



**Economic Development Authority
Special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 23, 2024
4:00 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Monge called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

EDA Members

John Monge, President/Mayor
Josef Matthews, Vice-President
Terry Furlong
Tim Cole, Council Representative

Staff/Ex-Officio Members

Brian Frandle, Executive Director
Daniel Winek, Finance Director
Chris Cherne, EDA Secretary

III. ADOPT AGENDA

President Monge requested a motion to adopt the agenda.
M/Cole, S/Furlong.
Motion carried 4-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of March 21, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes

President Monge requested a motion to approve the March 21, 2024 special meeting minutes.
M/Furlong, S/Matthews.
Motion carried 4-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No public comments.

VI. EDA DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

A. EDA Budget & Staffing

Finance Director Winek presented information on the EDA levy and budget. Winek discussed the personnel summary. Winek indicated that the Community Development Director's allocation of 0.5 occurred under the former City Manager, and the rest of the staff percentages existed prior to Winek's arrival to the City in 2021.

Winek noted that there was some discussion at the recent EDA meeting regarding whether the staff allocations would continue with an EDA versus an Economic Development Commission. The EDA is its own entity, and the other commissions do not have their own fund like the EDA. If the EDA were to change the staff allocations, the only place it could be redistributed to would be to the general fund, which

would have a levy impact. If this is something the EDA wants to do, Winek recommended it be done over a number of years so the general fund can absorb some of the allocation. Winek stated he does not believe it is necessary to remove all of the allocations, but perhaps lessening the allocation of the Community Development Director would be appropriate.

President Monge asked for a comparison between the staff allocations of the EDA and the Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA). Winek stated the Community Development Director's allocation is 50% in the EDA versus 20% in the HRA.

Winek stated there is room in the 2024 budget to hire a consultant, and he will return at a future meeting to discuss the 2025 budget, staff allocations, and the Façade Improvement Program. The balance sheet as of the end of 2023 indicates the EDA currently has \$479,020.33 in cash to be able to provide a Façade Improvement Program. The EDA would need to appropriate those funds and put it into a budget in order to use it for the program.

Winek stated that it would be beneficial to wait and see what talent arises from the Community Development Director position that is waiting to be filled. Cole stated during his tenure on the EDA, the EDA has always wanted a full time EDA individual. A position like that has previously existed but went away. It was the original intent that 50% of the Community Development Director's time would be allocated to the EDA. Cole stated he would like to hire an outside consultant and not hold the Director entirely responsible for all EDA duties.

B. Façade Improvement Program

Frandle presented the Façade Improvement Program item to the EDA. There were two tiers of grants proposed. One grant would be mini grants with no match requirement and the other larger grant would require a one-to-one match. The target area is downtown properties along 7th Ave. Winek added that the grant payments would be made on a reimbursement basis. Winek and Frandle discussed the application requirements and review process. They agreed there should be an application requirement including clear photos of the current status and renderings of proposed improvements. The applicants may present their ideas to the EDA at their regular meetings. Winek recommended all grants require matching requirements one-to-one and that no money should be reimbursed until all work is complete and demonstrated to the EDA.

Frandle stated he will continue to work out a streamlined draft to present at the next EDA meeting. Frandle stated it could be a grant or it could be a low-interest loan as well. Furlong stated if it is a loan it would be overwhelming to the Finance Department. Furlong recommended staff look at how other cities facilitate their façade improvement programs, such as the City of Oakdale.

The EDA discussed marking a certain amount of dollars in the EDA budget for the Façade Improvement Program. Matthews stated it is important to know what businesses would want to participate in the program prior to its establishment. Frandle stated that approaching some of these businesses with program logistics and parameters would be most efficient.

C. EDA Project Updates

Frandle provided updates on the following EDA projects:

- **2579 7th Ave E:** Crossroad properties provided a listing agreement to market this site, but the City Council voted down the listing agreement and instead directed staff to have the property appraised. The property was appraised in December 2023, and no further action has been taken.
- **Article 7:** Construction is underway and planned to be completed and open for move-in by fall 2024.
- **Delaware Place Plat:** Doug Andrus of Andrus Built, LLC entered into a contract for private development with the City to build 10 townhouse units on the City-owned property at the NE intersection of 17th Ave and Delaware Ave. A preliminary plat and PUD application were submitted on March 26, 2024 for staff review. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing

on the proposal on May 2, 2024, and the City Council is tentatively scheduled to act on May 21, 2024.

- **Margaret Street Commons:** In late 2023, staff engaged a surveyor to replat the development site to combine the redevelopment lots, separate them from the parking lot, and establish the necessary utility easements. The platting process was completed with the final plat approval by City Council on March 19, 2024.
- **Taco Bell:** A site plan was approved in the fall of 2023 to develop a Taco Bell at 2371 McKnight Rd. A building permit has been applied for and will be issued once all site plan approval contingencies have been satisfied.
- **Reflex Medical/River of God:** In the fall of 2023, staff reached out to DSGW Architects at the EDA's direction for a proposal to prepare a facility space analysis for River of God Church. The intention of this activity was to understand the space needs for the church so that the EDA may assist the church to potentially relocate so that Reflex Medical may expand to the east. Staff had a meeting with the Pastor of River of God Church seeking authorization to move forward with the study if authorized by the EDA. The Pastor indicated the congregation has decided to not move forward with a study at this time, and prefers to keep discussions internal at this time. Staff reached out but was unsuccessful in connecting with Reflex Medical to understand if there are alternatives to meeting the company's expansion needs.
- **Pine Tree Center:** Fire inspectors went through the property about a year ago to make sure some minimum requirements were being addressed. The property owner was given a list of items to be completed on the inside. There was nothing at that time that would lead the enforcement officers to consider it a hazardous or condemned building.
- **Pizza Factory:** There are no official updates on this business; however, there is news on the business' Facebook page that a potential sale is in the works and they are looking for a site to relocate to.

D. 2024 EDA Meetings

The EDA clarified that they will continue their regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month with a meeting time of 4:00 PM.

VII. **UPDATES**

A. Staff Updates

Frandle stated that two individuals have applied for vacant seats on the Economic Development Authority. He and the Mayor have reached out to other local businesses and owners and have received interest; the goal is to have a decision by the next meeting.

B. EDA Member Updates

Cole stated that he is looking for an EDA cheerleader to attend meetings, fill in the Article 7 building, and try to develop the lot across the street from City Hall. President Monge asked staff to reach out to the Article 7 developer to understand what spaces and sizes are involved.

Cole asked if the EDA wants to contact the owner of the Pine Tree Center again. Frandle stated he reached out and left a voicemail to the property owner. Monge asked if the building is still considered safe. Frandle will ask the fire inspectors for more information. Cole recommended taking a proactive approach to find out if the property owner is looking to sell Pine Tree Center or if the EDA can be involved.

Frandle stated that staff can invite a few potential EDA consultants to present at the next meeting.

Cole indicated his absence from the EDA meeting on May 14.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

President Monge requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.
M/Cole, S/Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 5:07 PM.

Motion carried 4-0.

The next regularly scheduled Economic Development Authority meeting is Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

Chris Cherne
EDA Secretary
651-747-2440
chris.cherne@northstpaul.org