

**City of Battle Lake  
Economic Development Authority  
Thursday, October 12, 2017**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in regular session on Thursday, October 12, 2017. President Randy Dorn called the meeting to order at 7:00 a.m. with Commissioners Jeff Drake, Don Maslow, Leigh Shebeck, Sara Boyum, and Milt Paulson present. Absent was Gene Kelm. Also present was Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer.

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

Martin and Dorn reported on an idea to sell Battle Lake gift certificates which could be used as any Battle Lake retailer. Rather than using a "gift certificate" that would need to be reimbursed, we could set up an account and use actual checks. The check can be printed with the information needed and the retailer can deposit them as any other check. We can provide an envelope with a list of retailers where the check can be used. The idea would be to encourage purchase of the gift certificates for any event and to encourage the shop local campaign. Dorn and Martin will work out the details for the implementation. Commissioners felt it was a good idea.

Martin reviewed the natural gas budget with the commissioners. She explained how the base rate is used to make the debt service payment but we do not have enough customers yet for the full payment so a transfer is needed from the natural gas operating fund to help with the payment. Money from the usage of natural gas goes to the operating fund. The council recently reviewed the budgets and decided to keep the usage fee the same as last year. Dorn said that it was good information for EDA members to know and can now answer any questions they might get from the community.

**Updates:**

- Tri-City Living – Working on an education project related to housing called Tri-City Living listens. The group is planning a "listening session" where anyone that might have interest in selling their house can come to one of three sessions on November 9<sup>th</sup>. This session will be for information gathering. After gathering information from each community, Tri-City Partnership will schedule a second session to provide technical assistance to community members related to housing and the information they received at the listening sessions. EDA commissioners liked the idea and felt that the technical assistance should come from local experts – realtors, bankers, etc. Martin will pass this suggestion onto the group.
- Hatchery Row - The start of the visioning process with Duet Designs will begin with a kick-off meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Martin presented the proposal from Duet Design with the fee of \$9,000 and \$3,500 of this is pro bono for an actual cash total of \$5,500. Martin applied for and received a grant from Blandin Foundation for \$5,000 to do the visioning process so the addition amount needed from the EDA will be \$500. Dorn made a motion to approve the proposal from Duet Design. Boyum seconded. MCU
- The Business Retention and Expansion Task Force is currently conducting business interviews and they should be completed mid-October.
- 2018 Levy – The increase was 6.96% but the tax rate went up only .06% due to increase in tax capacity. This is a positive statement to our local taxpayers that we are focusing on retaining businesses by keeping the rate down.

City council agenda and minutes were reviewed.

The Shawn Frank property was discussed. Paulson said that he is interested in selling but the commissioners were in agreement that the property is better suited to attract a new business and retain the tax base. It might be worthwhile to see if he is interested in allowing the EDA to put up an information kiosk and/or signs.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 a.m. Next meeting will be held Thursday, November 2, 2017 at 7:00 a.m.

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Valerie J. Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer