated there is a misconception in the community that Rocky Wall has come in and told the city what will happen to the park and the city is paying Rocky Wall. Drown suggested Rocky Wall's role and development of the park is similar to the Lion's Club parks throughout Minnesota. Marcia Oates suggested residents should view the Rocky Wall committee as people who have moved to the city and suggested putting the other members, who are well known locals, in the forefront of the committee. Discussion regarding past projects, residents being informed, perceived lack of public input by the Rocky Wall committee, and delay of the CSAH portion of Davis Drive. Chair French expressed the proposed plan was designed on what people wanted, low maintenance, and would include a history walk, nature play area, stage area for concerts, and multi-use pavilion space. Member DeRosier expressed his frustration regarding a group of "naysayers" who do not want anything to happen, remain status quo, and lower taxes, but want new roads and amenities. He further commented on the cost to maintain streets, infrastructure, and services, and feels that without making improvements the city will not be able to sustain itself. He continued that those making decisions live in the community, that everybody would like better streets and have lower taxes, but no one in this group of "naysayers" has called a Councilor or have presented a solution on a different way to attract new revenue for the community to cover our needs. Discussion followed regarding a bond funding request submitted to the State of MN, the cost of maintenance,

public requests to incorporate a splash pad, and providing correct information to the public regarding plans and nonprofit group involved.

NEW BUSINESS- None at this time.

Motion by DeRosier, second VanHouse to adjourn at 3:51 p.m. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes taken by Lisa Christenson