



Approved: April 25, 2016

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY JOINT MEETING
WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JANUARY 25, 2016
6:00 PM – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, President Grant called to order the Economic Development Authority meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Present: EDA President David Grant; EDA Commissioners Brenda Holden, Fran Holmes, and Dave McClung (arrived at 6:20 p.m.)

Absent: None

Also present: Executive Director Jill Hutmacher; Senior Planner Matthew Bachler; City Clerk Amy Dietl; EDC Member Dan Erickson; EDC Chair Steve Heikkila; EDC Member David Radziej; EDC Member Liz Johnson; and Jonathan Weinhagen, Vice President of St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 26, 2016

MOTION: EDA Commissioner Holmes moved and EDA Commissioner Holden seconded a motion to approve the October 26, 2015, Economic Development Authority Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously (3-0).

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Arden Hills Business Retention and Expansion Program

Senior Planner Bachler stated that the Economic Development Authority (EDA) approved a Business Retention and Expansion Service Proposal from the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) on January 26, 2015. Over the past year the Economic Development Commission (EDC), community volunteers, and City staff have been working with SPACC on designing and implementing a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program. A total of 24 local businesses were interviewed as part of the program, and SPACC has completed an analysis of the business survey results. These results along with a program overview, profile of the business community, and priority areas are included in the BRE Program Report provided in the EDA packet.

Senior Planner Bachler noted that Jonathan Weinhagen, SPACC, would be giving a presentation on the findings included in the BRE Program Report.

Jonathan Weinhagen, Vice President of the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Commissioners for their time. He presented the Commissioners with further information on the BRE program. He appreciated the efforts of staff and the EDC members over the past year. He further discussed the results and findings within the BRE program. He provided comment on the profile of businesses within Arden Hills, noting that the majority of the local businesses were either manufacturing, management of enterprises, or administrative and support.

Further discussion ensued regarding how jobs were classified for the businesses within the City.

Commissioner Holden questioned if educational services should be included as a category in the profile of businesses in the City.

Mr. Weinhagen explained that based on the data that was collected, educational services did not come in as one of the top industries by employment.

EDA President Grant requested Mr. Weinhagen investigate the jobs data for educational services further. He indicated that Northwestern's address was in Roseville, but a portion of their property was located within Arden Hills, which would increase the educational services jobs numbers. He discussed how the Pine Tree Drive location for Bethel University would also increase the number of educational services jobs located in Arden Hills.

Mr. Weinhagen stated that he would investigate the data on the educational services sector further and would report back to the EDA. He reviewed the large number of jobs within the community and the importance of mass transit.

Commissioner Holden believed it would be valuable to have additional information on how many employees were visiting local restaurants during the lunch hour, versus those that ate within their corporate campus.

Executive Director Hutmacher reported that the Red Fox area has peak traffic counts at mid-day which suggests restaurants and other local businesses are visited by employees.

Mr. Weinhagen discussed the number of employees that come into Arden Hills on a daily basis, and noted the number of Arden Hills residents that work within the community. He explained that the City was unique given the large number of employees that came into the community on a daily basis. He reported that there was a growing trend for employees to live closer to their work and commented on how this would impact employee populations. He was proud to report that the business community ranked Arden Hills as having an excellent quality of life. He congratulated the Council for setting the proper culture within the business community. Another positive indicator for local businesses was that they are growing, which also grows the employee population.

Mr. Weinhagen indicated that the City had an opportunity to advocate for expanded public transit service. He discussed how this would positively impact local businesses and their employees. He encouraged the EDA to dig into this further, and possibly pursue the extension of the A Line to TCAAP. He then provided comment on the importance of a skilled workforce.

Commissioner Holden questioned how the City could get involved in growing the local skilled workforce.

Mr. Weinhagen stated that he believed that the City should work to have the right resources and relationships established and in place to point companies in the right direction to find skilled laborers. The City should work to leverage employees for its local businesses.

Commissioner Holden saw the importance of extending the A Line up Lexington Avenue and not just to TCAAP, given the number of major employers in Arden Hills.

Executive Director Hutmacher stated that staff and the Chamber have been involved in conversations about incremental expansion of the A Line to service these companies and their employees.

Mr. Weinhagen encouraged the City to continue having conversations regarding transit and for the Council to ramp up its knowledge in this area.

Commissioner Holmes did not believe that recommendations were provided for all of the comments received from the businesses. She understood that the City needed more restaurants but did not believe the City was lacking in part-time help.

Mr. Weinhagen commented that he could work to identify further recommendations. He discussed the importance of City staff and the EDC to continue its communication and visits with local businesses.

EDA President Grant thanked Mr. Weinhagen for his thorough report to the EDA.

B. 2015 EDC Report and 2016 Work Plan

Executive Director Hutmacher stated that the Economic Development Authority approved the 2015 EDC Work Plan at the January 26, 2015, joint meeting with the Economic Development Commission. The EDC made significant progress on its 2015 goals as summarized as follows:

New Member Recruitment

- Three new members have been appointed to the EDC in 2015.

Business Retention and Expansion Program

- Recommended to the EDA that the City obtain consulting services from the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce (SPACC)
- Worked with SPACC to compile a list of all businesses in the City of Arden Hills
- Created an interview questionnaire
- Selected businesses to interview based on industry and job growth
- Participated in BRE interviews
- Monitored process of BRE program
- Received the Leaders in Local Government Award from the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce in the category of Business Retention and Expansion

Marketing and Outreach

- Worked with the Communications Committee to assign business-related newsletter topics
- Edited, finalized, and posted the City Video Tour on the City's website and YouTube channel
- Provided feedback on installed Gateway Signs and possible locations for additional signs
- Planned and promoted State of the City events on September 29 and October 1

Executive Director Hutmacher explained that the EDC approved a 2016 Work Plan on January 6, 2016.

Staff requested that the EDA review and approve the work plan.

Commissioner Holden questioned if the State of the City was still worth the time invested in the event.

Executive Director Hutmacher stated that this was evaluated mid-year by the EDC and the City Council on a year-to-year basis.

Commissioner Holmes thanked staff for the thorough report. She suggested that the Council check in with its local businesses to see why they are not attending the State of the City.

Executive Director Hutmacher discussed the small business series of workshops that were being planned by the City that would encourage community engagement with local businesses.

EDA President Grant asked if the EDA Commissioners had any input on the EDC work plan.

Commissioner Holmes suggested the revolving loan fund program be made a very low priority.

4. EDA MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

5. ADJOURN

MOTION: EDA President Grant moved and EDA Commissioner Holden seconded a motion to adjourn the Economic Development Authority meeting. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

EDA President Grant adjourned the Economic Development Authority joint meeting with the Economic Development Commission at 6:58 p.m.



Jill Hutmacher
Executive Director



David Grant
EDA President