

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD MEMBERS OF THE EAST GRAND FORKS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)

A regular meeting of the Board Members of the East Grand Forks Economic Development Authority was held at Noon on April 16, 2024

Roll Call:

Meeting was called to order by President Grinde at 12:00 pm.

EDA Board present at roll, President Josh Grinde, Board Members: Dale Helms, Penny Stai, Ben Horken, Brian Larson via TEAMS, and Daniel Black.

Absent: Justin Hecht

Staff present: Paul Gorte (EDD), Economic Development Director; Brenda Ault (EA), Executive Assistant; Karla Anderson (FD), Finance Director; Reid Huttunen (CA), City Administrator

Also Present: Barry Wilfahrt, Chamber CEO

1. **Roll Call:** President Grinde determined a quorum was present.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

a. March 26, 2024, Regular Meeting

A Motion was made to approve the March 26, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, by Board Member Horken, seconded by Board Member Black. M/S/P- Horken, Black; 6-0, mc.

3. **Bills and Communications**

a. Review of Accounts Payable: April 2, 2024: No comments

b. Approval of Accounts Payable: April 16, 2024

A Motion was made to approve the April 16, 2024 Bills, by Board Member Horken, seconded by Board Member Helms. M/S/P- Horken, Helms; RCV: Larson-Y, Black -Y, Stai -Y, Grinde -Y, Horken -Y, Helms -Y; 6-0, mc.

4. **Reports**

a. Delinquencies – None

b. Director's Reports: March 2024- EDD Gorte stated that the report was in the packet. No questions

c. Quarterly Social Media Report: EDD Gorte stated that the report was in the packet. Diane Blair retirement post was the most popular post.

d. Financial Reports: FD Anderson stated that the reports were emailed, the cash balance sheets are in the packet for December year end, January, and February. The audit is done, but they have not received the reports back from the auditors yet.

e. Quarterly MIF Loan Report: EDD Gorte stated that the report is in the packet and all loans are up to date.

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5. Unfinished Business

a. Economic Development Strategy Update; EDD Gorte explained that on March 16, the EDA and the City Council reviewed the draft Strategic Plan update. Neither group recommended any changes. He is recommending approval.

A Motion was made to approve the Strategic Plan, by Board Member Black, seconded by Board Member Horken. M/S/P- Black, Horken; RCV: Larson-Y, Black -Y, Stai -Y, Grinde -Y, Horken -Y, Helms -Y; 6-0, mc.

b. Economic Development Director Job Description: At its February meeting, the EDA received a list of skills needed by the Economic Development Director and the current job description. President Grinde appointed an ad hoc committee to review the job description and recommend revisions. The Committee met. The EDA discussed the proposed job description on March 26 and suggested a couple of edits. The City Administrator made the edits and prepared a position announcement. The Administrator has been working through the details of the hiring process. Attached are the proposed job description and the position announcement. EDD Gorte is recommending approval.

A Motion was made to approve the Economic Director Job Description, by Board Member Helms, seconded by Board Member Stai. M/S/P- Helms, Stai; RCV: Larson-Y, Black -Y, Stai -Y, Grinde -Y, Horken -Y, Helms -Y; 6-0, mc.

c. Builder Incentives update: revive \$100,000 builder incentive and seek additional loan authorization: EDD Gorte stated that the City implemented a builder incentive program to provide builders with up to \$100,000 in an interest-free loan to increase sales of lots and construction of new homes on City residential lots. The program performed well until the City ran out of available funds in 2023. The program was suspended during the summer of 2023 until funding could be found.

In late March a meeting with the City Administrator, Finance Director, and Economic Development Director, was held, to discuss how to revive the program. He has received requests, as well as EDA President Grinde has received requests, to use the program this year.

The 280 account now has the funding for up to 3 loans. This is a short-term solution; the funds in that account will be depleted as other expenditures are taken from the account.

Because the program is a loan rather than an expenditure, funds could be lent from an account that has funds and be made available for the program. Each "expense" is offset by a credit so that there is no net impact on the City budget.

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The program reduces the cost of construction for the builders, allowing them to build more affordable homes. There is a large pent-up demand for this program. EDD Gorte is recommending asking the City Council to allow access to another account, such as the City reserves, to fund up to five additional loans. The program is expected to facilitate the sale of City-owned lots and help the City exit the business of developing and selling residential lots sooner.

A Motion was made to recommend that the City Council revive the \$100,000 builder incentive program with the currently available funds, subject to the original and revised parameters, by Board Member Black, seconded by Board Member Horken. M/S/P- Black, Horken; RCV: Larson-Y, Black -Y, Stai -Y, Grinde -Y, Horken -Y, Helms -Y; 6-0, mc.

A Motion was made to recommend that the City Council authorize the use of other funds, such as the City reserves, to allow up to five additional loans, by Board Member Horken, seconded by Board Member Black. M/S/P- Horken, Black; RCV: Larson-Y, Black -Y, Stai -Y, Grinde -Y, Horken -Y, Helms -Y; 6-0, mc.

d. Promise Act Grant Program (Northwest Minnesota Foundation): EDD Gorte stated that April 30th is the application deadline, there are links on the City website to take you to the site for this grant.

FD Anderson stated that the Foundation is very helpful and the form is easy to complete.

6. New Business

a. Branding Update: Integrity Fundraisers proposal (information only)

EDD Gorte stated he was contacted by a business that would like to use the City brand commercially on items that could be sold. The Marketing and Communications Plan approved in 2018 included Branding Guidelines but did not include a policy for commercial use of the brand.

He took the request to the City Council for discussion. Based upon that discussion, he will find how other cities and public bodies handle the commercial use of their brands in order to prepare a policy to guide the City.

EDD Gorte stated that Wilfahrt was present to inform the Board about the 2024 Shark Tank, which will be held on Tuesday, April 30, 2024.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 12:16 by Board Member Black, was seconded by Board Member Horken. M/S/P- Black, Horken; mc.

The next regular meeting is May 28, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brenda Ault, Executive Assistant