

**City of Battle Lake
Economic Development Authority
Thursday, September 7, 2017**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in regular session on Thursday, August 7, 2017. President Randy Dorn called the meeting to order at 7:00 a.m. with Commissioners Jeff Drake, Don Maslow, Leigh Shebeck, Sara Boyum, Gene Kelm and Milt Paulson present. Also present were Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer and Dave Bickett from Park Region Telephone.

Drake made a motion to approve the agenda. Boyum seconded. MCU Shebeck moved to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Drake seconded. MCU Paulson moved to approve the financials as presented. Dorn seconded. MCU

Dorn suggested the commissioners consider a \$5,000 pledge or donation to the Battle Lake Childcare Center out of professional services to help them pay for expenses related to the design of the building. Martin said that the account may not have that much in it to accommodate that request. There are some expenses associated with the Hatchery Row visioning project and Business Retention and Expansion. They could use another line item as long as the commissioners do not go over the total budget. Some members were concerned about shorting our funds and maybe we should wait until the end of the year. Dorn stated that this project is very important to Battle Lake's economy and this is one way to show that the EDA and City of Battle Lake are supporting the project. Maslow wondered if we should receive more specific financial information from them. Childcare board members will be at the City Council meeting next Tuesday and will give an update. This information can be provided to the EDA next month. Drake made a motion to approve a \$2,000 pledge to the Battle Lake Childcare Center, to be paid after they submit an invoice. Martin will request this. Paulson seconded. MCU

Visitors:

Dave Bickett from Park Region Telephone was in attendance to explain their current projects and plans for broadband:

- Grant funding has been used recently to get service to the east side of Clitherall Lake, Fisk Lake and the Vining area. Typically, the cost to get fiber to each home is about \$8,000 and the state grant program pays \$3,000 to \$4,000 per customer.
- Park Region currently serves a number of businesses/entities to provide the speed they need – First National Bank, Battle Lake Public School, Lake Region Healthcare, etc. They plan to extend service along the main street of town to service those businesses.
- Within six to eight years, Park Region plans to have fiber to every home in their area.
- If the City is building a commercial/industrial park, Park Region is willing to put service in to make the project "shovel ready."
- Dave also mentioned that he is willing to meet with the EDA or staff anytime to help with broadband needs.

Dorn made a motion to approve the 2018 EDA budget as presented. Shebeck seconded. MCU

Discussion on the natural gas budget was tabled.

Kelm suggested the EDA/City look at the property between Creative Cuts and Seip Drug for the installation of an information kiosk, maps, signs, etc. It could also be used to create a walking connection to the Community Center and public parking area. Paulson will ask Shawn Frank, owner, if he has interest in selling or leasing.

Updates:

- Tri-City Living – still working on a social media project related to housing repairs. More to come.
- The Business Retention and Expansion Task Force met in August and had the training they needed to start the business interviews. This should all be wrapped up by mid-October.
- School enrollment is at 425, down from last year.
- Brett Feda will attend the council meeting next Tuesday to present his Eagle Scout project for the information kiosk to be placed in Art Alley.
- There is a newcomers' picnic on September 20th.
- Milt has good interest in the West Tool Building from a prospective new business. They may request some assistance through tax abatement.

City council agenda and minutes were reviewed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 a.m. Next meeting will be held Thursday, October 5, 2017 at 7:00 a.m.