

Harmony EDA Minutes

October 31, 2013
7:30 AM

Community Center
Council Room

Present: Chris Skaalen, Steve Cremer, Steve Donney, Deb Swenson, and Andy Batstone

Also present: Emily Ellis, Jerome Illg, and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:37 AM by Chris Skaalen

Minutes

The minutes of the October 3, 2013 meeting were reviewed. Motion by Swenson, second by Cremer to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

The financial report was reviewed and loans were discussed. Giesen mentioned that no donation payment for cutting hay in the industrial park had been received. The board discussed, consensus was that staff should contact the tenant and give a deadline of November 15, 2013 for payment of the donation. If no donation is received, staff should solicit other interested parties for use in 2014. Motion by Donney second by Cremer to approve the financial report and payment claims as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

EDA Strategic Planning

The board reviewed previous strategic planning discussions. Consensus was that the EDA should focus on one major project at a time and that the first major area of focus should be on setting itself apart as a friendly, livable community. This included a primary focus on residential growth and secondary focuses on marketing/showcasing existing assets and fixing blighted or stressed properties. Giesen is to develop a work plan around this focus for continued discussion at the next meeting.

Additionally, the board would like to develop a more substantial "Welcome" package or promotional item that can be used to market the livability of the community.

Consensus of the board was to begin future meetings with an open forum/brainstorming session to keep the planning process moving forward and develop new ideas and projects.

Chamber Report

Emily Ellis gave the Chamber report. She gave an update on past and upcoming events.

The board discussed its Visitor's Guide ad. Consensus was to utilize a full page ad in the 2014 Visitor's Guide instead of a ¾ page ad and to use it to highlight a livable community.

Prospects/ Community Update

Giesen gave an update on prospects.

Giesen mentioned that the manufacturing prospect for the industrial park had secured a deal near its current location in Preston and at least for the time being wasn't pursuing

Harmony any longer. The board discussed that being able to quickly respond to this prospect was something to be proud of; that the EDA is ready and able to respond to inquiries and prospects in a very efficient manner which will help on future projects.

Giesen presented a request from Harmony Enterprises for tax increment financing (TIF). Harmony Enterprises would like to add an additional 5,500 square feet to their facility. Because of additional costs relating to storm water drainage, utilities, and dirt work needed for the project to move forward Harmony Enterprises would like to utilize TIF in order to proceed. Cremer discussed his project further. The board discussed. Consensus was that this would be an excellent project to support. Motion by Batstone, second by Swenson to recommend that the City Council move forward with further review of Harmony Enterprises' TIF request. Motion carried 4-0-1. Cremer abstained.

Giesen discussed that there may be an opportunity to apply for a state grant in conjunction with the Harmony Enterprises expansion that could provide up to 50% of the cost of a new municipal well. The board discussed. Consensus was that staff should apply for the grant if the council is agreeable.

Adjournment

Motion by Donney, second by Skaalen to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:43 AM. The next regular meeting will be on December 12, 2013 at 7:30 AM at the Community Center.