



Winona County Economic Development Authority

Thursday January 28, 2021 - 4:30pm

Ring Central Meeting

Members Attending: Chris Meyer, Greg Olson, Jim Vrchota, Mike Kennedy, Jeff Larson, Ryan Grobe, Lucy McMartin, Scott Sherman

Also attending: Kay Qualley, Planning & Environmental Services Director; Paul Ellison, Winona County Attorney's office; Lew Overhaug, Planning

Regular Meeting

1. Call to Order

Chair J. Vrchota called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. Elections

A. President and Vice President

Jim Vrchota was nominated for President. Hearing no further nominations, the EDA voted on Jim Vrchota for President. Vote: Yes – All.

Ryan Grobe was nominated for Vice President. Hearing no further nominations, the EDA voted on Ryan Grobe for Vice President. Vote: Yes – All.

B. Secretary/Treasurer

Traditionally the Planning Staff has been the Secretary/Treasurer for the EDA. Consensus among the EDA was for Planning staff to continue as Secretary/Treasurer.

C. Loan Committee Members

The EDA decided the Loan Committee would be comprised of Duane Klein, Mike Kennedy, Jeff Larson, Ryan Grobe and Jim Vrchota.

3. Approval of Agenda

On motion by M. Kennedy and seconded by J. Larson, the EDA voted to approve the agenda. Vote: Yes – All.

4. Introductions and welcome new members

All attendees introduced themselves, except for one anonymous attendee who attended the virtual meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes – October 22, 2020

On motion by J. Larson and seconded by C. Meyer, the EDA voted to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – All.

6. Financial Reports, Kay Qualley

A. October – December 2020

Kay Qualley went over the financial reports with the EDA. Chair J. Vrchota requested

49 an informational mailing about the Revolving Line of Credit be sent out to all Winona's
50 financial institutions and Chamber of Commerce by staff. K. Qualley mentioned that
51 this is done on an annual basis and that last year, L. Overhaug revised and updated the
52 Authority's brochure, which will be included in the mailing. Banks are the chief source
53 for potential gap loan financing projects for the EDA.

54
55 On motion by J. Vrchota and seconded by M. Kennedy, the EDA voted to charge off
56 Envirolastech's debt and to allow collections to happen as they pursue the judgement.
57 Vote: Yes – All.

58
59 On motion by R. Grobe and seconded by M. Kennedy, the EDA voted to approve the
60 financial reports. Vote: Yes – All.

61 62 **7. Loan Updates, Kay Qualley**

63 **A. Current Loan Status**

64 Discussion occurred during financial reports. Banks can offer slightly lower interest
65 rates than the EDA's 3% floor rate, which means requests are slow right now and many
66 loans paid off. Staff will work on website improvements in the intervening period.

67 68 **8. New Business**

69 **A. Survey and discussion, economic development priorities**

70 Kay Qualley gave a PowerPoint presentation based off an economic priorities survey
71 that included the following topics: transportation availability, workforce housing,
72 pressing economic development issues, workforce availability, remote workers and
73 coordinated action plans. Discussion ensued amongst the EDA members about the
74 related topics and prioritization by the EDA. Their responses were compared to those
75 from SE MN EDA staff in our area and housing and childcare received top rankings with
76 both groups. A summary of the discussion and the economic development priorities
77 from the survey will be sent to members prior to the next meeting.

78 79 **9. Old Business**

80 **A. Housing challenges, next steps**

81 Kay Qualley shared that the cities of St Charles, Lewiston and Goodview have reached
82 out a couple of times over the last year. Consideration may be given to the
83 development of a housing workforce group, based on local needs and on the survey
84 responses. This topic can be tabled for a later meeting pending more information from
85 St Charles, Lewiston, and Goodview as well as the EDA members.

86 87 **10. Member Reports/Comments**

88 **A. Chris Meyer – Winona County Jail Update and Minnesota Inter-County Assn**

89 Chris Meyer gave an update on the process of a new Winona County Jail and the impact of
90 the levy would be as a result of the jail project. The idea of using sales tax to help fund the
91 jail project will be a discussion with Winona County Board and staff. Input is encouraged by
92 business owners and other members of the public to give feedback to the Winona County
93 Board about the idea of a sales tax.

94
95 Chris Meyer shared budget updates from the Minnesota Inter-County Association.

96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116

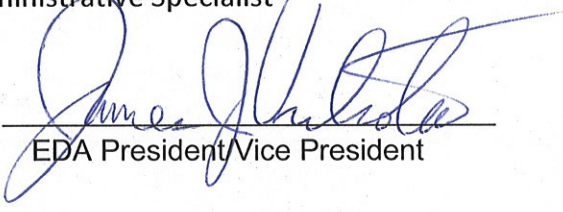
B. Mike Kennedy - He requested a discussion at an upcoming EDA meeting with the County Administrator regarding the opportunities for economic development in the county and to allocate more resources to the EDA. By allocation, M. Kennedy explained he would like consideration of an additional ½ time Economic Development staff member to be employed with Winona County, not allocate more work to the current staff.

11. Adjournment

On motion by R. Grobe, the EDA voted to adjourn. Vote: Yes – All.

Next meeting is April 22, 2021 at 4:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Anne Schwertel
PL&ES Administrative Specialist

Signed by 
EDA President/Vice President

4/30/21
Date