

Harmony EDA Minutes

January 7, 2016
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

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

Also Present: Greg Schieber, Jerome Illg, and Chris Giesen

The annual meeting was called to order 7:34 AM by Chris Skaalen.

Election of 2016 Board Officers

Motion by Swenson to re-elect the 2015 board officers to the same positions for 2016, second by Kingsley. Skaalen asked for any other nominations three times, and hearing none called the question. Motion carried unanimously.

2016 board officers: Chris Skaalen is President, Steve Donney is Vice President, and Deb Swenson is Treasurer.

Appointment of 2016 Standing Committees

Skaalen re-appointed Swenson and Batstone to the loan committee for 2016. No other standing committees were created.

Minutes

Motion by Swenson second by Kingsley, to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2015 meeting as corrected and the December 21, 2015 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports & Claims

Illg gave an update on the revolving loan fund and past due loans were discussed.

A payment claim was presented from Community and Economic Development Associates in the amount of \$6,998.55 for first quarter 2016 economic development staffing services. Motion by Kingsley second by Donney to approve the claim as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce

Batstone reported that the chamber's annual meeting would be held on January 13, 2016 at 6 PM at the community center. Illg said that Becky Hoff was finalizing the chamber's 2015 annual report and would present it both at the chamber's annual meeting and at the February EDA meeting.

Trail Extension Project: Update & Next Steps

Greg Schieber was present to give an update on the trail extension project. He explained that the committee was still pursuing options with three landowners. He also mentioned that a couple of minor route changes might be necessary to accommodate corners but that the property owners were agreeable. The board discussed the project at length. Consensus was that the project was making significant progress. It was suggested that the EDA formally request that legislation be authored by local legislators. Motion by

Skaalen, second by Donney to write a letter requesting that Representative Greg Davids and Senator Jeremy Miller author legislation funding \$1.5 million to acquire and construct a state trail extension to Iowa and Niagara Cave. The motion also called for the City Council to review and approve the letter and request. Motion carried unanimously. Giesen said he would follow up with the legislators in regards to the letter once it was sent in the mail. It was also discussed that meetings should be set up with legislators.

2016 Projects & Objectives

Giesen reviewed several project ideas for goals and priorities for 2016. The board discussed. In addition to current projects, priorities should include the attraction of a dentist to Harmony. The board asked to begin discussing the attraction of a dental practice at the next meeting.

Marketing Program Idea Discussion

Illg and Giesen present an idea for a marketing program where participating businesses would be encouraged to visit other businesses in an effort to promote common knowledge about products, services, and general knowledge of the community which would better promote the community to visitors and patrons. No action was taken.

Prospects/Community Update

Giesen mentioned setting up a joint board meeting between the EDA, City Council, and school board like last year to discuss projects and goals. Consensus of the board was to set a tentative meeting date for mid to late February and discuss a possible agenda at the next EDA meeting. Staff was asked to invite the school board and determine their interest in such a meeting.

Giesen said that Sterling Drug's CEO contacted him to see if the board or chamber could help promote the use of the store among local residents. The board discussed and was agreeable to help and asked that Sterling provide literature or a message to distribute. In the meantime, the board would spread the message by word of mouth. It was also discussed that it was important to always stress the importance of shopping local.

Kingsley reported that he and Giesen made the first monthly business visit as discussed the last meeting. They met with Hahn Lumber. Giesen said he would continue to set up at least one meeting and invite an available board member to attend; he said the purpose of the meetings was to show appreciation for their investment in Harmony, discuss any opportunities for the EDA to better serve the community, get information out about various programs and opportunities, and create a better relationship between the EDA and existing businesses.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2016 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.

Hearing no objections, Skaalen adjourned the meeting at 9:12 AM.