

**CITY OF LAKE ELMO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MINUTES
May 21, 2024**

Call to Order/Roll Call

Charles Cadenhead called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

PRESENT: Charles Cadenhead, Ninna Waldoch, Jeff Holtz and Tony Manzara, Don Place

Staff Present: Interim City Administrator Clark Schroeder, Community Development Director Jason Stopa, and Planning Assistant Ashley Monterusso

February 21, 2024 Minutes

Motion by Manzara, seconded by Place to approve. Motion carried.

Consideration of Submitting a LOI for 3M Priority 2 Grant Funds:

Monterusso presented on submitting a LOI for 3M Priority 2 Grant funds which would be used to lift the bonded status on the Washington County Landfill site with the intention of developing a solar farm or leasing the land for solar development. Monterusso provided background on the 3M settlement and grant, as well as the landfill site. Manzara added that submitting the LOI is a logical step as the cost is small and submission is necessary before next steps can begin. Manzara outlined next steps including speaking to the city attorney, representatives, and solar power developers about the project details and legislation. Holtz asked for clarification on the need for legislation. Manzara explained that there is a gray area around what the legislature allows. Regarding authority to submit LOI without city council approval, Schroeder asked why the proposal is on the city PID instead of the MPCA. Manzara explained that the state land topography is not ideal for a solar farm. Based on answer, Schroeder communicated that EDA has the authority to approve LOI. Holtz agreed.

Place asked about a return-on-investment analysis. Cadenhead stated that there are many unknowns at this stage but added that next steps depend on submission of the LOI. Waldoch agreed. Holtz added that other cities will submit proposals and it is worth submitting sooner than later. Cadenhead added that the LOI is not a commitment to moving forward with the project.

Motion by Cadenhead, seconded by Holtz to approve recommendation of the submission of a LOI for the 3M Priority 2 Grant funding. Motion passed.

Discuss EDA Website Plan

Manzara discussed who the audience would be for the change in website materials – list of businesses that exist in Lake Elmo to encourage folks to shop locally. Mayor added to the discussion by saying he wanted more stories about business and about Lake Elmo’s availability and traffic on 94. Holtz mentions that Stillwater links to WA county data. Place adds to discussion and encourages messaging about water. And adds that residents could be another target audience for the updates. Waldoch adds that the city doesn’t need to re-invent the wheel but the website should include relevant links.

Update on Old Village Master Plan and Selling Fire Station Discussion

Stopa provided update on the Village Plan and included a proposed timeline. Asked for input on the best approach for moving forward with selling the fire station. Mayor expressed we should get appraisals done for the parcels. Mayor reports that he wants to put the parcels on one RFP. Manzara asks if in the RFP could award more points to a business that wants to bring in-person business in town legally. Stopa communicates that he is looking into that option legally. Holtz asks about pollution issues that may be on site and recommends looking at grants for remediation if there is.

Future Agenda/Reports

The next meeting of the EDA is scheduled for August 20, 2024.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned by Cadenhead at 6:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Monterusso