

Meeker County Economic Development Authority
Thursday March 11, 2021 @ 5:30 pm
Via Zoom per COVID-19 restrictions

Present: Tim Benoit, Eric Holt, Steve Schmitt, Chuck Lietzau, Mike Lokken, Mark Smith, Danny Schiefelbein, Brent Bengtson, Chris Loew & DSI Consultant Lisa Graphenteen

Meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm by President Steve Schmitt.

Public comment: no one present

M/S Bengtson/Holt to approve the agenda Motion Carried

M/S Smith/Benoit to approve the minutes from the January 14, 2021 and February 25, 2021 meetings with no additions or corrections. Motion carried

M/S Schiefelbein/Holt to approve the January, February & YE 2020 Accountant financial summaries. Motion carried.

Consultant Graphenteen discussed with the board their thoughts on the continued need for housing in Meeker County and what role they wanted to continue to take in housing? Some items of discussion were:

- A summary of the projects assisted to date and those in the pipeline. The Board reviewed the total funds available.
- Do another RFP or just take applications as they come in – a pipeline like basis with each application approved by the board.
- Beyond housing, do we set aside a pool of funds to help w/the building of a new day care center
- It was consensus of the board that they definitely do not want to take a direct developer role at this time and they feel the public/private partnership has been successful.

Consultant Graphenteen then discussed the EDA's 2021 Goals. She reviewed the results of the survey that was sent out to board members and city officials to complete. The results are:

1. Housing
2. Business Start up and expansion
3. Childcare
4. Job creation
5. Workforce Development

Other thoughts / topics of discussion were:

- Need to promote ourselves better to what we are working on to our communities
- Continue working on outreach and connecting w/ our communities
- Have some shovel ready opportunities
- Childcare – where are we at with the committee that was started? Should one of the board members sit on the committee along with Chris & Lisa? Graphenteen will forward information to the Board on the childcare goals and also follow up with the Chamber on the restructured committee.

Consultant Graphenteen then asked the board what their thoughts were on Marketing & Collaboration with the Chamber? Board members thoughts were:

- Who is the target audience? Age group? Jobs?
- What is the success rate of the Marketing firm the Chamber was looking at using?

- What would the EDA get in return for the money they put in?
- Is there commitment from all players that are contributing?
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Consultant Graphenteen gave a Legislative update on the new federal stimulus. Meeker County will be receiving additional funds and it appears expanded timelines and eligible uses will be a part of the funding.

Chris informed the Board that Board Member Dennis Loch will be resigning from the board due to work/meeting schedule conflict and no longer living in the county.

UPDATES:

- Econ Development –
 - o Michelle Marotzke from the Mid Minnesota Development Commission is going to join us for our May meeting to talk about their work in assisting the LFD Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission on planning for the downtown district and how all organizations can collaborate.

M/S Holt/Bengtson to approve adjourning the meeting at 7:09 pm. Motion Carried