



## **Battle Lake Economic Development Authority Thursday, April 20, 2023 - 7:00 a.m. Battle Lake City Hall**

Call to Order  
Approve Agenda  
Approve Minutes  
Approve Financials

- **Visitors**
- **Hatchery Row**
  - **Community Space/LACC**
  - **General Update**
- **High School Representative**
- **Other School Updates**
- **Business Priorities – Action Items**
  - Business Meeting - Held March 31, 2023
  - Review Survey Results – Discuss Action Items
- **Old Youth Center Building**
- **Other Updates?**
- **Upcoming Meeting:**
- Next EDA Meeting – June 1, 2023

**“The mission of the Battle Lake Economic Development Authority is to promote diverse Economic Development and enhance quality of life through the retention and growth of business, industry & services in the Battle Lake area.”**

**City of Battle Lake  
Economic Development Authority  
Thursday, March 2, 2023**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in a regular session on Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 7:00 a.m. with Randy Dorn, Rich Bullard, Rob Nudell, Sean Belmont, and Steve Young present. Absent were Josie Thomopolous and Marjorie Quammen. Also present were Val Martin, Clerk/Treasurer/EDA Director/Zoning Officer along with Reba Gilliland, Art Advisory Committee Representative. The visiting speaker was Melissa Hoffman from Good Sam.

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

Bullard made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Belmont seconded. MCU

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

**Visitors:**

- Melissa Hoffman, Good Samaritan Center Administrator, was in attendance to introduce herself and discuss what is going on at their facilities.
  - Melissa recently started her position at Good Sam after Casey Ward left for another position in the organization.
  - She was previously employed at a nursing home in Wadena.
  - The nursing home recently had its annual survey showing no deficiencies.
  - Keeping full-time staff is a huge challenge. They are working on setting wages at a higher rate to encourage new employees.
  - Capacity is 55 and they are at 51 – staffing is a factor in setting the number of residents they have. She feels getting to their capacity is a high priority but needs to have the staff to make this work.
  - They are working on a \$50,000 deficit budget. It will be important to have financial and staffing stability prior to any future expansion.
  - They have a good number of volunteers and anyone interested in volunteering can contact Tammy Carlson.
  - Nudell mentioned the school is working on a partnership with Good Sam on a CAN program for high school students.
  - Good Sam's Advisory Board will continue meeting at some point. Rich Bullard, Randy Dorn and Reba Gilliland are all part of that Board.

**Hatchery Row**

- General updates were discussed. The LACC has committed to leasing space in Hatchery Row. No members were in attendance to discuss this further.

**High School Representative/School Update**

- No students were available

**West Battle Lake Shore Association** - Belmont is involved with this organization and they have several projects in the works:

- They are interested in working with the City on a few projects in the future.
  - They have been discussing the idea of a boat wash station at one of the accesses. They are currently partnering with Otter Tail County on this. Martin mentioned that this was something the County had considered a few years ago for Lions Park.
  - They've also discussed the idea of some type of concrete pier that could also be used as a walking pier at Lions Park. The pier may help with the sand movement and the issues at the boat launch. Martin suggested they work with DNR on a design and permission for the pier.

### **Business Priorities – Action Items**

- Survey results were distributed. There were about 24 businesses/organizations responding. EDA Commissioners will discuss the results at the next meeting. Martin will prepare some possible action items.

Randy Dorn informed the Commissioners that he has a commitment as part of the Independent Bankers Association that will take up more of his time and he may miss some meetings because of this commitment. There was a discussion on whether he should step down as president or continue with the Commissioners knowing that he might miss some meetings in the next year. Martin said that she would like to see him remain as president as there are a number of opportunities and meetings that happen outside of the EDA meetings and it is a huge benefit to have him continue in the role. Commissioners agreed with Martin, Young is currently the Vice President and can run meetings in his absence. Scott Duberowski, Bank Vice President can attend EDA meetings in Dorn's absence to have someone present from the bank.

### **Other Updates:**

- School updates:
  - 54 heat new heat pumps are being installed.
  - The career fair is on April 20<sup>th</sup> – they are continuing to look for businesses that would like to participate. They are also looking for more volunteers to help conduct mock interviews with the students.
  - The School Board has some working sessions coming up to discuss the outcome of the committee work with Site Logic on a future plan for their facilities.

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Upcoming meetings:

- Annual meeting on February 2nd at noon.

Adjourn at 8:23 a.m.

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

**Economic Development Authority**

**Fund # 240**

**Statement of Revenue and Expenditures**

Dept	Acct		Current Period	Year-To-Date	Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Jan 2023
			Mar 2023 Mar 2023 Actual	Jan 2023 Mar 2023 Actual	Jan 2023 Dec 2023	Jan 2023 Dec 2023 Variance	Dec 2023 Percent of Budget
<b>Revenue &amp; Expenditures</b>							
<b>Revenue</b>							
<b>Economic Development Authority</b>							
46500	33600	Grants and Aid	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.0%
46500	36211	Now Acct Interest	3.02	11.12	0.00	11.12	0.0%
<b>Economic Development Authority Totals</b>			<b>\$3.02</b>	<b>\$10,011.12</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$10,011.12</b>	
<b>Revenue</b>			<b>\$3.02</b>	<b>\$10,011.12</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$10,011.12</b>	
<b>Gross Profit</b>			<b>\$3.02</b>	<b>\$10,011.12</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>							
<b>Hatchery Row</b>							
46316	319	Other Professional Services	0.00	26,841.40	0.00	26,841.40	0.0%
<b>Hatchery Row Totals</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$26,841.40</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$26,841.40</b>	
<b>Economic Development Authority</b>							
46500	133	Employer Paid Dental	0.80	2.40	0.00	2.40	0.0%
46500	131	Employer Paid Health	35.22	105.66	0.00	105.66	0.0%
46500	122	FICA	29.43	64.27	0.00	64.27	0.0%
46500	123	Medicare	6.88	15.02	0.00	15.02	0.0%
46500	430	Miscellaneous	10,000.00	10,783.42	0.00	10,783.42	0.0%
46500	121	PERA	27.64	71.86	0.00	71.86	0.0%
46500	322	Postage	75.60	85.60	0.00	85.60	0.0%
46500	350	Print/Binding	0.00	212.97	0.00	212.97	0.0%
46500	100	Wages and Salaries	490.09	1,082.86	0.00	1,082.86	0.0%
<b>Economic Development Authority Totals</b>			<b>\$10,665.66</b>	<b>\$12,424.06</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$12,424.06</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>			<b>\$10,665.66</b>	<b>\$39,265.46</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$39,265.46</b>	
<b>Revenue Less Expenditures</b>			<b>(\$10,662.64)</b>	<b>(\$29,254.34)</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Net Change in Fund Balance</b>			<b>(\$10,662.64)</b>	<b>(\$29,254.34)</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	

Ck #	Date	To	Amount	For:
46363	3/16/2023	Neverbetter	\$ 10,000.00	CDA Grant (pass-through)
EFT	3/27/2023	Postage Meter	\$ 75.60	
		Total for March	\$ 10,075.60	

1-Jan Beginning Fund Bal \$ 42,067.40  
 28-Feb Current Fund Bala \$ 12,813.06

## 2023 Business Survey – Battle Lake EDA – SURVEY RESULTS



1. Type of business:
  - a. Retail 4
  - b. Restaurant/Bar 6
  - c. Entertainment
  - d. Service 6
  - e. Nonprofit/Church 3
  - f. Medical 3
  - g. Other (specify) 4
    1. Dental, 2. Building owner, 3. resort/lodging, 4. hospitality.
  
2. In 2022, how were your sales, in comparison to pre-COVID:
  - a. No change 5
  - b. 25% Incline 6
  - c. 50% Incline 2
  - d. More than 50 % incline 2
  - e. Decline in sales 6
    1. New business, 2. Rent stayed even, 3. no change at BL location, 4. new business, 5. new location in BL – sales were up slightly but profits decreased by 2/3 from previous year, 6. decline was in profit
  
3. What were your most difficult obstacles (if any) over the last several months – check all that apply:
  - a. Staffing 17
  - b. Getting supplies 11
  - c. Marketing 1
  - d. Time Management 3
  - e. Cost of Supplies 16
  - f. Other 2
    1. Seemed to be a demand for affordable retail and service space, 2. government at levels, reach in fees and regulations
  
4. Are you considering any of the following? Please use the space below to let the EDA know how we can assist along with your contact information.
  - a. Expanding 6
  - b. Moving 0
  - c. Selling 5
  - d. Closing 1
  - e. No Changes 10
  - f. Other 3
    1. Applying for a MN Border to Border grant in the 2023 cycle for south Battle Lake to bring fiber-high speed broadband access, 2. business model change, 3. we are looking to increase available of specialty medical services and therapy in the City, 4. I have been surprised at how little interest there has been in leasing the additional two buildings at 416 S Lake – referrals would be great – I assume it may be more difficult after Hachery – making changes to building to hopefully increase interest, 5. retiring in 2024, 6. looking for new building in town,
  
5. Are you interested in business training for any of the following?
  - a. Social media 5
  - b. Customer Service 4
  - c. Business Transition 1
  - d. Marketing 4
  - e. Technology Advances 4
  - f. No interest 11
  - g. Other (please specify) 1

**Action Item: Work on additional social media training in the fall.**

Maybe, We do this through LRHC

6. Social Media is a vital part of promotion for businesses. We offered two Social Media training opportunities. If you did not attend, what were your obstacles? 1. Conflict with critical church meeting, could not make dates, Ashley attended, we have someone that manages our social media and they were unavailable, not enough time, scheduling conflict, previous commitment, other commitments, timing, we have internal resources on the topic and people actively managing that side of our business
7. Below is a task list related to some of the EDA goals and priorities, please circle all that you feel are important:
- a. Expanding year-round businesses 15
  - b. Creating a business organization with set meeting dates 4
  - c. Continued work on housing 11
  - d. Ongoing Business Communication including Quarterly EDA reports 6
  - e. Continued work with Lakes Area Community Center on Community Events & Opportunities 10
  - f. Support of the school 11
  - g. On-going business training 4
  - h. Group advertising – i.e. TV ads, YouTube Videos, Print Ads 9
  - i. Assist businesses, in collaboration with the Otter Tail County Community Development Agency on the workforce shortage 8
  - j. Comment:  
Need more businesses that create jobs that will attract families to live in our area, partnering with schools to help create a work force that values working with local small business, zero Battle Lake businesses or EDA have in our years of ownership ever referred one customer to use, the City is an important part of our market and we want to be able to support community growth and planning.

**Action Items:** 1. Held the first business meeting – good participation. Many ideas came from that meeting for promotion and advertising and several other items on this list. 2. We'll continue to work with the LACC on their move and support the school in any way we can and as needed. 3. Communication – will be doing a mailing to businesses in the next week or so with an invite to the next business meeting and the outcome ideas generated by that meeting. It will also include these survey results and a request for donations for fireworks.

8. Is your business or organization in the City Limits? If not, what township are you in?  
Yes – 18  
Nidoros, In City limits but also rural, Citherall, Everts, Everts, all over Otter Tail County, Ottertail City limits, run the business in the City but looking for land/building in City limits,
9. Informally, we have a connection to our businesses, but there seems to be some interest in meeting on a formal basis. How can we accommodate your schedule to make this work for you? Circle all that apply:
- a. Hold Quarterly Meetings 14
  - b. Hold Monthly Meetings 3
  - c. Best day of the week: Monday – 1, Wednesday = 2, Thursday -1
  - d. Time? 7:30 a.m. 4 Noon 4 3:00 p.m. 2 5:00 p.m. 1 7:00 p.m. 3
  - e. Zoom option 1
  - f. I'm not interested 5  
We can make meetings work out, you have never been interested in resort comments, in person meetings with virtual options are great to allow flexible attendance, in person and virtual options for everyone, I'm flexible,

10. Please let us know what the EDA is doing well, what we can do better or what other comments you have for us:

1. We appreciate the EDA including Park Region
2. Help new management and businesses get more involved with the EDA - sometimes we get so busy running the business we don't know how to reach out and see how we can be more involved which in turn lets people know we are here.
3. Great communication.
4. I have not seen any work for resorts outside the City limits.
5. Continued support of area businesses and providing education to the community.
6. Communication among stakeholders is going well. Planning with a purpose is going well too. Trying to find the balance of supporting growth and retaining local culture is important.
7. Good communication – you do a nice job.
8. Your help with small businesses and promoting the community.
9. I apologize but I haven't been keeping track of the EDA.
10. I would appreciate efforts to lease vacant space.



# Breakfast & Brainstorming - Minutes

## Friday, March 31, 2023

### 7:30 a.m. Battle Lake City Hall

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- Welcome and Introductions with 30-plus people in attendance. From the EDA was Val Martin and from the LACC were Katrina Ball, Rikka Brandon, Casey Love, and Lauren Belmont.
- **Economic Development Authority – Val reviewed the following items and opportunities:**
  - Social Media Flyers
  - Coupon Flyer and Book
  - Survey Results
  - Fireworks
  - Shared Calendar with LACC
- **Lakes Area Community Center – the LACC Board reviewed the following items they have been working on:**
  - Wenonga Days
  - Hatchery Row Facility
  - Spring and Fall Promotions
- **Brainstorming** - Joint Advertising and other discussions:
  - Billboard off on I-94 or other major highways
  - Discussed the use of Facebook and how businesses can easily “boost” posts for an inexpensive fee.
  - The LACC has been working with Janell Kraemer, the Battle Lake school business teacher, and LACC Board member. They’ve done some graphic design for the LACC on several projects. There may be additional opportunities for this.
  - Wenonga Days – Businesses should let Val or the LACC know if they have something going on during the event so it gets on the poster and in the advertising.
  - Park Region representatives in attendance mentioned that local channels are available for advertising and promotion. Arvig also has this option.
  - The Fox station in Fargo has done some joint promotion of some restaurants in Battle Lake. There may be other opportunities there.
  - Consider a promotion around “ice out.” Float the boat kind of event?
  - Utilize the Lake Associations for advertising opportunities.
  - Expanding the Business Season – LACC is considering a Winterfest event similar to Wenonga Days.
  - Art of the Lakes is intending on using the old LACC building for year-round art events. They are still planning how this will work.
  - Consider working with the school while they are having events – promote businesses that are open during activities like speech, games, drama, etc.
  - There will be a Babe Ruth Tourney coming up at the end of July with games in Henning but there will be parents and kids from several states and Canada. This is a good opportunity to promote things going on in Battle Lake. It sounds like each team is only playing one game per day so they’ll have lots of free time to do other things. We should prepare a welcome packet for this event with bling items from businesses, coupons, flyers, etc. In fact, we should have bags of some sort of hand for multiple events.
  - Dog trials were done at the Wasson farms last fall by the St. Croix Springer Spaniel Club. It sounds like that will happen again this year. More promotion of the businesses and notification to them should be done.



- Use of a Facebook page for the promotion of Business activity. Live Love Lake Battle Lake was set up for this type of use. Val will get this word out and we'll start using this Page a little more again. Businesses can all post items to the page.
- There will be fireworks for Wenonga Days again. The City is contributing \$1500 again this year and Val has sent an email with donation requests.
- There was a discussion on a type of evening business get-together. ABC Brewing is interested in doing this but it would also be great to rotate business locations. Rikka is interested in working on this.
- There is an open house for Art Alley on July 17<sup>th</sup> from 2 to 4 to celebrate all of the new updates.
- Reba Gilliland noted that the flowers downtown are planted and maintained by volunteers. The City Staff take care of the watering.
- Community Fund does a number of projects in the community such as the Gathering of Airplanes and putting up the Christmas tree downtown.
- Someone suggested an extension of art down 78 to 210 along with additional sidewalks.
- Jeff Wiersma from Glendalough Park gave an update on the park activities.
- The group suggested a next meeting to be held Mid-May to develop additional ideas for the summer.
-