

Minutes of Regular Meeting

St. James Economic Development Authority | July 11th, 2023 | St. James City Hall

Present: Dean Olsen, Steve Jeppson, Mark Collier, Mark Johnson, Sue Craig, Mark Collier, Paul Harris, Ex-officio Scott Westman;

Absent: Lisa Rodriguez

Staff: Jon Wilson, Brianna Sanders, Tammy Stevens,

The meeting was called to order at 12:11pm on July 11, 2023. There were no additions to the agenda.

Motion by Johnson, second by Collier: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Tuesday, June 13, 2023. MC.

Motion by Olsen, second by Craig: To approve the financial report. MC.

The EDA Director presented the staff report. There was discussion regarding the receiving landscaping quotes. It was mentioned that the quote seemed high for the scope of work. It was mentioned that the EDA will receive additional quotes to make sure the quote is competitive.

There was discussion on the Commercial Revitalization Program. There was a question on how much funding the program will have and how much an application can request in assistance. Dependent on the City Council decision on July 11, the fund should have \$65,000 in it. The EDA board approved the loan amount on April 11 for up to \$20,000 in loan assistance with a 2.5% interest rate over 3 years. There was no action to change these guidelines.

The EDA Director presented information on the financing of the Industrial Park Expansion. There was discussion of the options that the EDA/City could pursue including a new TIF District, a Bond, a Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant, or a combination of the options. It was discussed whether the bond payments would be paid for by the city or by the EDA housing fund. The EDA Director stated that there is capacity in the EDA housing fund for the bond payments.

Motion by Johnson, second by Collier: To recommend that the EDA/City pursue a bond to pay for the Industrial Park Expansion development costs. MC.

The EDA board has discussion on some funding opportunities for housing. The city council dedicated the decertified TIF funding to be used for some housing purpose. Between TIF 1-4 and TIF 1-5, the EDA will have approximately \$200,000 to be used towards housing. Additionally, Watonwan County has received funding towards Homeless Prevention Aid at \$18,000 for the next 5 years. The Human Services Director asked if the EDA board had any ideas of useful ways to use this money for homelessness prevention. It was discussed that the funding could be used for incentives to renovate homes. The Board also discussed

a school program that could to help fix up homes and that to celebrate the renovation of homes to host a “parade of homes”.

The EDA Director presented information on restarting the Lunch and Learn program. It was stated that back in 2019 the EDA partnered with the Chamber of Commerce. With restarting the program, the EDA will sponsor the events to ensure it is available to every business in the community. It is the hope that the Lunch and Learns will provide needed technical assistance to the area business owners. The expected cost for 2023 is \$500-\$1000.

Motion by Craig, second by Harris: To approve the Lunch and Learn activity and to cover the expenses of the activity. MC.

Motion by Collier, second by Craig: To adjourn the meeting at 12:56pm. MC.

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Sanders
Economic Development Director