

**City of Battle Lake  
Economic Development Authority  
Thursday, December 3, 2020**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in regular session on Thursday December 3, 2020 with some members participating via video conference pursuant to Minn. Stat.13D.021 due to a health pandemic. Randy Dorn called the meeting to order at 7:00 a.m. with Commissioners Darren Kern, Steve Young, Leigh Shebeck, Gene Kelm, Josie Schmidt, and Don Maslow present. Also present was Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer. Other visitors were in attendance.

Young made a motion to approve the agenda. Kelm seconded. With a roll call vote, those in favor included Dorn, Kern, Schmidt, Kelm, Young, Maslow and Shebeck with no member voting no. MCU

Shebeck made a motion to approve the minutes. Kern seconded. With a roll call vote, those in favor included Dorn, Kern, Schmidt, Kelm, Young, Maslow and Shebeck with no member voting no. MC

Kern made a motion to approve the financials. Young seconded. With a roll call vote, those in favor included Dorn, Kern, Schmidt, Kelm, Young, Maslow and Shebeck with no member voting no. MCU

**Visitors:**

Barbara Dacy from Otter Tail County HRA along with Alex Johnson and Jill Amundson from West Central Initiative joined the meeting to review and discuss the housing survey for Battle Lake. A sample from Ryan Pesch was distributed with the following comments:

1. Add a question about maintenance free living i.e. desire to live in an association and own rather than rent. There seems to be a lot of interest from folks to purchase a townhome within an association with lawn care, snow removal, etc. being taken care of.
2. Do we need the Race question? And to be respectful, folks should fill in their race as opposed to a check off box.
3. Should we drop 15 to save space? Do we really need education level?
4. There was a question about the validity of social media responses to the survey. How do we know they are legitimate?
5. Title of Survey; should it be City of Battle Lake survey? Then discussion evolved into how do we know if respondents are thinking about immediate surrounding townships to live in. Can we include a map? While it is still important to get concrete information related to the City of Battle Lake, is there some way to word a question that might include some of the area outside of City limits.
6. How far north and west around the city will the survey extend? Need an update on the school district map status. Might be helpful for folks to indicate where they want to build or move to. Make sure to include all of the school district, along with the other areas we were looking at.
7. Add a question about do folks want to build or buy an existing home?
8. And what are the hurdles to building? (although I was not sure if he was also asking about the hurdles to buy existing) Hurdles would include the need for down payment assistance, need for financing, etc.
9. Not clear if the existing housing payment and how much more they are willing to spend will be indicative of the price they can afford. Prefer a check off box of values. This would also be more direct information for the grant application.

10. Concern about the relationship of 7a to 7b...will it tell us enough. Somewhat difficult is hard to measure for example. Maybe 7b says "Explain your answer to 7a in more detail."

Martin will get back to Pesch on the discussion points and changes to the survey.

Alex Johnson from WCI reported that he has been downloading information and will prepare a sample of what he has done so far. He will be reaching out to some members of the EDA for additional information.

### **EDA Lot**

The actual costs to the EDA lot were presented. The EDA has a total of \$8,274 invested with the purchase and the soil sampling. Martin has talked with the prospective buyer and let him know that the EDA would be interested in selling and he should offer a price. Martin followed up with another phone call and did not hear back from him prior to the meeting. The EDA discussed what they would like to sell it for. There is a large ravine that is a natural stormwater pathway and would probably need to be left alone. This takes up a good portion of the south part of the lot. After discussion, the EDA would like to get somewhere between \$8,274 and \$15,000 for the lot. Martin can work with the prospective buyer on pricing and come back to the EDA for approval.

### **COVID-19 – Assistance to Businesses**

- CARES Act Funding from the City has been fully distributed. Martin reported that the CDA has also completed their distribution with many of the businesses and nonprofits in Battle Lake receiving funding from the CDA.
- The business survey has been sent out with 16 responses so far. Martin will send another reminder to the businesses.
- Some ideas to assist businesses were discussed. Martin has scheduled a zoom meeting with the retail and restaurants that are still open. She will make a follow-up phone to make sure the participation is as strong as possible. The EDA felt this could be an important meeting that will give the EDA direction for Christmas and winter to help promote the businesses as we move through this pandemic.
- Martin discussed her idea of sending postcards to all the residents with a reminder to shop local and what options are available. Commissioners felt anything we can do will be helpful.
- Darren Kern will also share the flyer when they send out information to students and parents.

### **Hatchery Row:**

The developers and council have come to a verbal agreement on a development agreement. Martin asked Traci Ryan to make changes to the development agreement that was done by Paul Jensen from Cline Jensen when we were working with another developer. After some changes were made Martin and Ryan worked with Randy Dorn, JJ Cline and the developers, along with their attorney to come to an agreement to present to the council. The changes were presented at the November 24<sup>th</sup> council meeting and the full agreement should be completed for council approval on December 8, 2020.

Next meeting is January 7, 2021.

Adjourn at 8:12 a.m.

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