

## **Harmony EDA Minutes**

May 4, 2017  
7:30 AM

Council Room  
Community Center

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

Also Present: Dr. Sarah Otto, Emily Onsager, Whitney Bestor - Tulip Tree Studios, Vicky Tribon, Jerome Illg, and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:35 AM by Chris Skaalen.

### **Harmony Veterinary Clinic: Proposal**

Dr. Sarah Otto and Emily Onsager were present to discuss their proposed expansion of the Harmony Veterinary Clinic. They have outgrown their current office and are considering purchasing 3 lots in the Industrial Park for their expansion. Because they have to sell their current property and firm up plans for the expansion, and because they want 3 particular lots in the Industrial Park, they requested that the Board allow them to purchase a 2 year option on lots 3, 5, and 6 of block 1 for an amount of \$3,600.

They discussed their project in detail. They mentioned that they are currently working with an architect to design the proposed building but they anticipate that it will add approximately \$600,000 - \$800,000 of new tax base to the city, retain and add jobs, and expand the services they provide including doggie day care. They would separate the large and small animal entrances providing a better customer experience, have space for more parking and drive thru trailer traffic, have more office space, and have green space for outdoor animal activities. Consensus of the board was that this would be an excellent project for the community. The board discussed at length with Dr. Otto and Onsager. It was mentioned that if all goes as planned, they would start construction in 2018 and open in 2019. Motion by Donney, second by Kingsley to approve selling the option contract to the Harmony Veterinary Clinic as proposed. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Minutes**

Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2017 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Financial Reports & Claims**

Giesen reported all loans were current and the board reviewed the loan portfolio. There was a claim for payment from Tulip Tree Studios in the amount of \$750 for the city logo design work and a claim from Community and Economic Development Associates in the amount of \$7,138.50 for quarter 2 economic development services. Motion by Skaalen second by Donney to approve the financial report and claims as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Harmony Spirits Project Update**

Giesen mentioned that he had spoken to the project owners and that while all was moving forward, it was much slower than they anticipated. They had additional information they needed to work through with their lender and now anticipated a closing date for their project in the September 2017 timeframe. Giesen recommended that the board extend the deadline of the EDA assistance package for their project from June 1, 2017 to November

1, 2017. Originally the deadline was May 1, 2017 but had been extended at the May 2017 meeting by the board. Motion by Swenson to approve the deadline extension as recommended, second by Donney. Motion carried unanimously.

### **City Logo**

Tulip Tree Studios was present to discuss the draft logos presented at the last meeting. The board discussed their opinions at length of what they liked and did not like about the drafts. Consensus tended to lean towards option #7, the stylized “Harmony” with the circle, and a tagline. Consensus could not be reached on if a tag line should be used, if one is used what it should say, or the use of the logo. Donney favored adding a musical note into the stylized “Harmony.” Others weren’t sure that a musical note accurately represented Harmony. Discussion centered on use of the logo, specifically on the water tower. Skaalen thought that the logo should be on the water tower because it’s the first thing people tend to see in the community. Tulip Tree suggested that if the intent of the logo is to market to tourists or potential visitors, the city should have the logo on the water tower. Kingsley thought a musical note could be worked into the logo but wanted to see “Living in” as the tagline. There was a consensus that “Living in” would work as a tagline. The board also discussed whether or not the “est.” date was correct. Consensus was that the city was founded in 1895 but staff would verify.

The board discussed several variations and options. An option to use the logo with or without the tagline was generally favored by the board because the logo may not fit appropriately in some uses. Tulip Tree agreed to take the feedback received from the discussion and generate some additional concepts with the alternate tagline options and report back for the next meeting.

Swenson left the meeting at 8:52 AM.

### **Bike Trail Project**

The board discussed the status of the bike trail extension. Giesen mentioned that it was unlikely that funding would be received this year because the Harmony project was not included in the legacy omnibus funding bill and a bonding bill was still questionable. He commented that the legacy funding was a long shot and that any bonding bill would likely contain mostly projects from last year that went unfunded; that next year is the traditional bonding year. However, Giesen said that the board should consider their next steps and begin planning for a much stronger approach next year as the window of time before the purchase options closes. He suggested organizing more formal visits to the bonding committee chairs and committee members beginning in January of 2018. Vicky Tribon was present and mentioned that she, Greg Schieber, Illg, and Giesen had a phone conversation with the Parks and Trails association and that in order to get revolving funds to hold the trail route through their organization we would need a letter of commitment to complete the trail from the DNR. The DNR has not yet committed to completing the trail but Tribon said she was coordinating getting a letter to that affect and mentioned that she and Giesen intended to submit a grant application to the LCCMR, which is funded by state lottery money, for acquisition dollars. Tribon also suggested that the approach the La Crescent trail took be looked into. Giesen said he would follow up on it.

The board also discussed having a public meeting sometime in June to discuss next steps for the project. It was suggested that the entire community could be invited, including local legislators, but that plans for the event should wait until this year’s legislative

session wraps up. Consensus was to discuss a community meeting at the June EDA meeting.

**Prospects/Community Update**

Giesen mentioned that he had sent letters to dentist prospects and had recently hosted a visit from the new regional representative from DEED.

**Adjournment**

Hearing no objection, Skaalen adjourned the meeting at 9:26 AM. The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2017 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.