

**REGULAR MEETING
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
CITY OF OAKDALE
FEBRUARY 2, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of the City of Oakdale was held on Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at the Oakdale City Hall, Oakdale, Minnesota. Chair Burns called the meeting to order at 5:15p.m.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present.

Chair: Bill Burns

Vice Chair: Dave Halper

Commissioners: Erin Voca
Gary Severson
Frank Orsello
Bob Stiglich
Jeff Bates
Lynn Stafford

Also Present: Andrew Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Susan Olson, City Council Liaison

Absent: Holly Koep
Stacie Penn
Bob Boullianne

Quorum Present: YES NO

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SEVERSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BATES, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 5, 2021.

Ayes 8

Abstain 0

Nays 0

Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Chair Burns explained the election process and stated he would like to remain Chair of the Economic Development Commission.

MOTION TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER BURNS FOR THE POSITION OF CHAIR FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION WAS MADE BY COMISSIONER ORSELLO AND SECONDED BY COMISSIONER VOCA.

No other nominations.

VERBAL VOTE WAS TAKEN TO ELECT COMMISSIONER BURNS FOR THE POSITION OF CHAIR FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMISSION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) CALENDAR YEAR, COMMENCING WITH THE FEBRUARY 2, 2022 MEETING.

**Ayes 8 Abstain 0
Nays 0 Motion Carried**

MOTION TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER HALPER FOR THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMISSION WAS MADE BY COMISSIONER HALPER AND SECONDED BY CHAIR BURNS.

No other nominations.

VERBAL VOTE WAS TAKEN TO ELECT COMMISSIONER HALPER FOR THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMISSION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) CALENDAR YEAR, COMMENCING WITH THE FEBRUARY 2, 2022 MEETING.

**Ayes 8 Abstain 0
Nays 0 Motion Carried**

BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION AND ATTRACTION PROGRAM (BRE&A)

Community Development Director Andrew Gitzlaff provided an overview of the BRE&A program.

The adopted Oakdale Comprehensive Plan identifies the need to provide business and labor with the support necessary to be successful and ensure continued employment opportunity for all residents as goals within the Economic Development Chapter. Specific polices are identified to achieve this goal including:

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- Support the success of business and labor by connecting them to resources at the MN Department and Economic Development (DEED) and other State, County, and Federal agencies
- Administer a program to attract new businesses to Oakdale.
- Administer a program to retain and assist in the expansion of existing Oakdale businesses.
- In partnership with public and private stakeholders, support those wishing to start a new business in Oakdale.

Staff is recommending the City establish a Business Retention, Expansion and Retention (BRE&A) Program to achieve this goal. The proposed scope of work would include the following activities:

- Participation in no fewer than 24 business visits (2 per month) for the first year.
- Develop a series of questions to ask each business and prepare a packet of resources at the City, MN DEED, other State, County or Federal resources.
- Recruitment of a BRE&A visit participant pool that includes key staff, elected officials and business representation.
- Identify businesses to be contacted for interviews.
- Provide administrative support in scheduling visits.
- Ensure invitations to visits are extended to the required staff, elected officials, and business representatives.
- Transcribe notes from each visit and conduct any follow-ups as necessary.
- Coordinated reporting of regional business and real estate activity.
- Year-end report, detailing BRE&A findings and recommendations.

Staff is pursuing a partnership with the Oakdale Area Chamber of Commerce (OACC) and the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SAPCC). EDC members will be invited to join the participant pool for visits.

In response to Commissioner Orsello's question regarding who will go on the visits and who is lined up already, Mr. Gitzlaff responded a staff member (himself), an elected official and someone representing business such as EDC member or OACC member.

Chair Burns feels it's not realistic for a large group to go on business retention visits but field visits and tours of larger businesses are also important.

In response to Commissioner Bates asking if this program is just starting and how 24 visits were established, Mr. Gitzlaff replied earlier efforts to start program were tried but this is a new program using partnerships. The number of visits is modeled after the City of Maplewood and being the first year it will establish a base that can be adjusted in following years.

In response to Commissioner Bates asking what is expected as the end result of these visits, Mr. Gitzlaff replied in addition to learning about opportunities and economic conditions the city may not be aware of, it will build relationships and connect businesses with resources.

Commissioner Severson believes the presence of committee members will show support to businesses. Chair Burns commented that the OACC invites city staff to ribbon cuttings and this is another step which shows support.

Commissioner Halper likes this proposal and is interested in attending visits. He feels it will promote a positive reputation for the city and the data gathered will help with future plans.

Commissioner Stafford is also interested in attending and noted that one of the speakers at a previous meeting mentioned the most effective Economic Development Commissions are ones who engage with the community.

Commissioner Voca is concerned with the deliverance of the results and how engagement will follow through moving forward and asked if there will be an action plan?

In response to Commissioner Stafford's question asking what type of data Maplewood gathered with this program, Mr. Gitzlaff responded the program summarizes types of input, tracks contacts and feedback and noted in response to Commissioner Voca's question, an action plan is something that can be added to the scope.

Potential Field Visits and Promotional Events 2022

At the January 5 Special Meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), Commission members asked staff to look into opportunities in 2022 to tour recently completed project, projects under development and to assist in the promotion and welcoming of new businesses and residential developments. The following activities were identified:

- HOM Furniture Tour.
- 4-Front Business Campus Tour.
- Willowbrooke welcoming event for first residents.

In response to Chair Burns asking when the Animal Hospital will be complete, Mr. Gitzlaff stated he doesn't have a date but the steel frames are up. It would be a fun business to tour and will be added to the list.

In response to Chair Burns' question when the first resident will move into Willowbrooke, Mr. Gitzlaff replied that road and sewer work needs to be complete first but estimates June-July.

Council Liaison Update

Councilmember Susan Olson reported on the following:

- Fire department will receive a new fire truck.
- Summerfest planning underway. Parade back by popular demand but carnival rides are not confirmed yet.
- Council met with Oakdale City Attorney, Washington County Attorney, Oakdale Police Chief and Washington County Sheriff regarding crime and juvenile crime. She complimented the team and stated they all work well together.
- City staff is almost at full employment.

In response to Vice Chair Halper's question if there is a Community Development Specialist position open, Mr. Gitzlaff replied that the position is Community Development Specialist/Economic Development and replaces Ms. Graffunder-Bartels as the staff liaison for the EDC. City Planner interviews are in the process and hopes are to be fully staffed by mid-March.

Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Orsello received a postcard from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) regarding the Hwy 120 and Hwy 36 study virtual open house. Plans are to upgrade Hwy 120 from I-94 to Hwy. 36. Commented that a virtual meeting was not the best way to hold this meeting and hopes live meetings will be scheduled. Mr. Gitzlaff responded MNDOT is not doing live meetings due to the pandemic but he is working on getting a speaker at the March EDC meeting to discuss the East Metro Interchange Project (94, 494, 694) and possibly the Hwy 120 project.

Commissioner Orsello commented that Hwy 120 needs upgrades as does the abandoned strip mall. Mr. Gitzlaff replied there has been interest in redevelopment of the strip mall.

Chair Burns discussed the following:

- Invited EDC members to the next OACC meeting and stated the speaker will be the owner of Blue Fin Bay on the north shore.
- He is looking forward to the visits to businesses and believes this is very good for the city.
- Christian Cupboard Emergency Food Shelf (CCEFS) has two locations in Oakdale; the main location next to Guardian Angels Church and a smaller location in northern Oakdale which serves 250 families a day. The main location is opening another style of market and suggested EDC attend the ribbon cutting. This food shelf is one of the best in the state.

Community Development Updates

Community Development Director Andy Gitzlaff highlighted current projects in the planning process as well as two ordinances.

Projects:

- Impact Apartments near Helmo and 4th Street. Norhart Development is proposing a seven story, high end rental apartment with ground floor restaurant and retail space, roof top pool and underground parking. Project was tabled for more studies on noise, traffic and infrastructure issues but will be reviewed again in March by Planning Commission.

- Mr. Gitzlaff has formed a weekly Development Review Committee meeting with the Fire Department, Police Department, Engineering, Building, Public Works and Planning to review all projects.
 - Current Projects in Construction: Willowbrooke Lennar and Continental homes, Tartan High School, Guardian Angels Food Shelf, HOM Furniture, Animal Emergency and Referral Center.
 - Projects in Review: 4Front Preliminary and Final Plat, Central Bark Doggie Daycare, Willowbrooke 40th Street, Rios Church. 4Front PUD Amendment to include restaurant, office, hotel and residential.
 - Pending Projects: Priority Courier Performing Arts Center and Headquarters, Cedric's Landing potential expansion, Oakdale Marketplace/Oakdale Station Residential Proposals.
- Mr. Gitzlaff noted that council has expressed interest in a pedestrian bridge over 40th Street which will be explored in the Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
- Mr. Gitzlaff noted that the biggest issue with Oakdale Marketplace and Station Residential proposals is the sewer capacity.

Ordinances:

- Electric Vehicle (EV) Ordinance. Allows EV charging in all zoning districts with guidelines. It will be discussed at the March Planning Commission.
- Temporary Outdoor Patio Ordinance. During the pandemic, permits were issued to allow dining outdoors. This has become an ongoing part of operation for some businesses. One business has expressed a desire for a temporary outdoor patio in 2022. At the February 8 meeting council will discuss and if it is decided to proceed, staff recommends moving forward as a demonstration in 2022 to gather information.

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next Economic Development Commission meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2022 at 5:15pm.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SEVERSON AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STAFFORD TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING OF FEBRUARY 2, 2022 AT 6:58 PM.

Ayes 8 Abstain 0
Nays 0 Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,
 Teresa Buhl, Recording Secretary