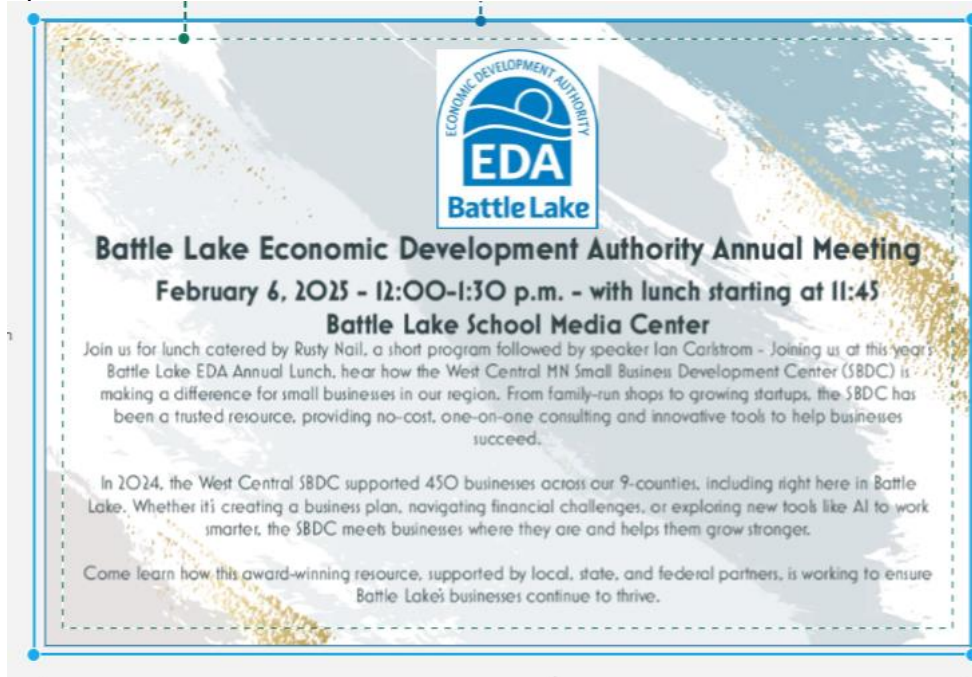




Battle Lake Economic Development Authority Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:00 a.m. Battle Lake City Hall

- Call to Order
- Election of Officers: Current: President – Randy Dorn, Vice President – Steve Young, and Val Martin, Secretary/Treasurer
- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes
- Approve Financials
- EDA Annual Meeting – February 6, 2025 – 12:00 – 2:30 p.m. at Battle Lake School Media Center – Lunch by the Rusty Nail
 - Speaker – Ian Carlstrom, WC MN SBDB



- Discussion – Utilize Balance of COVID Funds for Business Grants/Consider Additional EDA Funds for the Project
- Ideas for Breakfast and Brainstorming – Location? – Time? Review November Minutes
- 2025 Meeting Day/Time – 1st Thursday at 7:00 a.m.
- Work on Goals and Priorities
- City Christmas Party – January 12th

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – 6-year term

MEMBERS (5) CITIZENS - Josie Schmidt (12/31/2026), Rob Nudell (12/31/2029), Randy Dorn (12/31/2027), Steve Young (12/31/2028), Sean Belmont (12/31/2027)

COUNCIL MEMBERS (2) – Majorie Quammen (12/31/2024), Richard Bullard (12/31/2024)

EDA DIRECTOR – Val Martin (serves in an advisory capacity; non-voting members of Commission)

Art Advisory Committee Member – Non-voting member

“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
Tuesday, December 17, 2024**

The Battle Lake Economic Development Authority met in a regular session on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 7:00 a.m. with Rich Bullard, Randy Dorn, Rob Nudell, Steve Young, Sean Belmont, and Majorie Quammen present. Also present were Karalee Brandner, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, Reba Gilliland representing the Battle Lake Arts Advisory Committee, Sharon Casey representing the LACC, and Amy Baldwin Otter Tail County Community Development Director. Leigh Shebeck was also in attendance.

Bullard made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Amy Baldwin OTC CDA Director. Nudell seconded. MCU

- Amy Baldwin, Otter Tail County Community Development Director presented an update on progress of the Lincoln apartments. This building will have 10 apartment units with tuck under garages. They will be 2- and 3-bedroom units. The project was supported with a loan from the MN Department of Housing Loan as well as private funding, and a loan from the CDA of \$490,000.
- Baldwin presented information to the commission on programs available through the CDA and HRA. She shared literature for Otter Tail County Housing Finance Programs outlining programs for Homeowners, Homebuyers, Builders and Landlords. Dorn inquired if there have been any current surveys or studies to identify needs for our area.
- Baldwin shared information on a project that was just completed in Dalton that will be operated through the HRA. This was a small affordable senior housing unit with 6 units. This project came about as a need was identified for seniors wanting to stay in their hometown as they age. They are hopeful that as the apartment units fill up there will be single family houses coming onto the real estate market as well.
- There was discussion on the Labor Force, Employment & Unemployment Rate for Otter Tail County. Baldwin was optimistic as the number of workers is consistent. They were anticipating more of a drop as the baby boomers age out of the work force. Baldwin gave a brief overview of the Empowered Worker Program. This program helps to connect workers with barriers to employment such as a criminal record, housing instability, limited English proficiency, and poverty with employers. The program provides readiness and skills training, career exploration, and job placement, and navigator and success advocates. She shared a success story of helping an individual obtain training, pass their CDL test, and obtain gainful employment.

Dorn recapped the minutes and requested the correction of a spelling error. Nudell made a motion to approve the corrected minutes. Young seconded. MCU

Commission reviewed and discussed the financials. Discussion was held regarding the request for an additional \$500 requested by AMS Digital. Dorn requested this item be added to the January agenda for further discussion. Quammen made a motion to approve the financials. Bullard seconded the motion. MCU

- Leigh Shebeck summarized the Business Surveys that he had met with businesses to discuss. He spent ½ hour to 45 minutes with each business going through the survey. Many businesses reported a slight increase in sales. Cost of supplies was identified as being the largest obstacle, following that was staffing, marketing, and other factors. The majority of businesses surveyed had no plans for changes at this time.
- Nudell expressed his thanks to Leigh for his time and dedication to doing these surveys. Dorn referenced changes of legislation in Minnesota making it difficult for small businesses. Added employment expenses are hard for business owners to absorb.
- Sharon Casey with the LACC reported that the board had met and the new online calendar was approved.

The Commissioners moved to the discussion of the annual meeting. Rob offered to host the meeting at the school. Amy Baldwin suggested inviting Ian Calmstrom, Regional Director of West Central MN SBDC to speak. Discussion will continue in January to finalize details for the meeting.

- Request Approval – Utilize balance of COVID Funds for Business Grants – tabled until January

- Follow up – Ambulance Service – no discussion held.
- Follow up – Meeting with Townships – no discussion held.
- January meeting will be Tuesday, January 7, 2025, then the regular meeting time will be the first Thursday of the month at 7 am.
- New Year's cards with annual meeting invitation – Val will send out in January
- City Christmas Party will be held at Boathouse, January 12, 2025 with social hour at 4:30
- March 26, 2025 – College and Career Fair at School

Adjourn at 8:25 a.m.

Karalee Brandner, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer

Economic Development Authority

Fund # 240

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

Dept	Acct		Current Period Dec 2024 Dec 2024 Actual	Year-To-Date Jan 2024 Dec 2024 Actual	Annual Budget Jan 2024 Dec 2024	Annual Budget Jan 2024 Dec 2024 Variance	Jan 2024 Dec 2024 Percent of Budget
Revenue & Expenditures							
Revenue							
Hatchery Row							
46316	33600	Grants and Aid	0.00	31,468.28	0.00	(31,468.28)	0.0%
Hatchery Row Totals			\$0.00	\$31,468.28	\$0.00	(\$31,468.28)	
Economic Development Authority							
46500	36211	Now Acct Interest	6.71	57.06	0.00	(57.06)	0.0%
46500	39203	Transfer from Liquor Fund	0.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	100.0%
46500	70000	Transfers In	0.00	0.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	0.0%
Economic Development Authority Totals			\$6.71	\$20,057.06	\$25,500.00	\$5,442.94	
Revenue			\$6.71	\$51,525.34	\$25,500.00	(\$26,025.34)	
Gross Profit			\$6.71	\$51,525.34	\$25,500.00	\$0.00	
Expenses							
Hatchery Row							
46316	810	Refunds & Reimbursements	0.00	31,468.28	0.00	(31,468.28)	0.0%
Hatchery Row Totals			\$0.00	\$31,468.28	\$0.00	(\$31,468.28)	
Economic Development Authority							
46500	100	Wages and Salaries	2,189.88	6,348.72	8,300.00	1,951.28	76.5%
46500	121	PERA	17.16	291.78	0.00	(291.78)	0.0%
46500	122	FICA	134.66	380.07	0.00	(380.07)	0.0%
46500	123	Medicare	31.49	88.90	0.00	(88.90)	0.0%
46500	131	Employer Paid Health	(8.79)	448.10	0.00	(448.10)	0.0%
46500	133	Employer Paid Dental	(0.18)	9.42	0.00	(9.42)	0.0%
46500	200	Office Supplies	0.00	10.16	300.00	289.84	3.4%
46500	210	Operating Supplies	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.0%
46500	306	Training	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.0%
46500	319	Other Professional Services	0.00	9,175.00	5,000.00	(4,175.00)	183.5%
46500	322	Postage	0.00	188.02	500.00	311.98	37.6%
46500	331	Travel Expenses	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.0%
46500	340	Advertising	0.00	2,146.00	4,000.00	1,854.00	53.7%
46500	350	Print/Binding	0.00	29.32	2,000.00	1,970.68	1.5%
46500	351	Publishing	0.00	235.60	300.00	64.40	78.5%
46500	360	Insurance	0.00	43.72	120.00	76.28	36.4%
46500	413	Office Equipment Rental	0.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.0%
46500	430	Miscellaneous	125.00	1,332.66	1,000.00	(332.66)	133.3%
46500	433	Dues And Subscriptions	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.0%
Economic Development Authority Totals			\$2,489.22	\$20,727.47	\$23,820.00	\$3,092.53	
Expenses			\$2,489.22	\$52,195.75	\$23,820.00	(\$28,375.75)	
Revenue Less Expenditures			(\$2,482.51)	(\$670.41)	\$1,680.00	\$0.00	
Net Change in Fund Balance			(\$2,482.51)	(\$670.41)	\$1,680.00	\$0.00	

11-Dec 48253 Neverbetter \$ 125.00 Coffee/pastries for Breakfast and Brainstorming

Jan 1, 2024 Balance \$ 27,879.26

Dec 31, 2024 Balance \$ 27,208.85

Battle Lake Economic Development Authority (EDA) Business Facade Improvement Program

Purpose: The purpose of the Business Facade Improvement Grant Program is to establish a fund to assist building owners within the Battle Lake city limits by implementing a program that will encourage the beautification and improvement of our beautiful community, not only in the downtown area but throughout the City. The EDA will include the clean-up and restoration of the backs of businesses that face Hatchery Row and the parking lot north of the development. With the addition of these new apartments and the new Lincoln Apartment slated to start in the fall of 2024, we expect to see a large increase in pedestrian traffic on the backside of those businesses and we'd love to see some "sprucing up!"

Duration: Matching grants (forgivable loans) may be made under these policies to the extent funds are available, as allocated to the fund by the Battle Lake Economic Development Authority.

Eligible Applicants: Applicants may include building owners and tenants of downtown businesses in Battle Lake. Applicants may be individual owners, partnerships, corporations, tenant operators or contract for deed purchasers of property within the City limits of Battle Lake. Each applicant must provide all documentation of entity status requested on the application form. The property, upon which the improvements will be made, must be of a conforming use or legal non-conforming use under the Battle Lake Zoning Ordinance. Matching grants are available to properties within appropriate Zoning Districts which are making visible changes to the facades or exteriors of buildings including parking and landscaping improvements as defined by the Zoning Administrator.

Required Match: All applicants must provide matching funds on a minimum 1:1 ratio for grants up to \$2,500.

Eligible Uses: Matching grant dollars may be used for improvements to the exterior of buildings including brick replacement and repair, window and door replacement/repair, awnings and signs, exterior steps/entrances, siding, painting and landscaping.

Number of Grants: Each applicant is generally eligible for one matching grant per calendar year; exceptions to be made by the Battle Lake EDA and City Council.

Size of Grant: To the extent funds are available, the EDA may offer up to five 2,500 matching grants for projects with a total cost of at least \$5,000. Dollar amounts are subject to change and can be reallocated depending on the amount budgeted and project proposed.

Design Standards: All projects must meet the criteria identified in the Battle Lake Zoning Ordinances and approved by the Zoning Administrator.

Project Commencement: Projects utilizing the matching grant program may not begin prior to approval of the Design review, approval of the matching grant or issuance of a zoning permit, if needed.

Grant Payments: Applicants shall submit a copy of the invoice for the matching grant related improvement to the City. Grant payments shall typically be made directly to the owner / tenant after verification of completion of the work or supplying the product, following certification or inspection of the approved project by the City in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and other city regulations. Under no circumstances will work completed prior to approval of the application be allowed to qualify for funds.

Timing of Approval of Funds: To be considered for approval in the same month, please have applications submitted to the City Office no later than the first of the month. Applications will be reviewed by the City Clerk, then sent to the EDA board for approval.

Timing of Use of Grant Funds: Applicants shall have one (1) year to complete the project and have applicant's contractor(s) receive the matching grant disbursements from the date that the matching grant received approval from the City of Battle Lake EDA, If the project is not started or completed within the allocated time frame a written notice to the City of Battle Lake EDA shall be provided as to the reasons for the delay in the project. The EDA may request an individual to attend a meeting in order to discuss the project in detail again. Once a written response is received from the EDA then one (1) additional year may be granted to continue to use the allocated funds. **Security:** At the City Council's discretion, the City Council may require the applicant and property owner (if different from the applicant) to execute a subsidy agreement and promissory note upon the approval of the matching grant. In addition, the City Council may require the property owner to execute a mortgage as security for the repayment pursuant to the terms of the promissory note.

Repayment: The amount of the loan (without interest) will be due and payable to the City of Battle Lake EDA five (5) years following the distribution of loan funds. If; however, the business to which the loan was granted remains in business in the improved building five (5) years following the distribution of loan funds or the applicant transfers ownership to another entity that maintains the business the improved building for at least five years following the distribution of loan funds, the loan shall be forgiven by the Battle Lake EDA. If the borrower is to sell the building prior to 5 years after the disbursement date, the loan amount will be forgiven 20% for each year since the disbursement. If it is within the first year, funds will be due, unless the borrower sold to an eligible operating entity as determined by the City of Battle Lake.

Conflict of Interest: The applicant shall submit the name(s) of the owner(s), shareholder(s), partner(s), sole proprietor, corporation member(s) or other person(s) or business(es) with any financial interest in the project and its financing in order to preclude any conflict of interest in the loan review and approval process. For More Information: Building owners/tenants interested in applying for the EDA matching grant program may contact the City of Battle Lake.

MINUTES

Breakfast and Brainstorming

November 20, 2025, 7:30 am

Host: Neverbetter Market + Wellness

Approximately 25 people were in attendance. Introductions were made. Thank you to Sara and her team at Neverbetter for hosting and for the delicious treats and coffee!

Guest speaker: Marie Noplos - Otter Tail Lakes Country Association

- The focus of Marie's presentation was knowing your purpose.
- Marie highlighted the role of OTLCA and how they are working with many of our local businesses and organizations.
- Discussion on how there are many groups doing similar things.
- Focus on your target audience
- What is your purpose? Why do you get together?
- Don't be all things to all people, pick a lane and focus.
- Always be testing - what worked, what's working, what's not working.

DISCUSSION:

- What has been the most effective in terms of local marketing?
 - Collaboration and cross promotion. Marie gave the example of how Fergus Falls has multiple organizations but that they compliment each other (Greater Fergus Falls, Chamber of Commerce, Visit Fergus Falls, etc.)
 - It's necessary to identify and avoid overlap if possible - how can we leverage each other's organizations?
- Discussion on the upcoming Christmas events that are being planned. An effort was made to collaborate among LACC, Art of the Lakes, CAC, and Community Fund. Sara Faaaliga spearheaded the Grinchmas event to generate activity for the area retail businesses.
 - Sara Faaaliga and Leigh Shebeck both suggested that all events (tree lighting, Santa Day, and others should fall on the same weekend. The group had been concerned about the other events (BL Craft Fair and Home for the Holidays) also being on that weekend. Also noted that we shouldn't be influenced by double booking our events during the same day our neighboring communities are having similar events. Ultimately the Santa Day had been scheduled the following weekend for consistency with past years and availability of volunteers. An effort will be made to have one weekend of activities in 2025.
 - It was noted that many retail and or restaurants don't reopen in the winter for special events. Is it possible to have pop up opportunities to incentivize seasonal businesses to have periodic opening in the off season?

COMMUNITY UPDATES:

- **EDA:** Leigh Shebeck shared that, on behalf of the EDA, he's been interviewing businesses. Thus far he's had 10 interviews. He noted that a common theme was that they felt sales were even or down as compared to last year. Customer counts were down. It was noted that labor is still an issue for some. Leigh noted his previous training program for 14-17 year olds to introduce them to work opportunities.
- **BL School:** Rob Nudell stated that with the Battle Lake School renovation there is a goal for growth which will in turn should lead to business growth. There was mention of residents taking their kids outside of the district. Many factors may lead to this choice. Focus for the school is on retention and growth. Rob also reminded the group of the College Career Fair on March 26th. Many in attendance have participated in the mock interview process.
- **LACC:** LACC has begun to develop a new website that will contain an integrated calendar and updated business directory. The vendor is Locable, which supports small communities who don't have a Chamber of Commerce or Business Association.
 - Suggested to connect with the school to include all of their events as well.
 - A free profile page will be available to any business or community group in the area.
 - More information to be shared at a future meeting.
- **LACC/NBL:** A discussion was held that identified a need to reach out to our full time residents and get neighborhood input on year round needs. Perhaps a "neighborhood captain" that could host a block party in the Spring? Are there unmet needs that aren't being addressed when we focus on the seasonal visitors?
- Upcoming Dates:
 - December 6: Community Tree Lighting at CAC (hosted by CAC/LACC)
 - December 6-8: Great Western Challenge Boat Racing
 - December 7: BL Craft Fair, 542 Tour of Homes
 - December 11-21: 12 Days of Grinchmas and Grinchmas Party
 - December 14: Santa Days at CAC (hosted by LACC)
 - March 26: Battle Lake School College Career Fair

The next **Breakfast and Brainstorming** event is tentatively scheduled for **March 19, 2025** at a location to be determined.

Future Meetings:

- **May 21, 2025**
- **Sep 17, 2025**
- **Nov 19, 2025**

8. Fully utilize all real estate within City limits for residential and commercial expansion.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

ONGOING PRIORITIES

1. Keep an inventory of available commercial property on the City's website by including a link to

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

2. Reach out to prospective businesses when members have heard of possible interest in the co

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

3. Identify business gaps in the community and seek prospective business owners.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

4. Broadband – continue to work with the County on options and reach out to internet suppliers to hear about future projects and priorities.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

5. Housing – work on both single-family and multifamily options including new locations to expand housing. Look at public/private partnerships for development.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

6 Support the school.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

7. Parking – educating the businesses and public on availability – keep a map in the Battle Lake brochure.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

8. On-going training for business owners.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

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.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

10. Continue to meet quarterly with the business/community collaboration and the LACC.

LIST STEPS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS GOAL HAPPEN:

WHO WILL GET THIS DONE?

City of Battle Lake

2025

Meeting Calendar

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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February

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1st-EDA Annual Mtg @ Noon
25th-Council Strategic Planning

March

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May

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July

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August

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26th- Budget Meeting

October

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November

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HOLIDAYS

- January 1 - New Years Day
- January 20- MLK Jr. Birthday
- February 17- Presidents' Day
- April 18 - Good Friday (not paid)
- May 26- Memorial Day
- June 19th - Juneteenth
- July 4 - Independence Day
- September 1 - Labor Day
- November 11 - Veterans' Day Holiday
- November 27 Thanksgiving Day
- November 28 - Thanksgiving (in lieu of Columbus Day)
- December 24 Christmas Eve (not paid)
- December 25 - Christmas

June

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September

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December

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Please note - 4th Tuesday of the Month Council Meetings & All Planning Commission meetings are each held only when needed.

- Council Meetings 7:00 p.m.
- Planning Commission 7:00 p.m.
- Economic Development - 7:00 a.m.
- Last Day to submit documents for Planning Commission
- Holidays and/or Office Closed

February 6th EDA Annual Meeting - Held at the School Media Center