

**City of Battle Lake
Economic Development Authority
Thursday, June 2, 2022**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in regular session on Thursday, June 2 2022 at 7:00 a.m. with Randy Dorn, Sean Belmont, Rich Bullard, Josie Thomopoulos, Rob Nudell, and Steve Young present. Don Maslow was absent. Also present were Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer along with Katrina Ball and Lauren Belmont from Lakes Area Community Center, and Reba Gilliland from the Arts Advisory Committee.

Nudell made a motion to approve the agenda with additions. Bullard seconded. MCU

Young made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Thomopoulos seconded. MCU

Bullard made a motion to approve the financials. Young seconded. MCU

Hatchery Row

Katrina Ball and Lauren Belmont gave an update on the LACC.

- A grant was submitted to Blandins for items related to the space at Hatchery Row.
- Ball and Belmont spoke of the dissent within the Board – not all of them are on board with the community space at Hatchery Row. One member has resigned for personal reasons.
- They will no longer be providing the community space at the current building.
- Some of the Board members do not believe that the funds from the sale of the building should go to community space and have talked about other projects such as playground equipment, etc.
- Ball and Belmont feel the current Board need compelling information from the community that they want a community space.
- Martin is willing to work on a possible survey to go to businesses and individuals.
- Discussion on the need for new Board members that have interest in the future of a community center.
- EDA Board members feel it is important to keep moving towards the goal of community space at the new Hatchery building. The commissioners suggested we have a joint meeting with the LACC Board. Martin will work with Ball and Belmont on a date to meet.

Commissioners discussed the council's possible action on short term rentals. Council is considering putting a moratorium on short term rentals while they research possible requirements within the City limits. Mayor Bullard explained:

- Council feels the continued increase of short-term rental could change the look of the community.
- There have been some complaints on current short-term rentals such as partying, staying up late, etc.
- The County requires that all short-term rentals be registered with them. The County does an inspection and will approve or not, based on the inspection.
- Council is not interested in eliminating them, just considering some regulations – looking at what's best for the residents of Battle Lake.
- Bullard would also like to see short-term rental owners get together and produce some solutions for these concerns.
- Council will vote on a possible moratorium at the June 14th council meeting. If passed, this would be temporary and up to a year until they do the research to produce City regulations, if any. The council will give any new rentals up to July 1st to get registered if they haven't already. This information has already been disbursed through social media and the newspaper.

Graduate cards and keychains were presented by Dorn and Martin at the awards ceremony in May. The card encourages the new graduates to spread their wings after graduation but to remember they are always welcome back to Battle Lake.

A free social media class will be held June 8th with Kim Peterson volunteering to present the information. EDA will provide a free supper.

Dorn made a motion to approve the Ongoing EDA Goals and Priorities. Bullard seconded. MCU

Goals

1. Complete Hatchery Row Redevelopment.
2. Foster the relationship with area townships for economic development growth – invite members of Everts and Clitherall Townships to participate in EDA meetings by sending email packets and inviting them to attend meetings.
3. Continue Business, Retention and Expansion Process
 - Continued communication with Network Battle Lake – work with them on projects as needed.
 - Continued communication with Lakes Area Community Center Board.
 - Business communication – hold an annual breakfast & business appreciation meeting in February 2022 and follow -up with a newspaper article detailing the work of the EDA.
 - On-going BR&E Site visits will be done in the fall.
4. Continue work on a group advertising & marketing campaign.
5. Update the EDA brochure with information on the EDA and what can be offered to assist businesses.
6. Assist businesses with staffing needs by working with Otter Tail County's job opening portal.

Ongoing Priorities

1. Keep an inventory of available commercial property on City's website by including a link to area realtors.
2. Reach out to prospective business when members have heard of possible interest out in the community.
3. Identify business gaps in the community and seek prospective business owners.
4. Broadband – continue to work with the County on options and reach out to internet suppliers to hear about future projects and priorities.
5. Housing – work on both single family and multifamily options including new locations to expand housing. Look at public/private partnerships for development.
6. Support the school.
7. Parking – educating the businesses and public on availability – keep a map in the Battle Lake brochure.
8. On-going training for businesses owners.
9. Continue the working relationship with surrounding communities, employers, and partners - i.e., Tri-City Living, Otter Tail Tourism, Otter Tail County Community Development Agency and Live Wide Open.
10. Create a business collaboration group to meet monthly.
11. Continue to assist the Lakes Area Community Center with their transition to Hatchery Row.

Reba Gilliland mentioned that the Battle Lake Community Fund has somewhere around \$3,000 or so left from the COVID-19 Emergency Fund. She contacted WCI and they said the funds should be used for related expenses. Dorn suggested the funds be used to help businesses with utility bills. Commissioners agreed but it will be up to the Community Fund Board members to make a final decision.

Minutes of the Otter Tail County CDA were reviewed.

Upcoming meetings:

- July 7, 2022 at 7:00 a.m. – Next EDA meeting.

Adjourn at 8:05 a.m.

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