

Harmony EDA Minutes

March 9, 2017
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

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

Also Present: Steve Cremer, Tulip Tree Studios, Jerome Illg and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:38 AM by Steve Donney.

Minutes

Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2017 and February 28, 2017 meetings as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports & Claims

Illg reported all loans were current and the board reviewed the loan portfolio. There were no claims for payment.

Residential Subdivision Project: Hammel House & Co.

Steve Cremer of Hammel House & Co., a residential real estate development company, was present to discuss a project that he and his partner Bria Hammel, who is also his daughter, would like to undertake along 3rd Ave SE. He informed the board that they had purchased the outlots of the Lutes Scrabeck Addition and intend to develop the property in several phases. The first phase would include adding 10 lots along 3rd Ave SE and 1 lot along Garden Road SE. To do this, they propose to extend water to Garden Road and water and sewer from 3rd Ave to the Garden Road lot. They would also need to improve 3rd Ave from gravel to blacktop.

The total project cost was estimated to be about \$260,000 - \$300,000 or so. Cremer said he wasn't asking for any action from the EDA but asked the board for their thoughts on the project before taking the proposal to council. He stated that he will pay for the engineering, water extension, and services to individual lots. Because 3rd Ave is already a city street, he said he intends to ask the City to share in the cost of improving the roadway in the amount of \$120,000. The total roadway cost was estimated at about \$160,000. He noted he came up with that assistance amount based on the new home construction rebate program – he said he would build at least 1 home on a lot every year with a minimum taxable value of \$250,000 which would qualify for the \$12,000 rebate. Cremer noted that he would disqualify those 10 lots from the rebate program if the city provided the assistance requested. However he mentioned he is requesting the assistance up front and agreed to repay the city for the pro-rated amount of the assistance for which he does not hold up his end of the agreement. The board discussed at length. Illg mentioned that staff had been working with Cremer but it was still unclear where the city would find the funds for the assistance requested and that it would have to be discussed at a council level. Consensus of the board was that it was a good project for the community and the board wanted to help. It was discussed that potentially the rebate program could be viewed separately from the assistance provided to the developer.

Chamber of Commerce

The board reviewed and discussed the chamber report which was submitted from director Becky Hoff:

Promo Committee- Promotions Committee has been meeting monthly since February, working on 4th of July, Haunted Harmony and other events. Promo support letters were sent out to the membership last week.

Welcome Packet/Welcome Wagon – our welcome bags have arrived, currently collecting coupon updates and promotion items for the membership w/ the goal of having the new packets ready to go by mid April. Good member response thus far.

Guidebook Status- Books were delivered last Wednesday, local distribution to area businesses has begun.

Featured Business of the week- Went live on our website this week, each week we feature a local business and write an article about them. Visit us at www.exploreharmony.com to see.

Dept. of Health Media Training 03-02- I was invited to attend this training session by Fillmore Co. Public Health, and learned about media relations, strategies for marketing and promoting events, talking to the media, etc. The speaker was Steve Kinsella, who has worked as the press secretary for the MN Dept of Agriculture and the US State Senate. It was very interesting and a very good use of time.

Visitor Center – Will be open for the season start Saturdays in April, then six days per week in May. With our unusual warm weather we've actually had a lot of visitors stopping in in February/March.

City Logo

Giesen reviewed two submissions that were received for the city logo design, as requested by the board. He mentioned that Tulip Tree Studios and Letterwerks submitted a response per the board's requested inquiry. Both provided a cost, examples, and were offered the opportunity to present their proposal or answer questions at the board meeting. He said a third vendor was contacted but did not get a response. The board discussed. Consensus of the board was that the Tulip Tree Studios quote was more favorable to the goal they desired to achieve. Representatives from Tulip Tree Studios were present to discuss the process and answer questions. The board discussed at length. Tulip Tree said that they could turn around drafts fairly quickly; that their process was to get to know the community/customer better, draft black and white options so that color does not distract decisions on content, to refine drafts, and then add color once the design was chosen. Their quote was for \$1,500 and included city ownership of the original files for future printing needs. Motion by Swenson second by Kingsley to approve the quote from Tulip Tree Studios as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Bike Trail Project

Giesen mentioned that the trail extension bill was still in motion for the committees and that a committee hearing may be called on short notice. He said he would notify the board if he was informed about a hearing being scheduled and coordinate volunteers to assist with providing testimony at the hearing.

Giesen also mentioned that the trail committee volunteers wished to attend the “Day on the Hill” event like last year to promote the trail extension project. Consensus of the board was to reimburse registration fees and mileage of the volunteers participating.

2017 Joint Board Meeting Recap

The board discussed the joint board meeting recently held with the school district and city council. Consensus was that the meeting was a success and better than previous years. It was discussed that at the next annual meeting, the board should consider inviting key community groups but make sure that the conversation doesn’t get too diluted. The board thought the meeting was a great way to share ideas and work together as organizations.

Swenson left the meeting at 8:43 AM.

Skaalen entered the meeting at 8:47 AM. Donney turned the gavel over to Skaalen.

Batstone left the meeting at 8:57 AM.

Prospects/Community Update

The board discussed a possible project and interest in getting involved with a highly visible property that would be coming auction soon. Giesen reported had discussed the opportunity with several businesses in town already but wanted to see if the board would be interested in getting further involved itself. Consensus was to have staff continue watching the property and discuss opportunities with business, but that there wasn’t an immediate interest for EDA getting involved by purchasing the property themselves.

Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Skaalen adjourned the meeting at 9:32 AM. The next regular meeting will be held on April 6, 2017 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.