

 **DRAFT**

THE MEETING OF THE EDA BOARD HELD ON NOVEMBER 19TH, 2020, AT 6:00 P.M., AT THE PRINCETON CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M., by Genny Reynolds. Members present at City Hall were Thom Walker, Sharon Sandberg, and Jack Edmonds. Staff present were Robert Barbian via Zoom, Stephanie Hillesheim (Comm. Dev. Specialist), and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist).

Absent were Victoria Hallin, Brad Schumacher, and Charles Snustead.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY WALKER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2020. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

REPORTS:

1. Light up Princeton

Hillesheim said the City has received a little over \$15,000 in donations for Light Up Riverside Park. The lights have been purchased and the Public Works Department and Princeton Public Utilities will help hand the higher areas. They do have some volunteers helping. Volunteers that are working at the event will get half the donations that are received for that night. Food donations will also be accepted. There are twelve different scenes and the lights will dance to the music that is playing. Vehicles come down into the park and stay to the right and go through a drive area to see the lights. There will be lots of signage. It should be a good event. This was linked with the Small Business Saturday event downtown, but now with the restrictions those will have to be changed. The lights will turn on Saturday at 6 P.M. and Santa will be in the park from 2:00 – 4:00 P.M. where you drive by Santa and the kids will be able to put their letter in a mailbox there. The lights will be on each night from 6:00 P.M. – 10 P.M. and the final day will be January 1st. Police will patrol on the weekends.

2. Land Purchase

Hillesheim said the City is getting ready to purchase 42 acre parcel of land that will be an Industrial plat. This land is behind Aero Business Park. The City did not receive the EDA Grant from the Federal Government.

Reynolds asked if they have looked at East Central Regional Development for funding.

Hillesheim said she has spoken with Jordan Zellar and he has not mentioned it. They are looking at completing the 21st Avenue extension to the Industrial Park with a DEED Grant where Sylvia Corporation had purchased a parcel of land from Westling. The City would need to match funds with this grant.

Edmonds commented that the water, sewer, and streets would need to be put in this new Industrial Park.

Hillesheim said yes. Staff had shared the plans of the Industrial Park to three separate parties and they were interested.

Barbian said when he spoke to East Central they had mentioned the DEED Program.

Reynolds said the grant is for businesses and planning. They have a large amount of funding available. Talk to Pat at Mille Lacs County about abatement. He listens to what the companies need and what they could use.

Barbian said there has been strong interest, but they need to land a company.

Reynolds said the Façade Program was cut by 15% and the County would like the CARES Act Funds back that are not used so they can use them.

Barbian said they will have the receipts in to Mille Lacs County tomorrow.

Edmonds said the County State Aid will be from gas tax, and will not affect other types of funding.

Hillesheim said in July the City was approved for some funds from this program.

Barbian said the City LGA is important part of the City's funding and is concerned by the outcome of it. Any contact or conversation to help the LGA is important to share with us.

Walker asked on the grant that was not awarded to the City, was that to purchase the property for the Industrial Park and plat it, along with completing the connection of 21st Avenue.

Hillesheim said yes. The City is still moving forward with the purchase.

Barbian said years ago the idea of connecting 21st Avenue was looked at by the Council.

Hillesheim said the companies can expand to this area also.

Walker asked what the average lot size would be.

Hillesheim said 3.5 to 4 acres.

Walker asked if there is research or guidance of the lot size we should have to determine the lot sizes.



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Barbian said no. They believe the 3-4 acre lots are best.

3. CARES ACT

Hillesheim said the City gave out six grants from the CARES ACT and it came to \$19,000. The City had planned on spending \$20,000.

4. MN Investment Fund

Crystal Cabinets had received approval in 2017 from the City of Princeton for funding from MN Investment Fund (MIF) and a Job Creation Fund (JCF) loan from the State of MN Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). These loans are a way for a business to expand with a low interest loan that is secured through the local unit of government. The loans were used to expand their current operations. The expansion will include construction of a new building, new machines, and create new jobs.

Hillesheim said Crystal Cabinets is requesting an extension of the requirements. They have purchased most of their equipment, but have not taken a draw from this grant, but with Covid-19 they cannot meet the employment growth. They would like the extension till 2022. DEED is fine with the extension.

WALKER MOVED, SECOND BY SANDBERG, TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THE EDA BOARD SUPPORTS THE EXTENSION OF THE DEADLINE FOR CRYSTAL CABINETS UNTIL 2022. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

5. TIF for Housing

Hillesheim said on the south side of First Street the Developer Brigg's is in the beginning stages of TIF funding for an apartment site. There is also another Developer that is interested in TIF funding for a site on the north side of First Street for an apartment facility.

FORUM FOR IDEAS:

Reynolds said the Airport tour was great and informative. The EDA Board needs goals and maybe protecting the airspace would be something as an economic drive would be important.

Sandberg said she has events at the airport and people are surprised Princeton has an airport. Surrounding townships should be more aware of the airport. We need to look outside the box on what we have here. Yes, we have the Mille Lacs County Depot, but let's promote the airport. Education on the airport would be good for the EDA Board to talk about to other areas.

Walker commented on the reason for traveling by plane to Princeton and what type of aircraft they need to land here would be good.

Sandberg said specialty doctors fly into Princeton to service our area.

Hillesheim said the Council is looking into a lodging tax that would need to go to an organization like the Chamber to promote Princeton. It would be for all events, not just Chamber events or the City of Princeton events. The EDA could be part of that. Class reunions have an influence to the community where maybe people would move back to Princeton after coming to their reunion. That is important to economic development. The tax would be 3% on hotels and park reservations. The canoe rental and park project will help bring people here.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Hillesheim was asked if she hear from the Insurance Shoppe if they are still till looking at the Façade Grant.

Hillesheim has not heard from them.

NEW BUSINESS: None

WALKER MOVED, SECOND BY SANDBERG, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:12 P.M.

ATTEST:

Genny Reynolds, Vice President

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist