

Harmony EDA Minutes

October 4, 2018
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

Present: Steve Donney, Deb Swenson, and Andy Batstone

Also Present: Jill Fishbaugher, Barry Churchill, Jerome Illg, and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:30 AM by Steve Donney

Minutes

Motion by Swenson, second by Batstone to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2018 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports & Claims

The status of the loan portfolio was discussed. All loans were current. There was a payment claim from Community and Economic Development Associates in the amount of \$7,352.75 for 4th quarter economic development staffing services. Motion by Swenson, second by Batstone to approve the financial report and payment claims as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Update from Harmony Telephone Company

Jill Fishbaugher and Barry Churchill were present to give an update on the fiber optic installation project. They reported that they are planning to initially serve nine or ten businesses in the first phase of the project. Board members reviewed a map of the planned installation, but it was mentioned that plans were still fluid. Construction will start after a right of way permit is issued by MnDOT, hopefully within the next few weeks. The board was thankful for the update.

Experience Harmony II – Prioritize Potential Projects

Giesen reviewed the strategic goals identified through Experience Harmony II. At the last meeting the board organized the results into six categories and prioritized them. Giesen reported that he had cleaned up the priority list, creating an objective for each topic and then listed several projects that came from Experience Harmony discussions. The board reviewed the listing and discussed. Consensus was that the list was good. It was agreed that each month the EDA should have at least one topic from the list on the meeting agenda to work towards accomplishing.

2019 Visitor Guide Ad

Giesen reviewed the 2019 visitor guide ad with the board. Consensus of the board was to keep the same ad as the prior year.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Giesen gave the chamber report on behalf of director Becky Hoff. He said that she reported over 350 Harmony-opoly games have been sold, that the chamber is planning the city's 125th anniversary celebration, and that the visitor center will be now closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays during October and will then be closed for the season on November 1st.

He also reported that the chamber adopted a new mission statement: “Our mission is to advance the prosperity of the Harmony area for the benefit of its residents and businesses.” They are also working on the 2019 membership drive, guidebook, events, and marketing.

Prospects/Community Update

The board discussed the potential need for a new restaurant if one or both of the two that are listed for sale close and the potential to attract a new auto body shop if that were to close. It was agreed that if these businesses close, attraction of replacements should be a priority.

Giesen reported that per the conversation at the last meeting, he had discussed with MnDOT the installation of a welcome monument sign on the south entrance to town along highway 139. He said that the rules seemed to be very flexible and that MnDOT simply asked that we make a proposal to them with what we want. The sign can either be in the right of way or on private property, but should not create a hazard. The board suggested creating a small committee with a member of the public or two and keep moving the project forward.

Giesen relayed that there were no new updates on the bike trail project.

Swenson left the meeting at 8:56 AM. A quorum was lost and the meeting adjourned at 8:56 AM.

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