

Harmony EDA Minutes

January 11, 2018
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

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

Also Present: Becky Hoff, Jerome Illg, and Chris Giesen

The annual and regular meeting was called to order at 7:34 AM by Chris Skaalen

Election of Officers

The board discussed election of 2018 officers. Skaalen called for nominations three times but no nominations were made. Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to reelect the 2017 board officers to serve another term for 2018. Motion carried unanimously. 2018 board officers will be Chris Skaalen, President; Steve Donney, Vice President; and Deb Swenson, Treasurer.

Committee Appointments

Skaalen appointed Swenson and Batstone to the loan committee.

Skaalen created a new standing committee to oversee items related to the bike trail project. Giesen recommended the creation of this committee so that the entire board would not have to respond to questions about the trail project as they come up, especially as the legislative session/LCCMR/bonding bill discussions get busier. Donney and Batstone volunteered to serve on the committee. Skaalen appointed Donney and Batstone to the bike trail committee.

2017 Annual Report

Giesen gave a summary of the proposed 2017 EDA annual report of activity. He added that Harmony is being recognized around the region as a leader because of the leadership the EDA is providing for the community. Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to adopt the 2017 annual report as proposed. Motion carried unanimously.

Annual Program Review

The board reviewed the city business subsidy policy and active assistance programs. Giesen reminded the board that this is the second year including this review as a part of the annual meeting and it offers a natural point to review or modify programs that otherwise board members might not seek out to review. Programs reviewed were the Harmony business subsidy policy, revolving loan fund guidelines, new home construction rebate, and the industrial park incentive.

The board discussed extending the new home construction rebate program for 2018. Consensus was that it was a good program and was also creating a positive marketing opportunity for the city. Motion by Skaalen, second by Batstone to request that the city council renew the new home construction rebate program for 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

Giesen mentioned that the industrial park incentive was created about 15 or more years ago and had never been used or found helpful. Usually another program like TIF or abatement was more beneficial to the prospect. Because of this, Giesen and Illg recommended that the board discontinue the program. The board discussed and consensus was that the board shouldn't continue with programs that aren't useful. Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to end the industrial park incentive program effective immediately. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

Motion by Swenson, second by Batstone to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2017 meeting as corrected. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports & Claims

The board reviewed the loan schedule, all loans were current. There were two payment claims; \$545.06 from the Harmony Golf Club for the Experience Harmony Day lunch and \$7,352.75 for 1st quarter economic development staffing services/small city block grant administration reimbursement from Community and Economic Development Associates. Motion by Skaalen, second by Donney to approve the financial report and the payment claims as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Becky Hoff gave the chamber report. She invited the board members to the chamber annual meeting which will be held at 6:30 PM on February 6, 2018 at the Harmony Golf Club. This year the chamber is inviting all businesses, whether or not they are members, and focusing more on a social/networking event instead of formal reports and presentations. Hoff also reported that current membership is at about 80 members for 2018 which is on track for their usual level. She presented a fundraising program the chamber board is supporting; the chamber is going to create a real estate trading themed game for Harmony – Harmony-opoly! Hoff said the chamber is selling spaces/features on the board for local businesses to be featured and that several businesses have already signed up and also agreed to retail the games during the 2018 holiday season. If all the spaces/game features are sponsored, the cost of producing the game is covered and the retail sale price of the game (\$30) would be the fundraising profit for the chamber. Hoff asked the board if they would be willing to sponsor the “yellow” deck of cards at a level of \$600; she mentioned that the Harmony Area Community Foundation agreed to sponsor the “orange” deck of cards at the same \$600 level. She said that in addition to the deck of cards the new city logo would be prominently featured on the board. The board discussed. Consensus was that this would be a fun product to have for locals and those from Harmony but living elsewhere would want to buy. Hoff said that the EDA can have input on the information printed on the cards, too. Motion by Swenson, second by Batstone to sponsor the “yellow” deck of cards in the amount of \$600. Motion carried unanimously.

2018 Joint Board Meeting

The board discussed setting the annual joint board meeting between the city council, EDA, and Fillmore Central school board which normally occurs in February. As in the past, the board agreed that the goal of the meeting should be to provide an opportunity for the three governmental entities to meet, discuss current and upcoming goals and projects, and discuss any opportunities to work together or create efficiencies between the organizations. Consensus of the board was to set the agenda at the February EDA meeting, but that it should be similar to year's past with possibly a public forum at the

end of the meeting. It was agreed that staff should send letters to local organizations that this event was happening in case they want to listen and/or participate in the public forum.

Bike Trail Project – 2018 Lobbying Effort

Skaalen mentioned that he had discussed recording the land options with city attorney Greg Schieber. Skaalen relayed Schieber's recommendation that recording the options wasn't technically necessary. The board discussed at length. It was discussed that recording the options would provide additional security in case something were to happen to a landowner or a transaction would occur without anyone from the board knowing. Having the options recorded would at least have the options show up in a title search on the property and would potentially avoid issues such as court challenges down the road. Unanimous consensus was not reached on the best option to move forward. Motion by Swenson, second by Kingsley to have the city attorney record the trail land options. Motion carried 4-1; Donney voting No.

"Harmony" Gift for State Capitol

Giesen mentioned that in our state representative and senator's offices, other cities from their districts have donated something that represents their community. Harmony does not have such a presence in the state offices. Giesen said the Harmony-opoly! game would be an excellent gift for the local legislators once they are produced. The board concurred.

Community Survey Responses

The board briefly discussed the Experience Harmony II community survey responses. It was agreed that board members should review the results before the next meeting and come back prepared to discuss themes and possible project ideas, or items from the survey that could be discussed at the joint board meeting later in February. Giesen said he would compile his thoughts on common themes from the survey and distribute them to the board before the next meeting.

Swenson left the meeting at 8:52 AM.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Hearing no objection, Skaalen adjourned the meeting at 9:10 AM.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 1, 2018 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.