

Harmony EDA Minutes

March 14, 2019
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

Present: Chris Skaalen, Steve Donney, Kerry Kingsley, and Steve Sagen

Also Present: Jerome Illg and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:31 AM by Steve Donney

Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting as amended and the minutes of the February 7, 2019 meeting. Motion by Sagen, second by Kingsley to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports & Claims

The status of the loan portfolio and new home rebate program were reviewed. All loans were current. There was a payment claim from the Harmony Chamber in the amount of \$675 for the first admin payment for digital marketing services to CWS. Motion by Kingsley, second by Sagen to approve the financial report and claims as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Venture SE Minnesota Loan Fund

Giesen presented a request to provide a letter of support for a regional initiative called the Venture SE Minnesota Loan Fund. The program would create a \$25 million revolving loan fund for a variety of businesses and community projects in southeast Minnesota, outside of Rochester. The program was put forward by the regional development and economic diversification organization Journey to Growth for the benefit of the entire region. The board discussed. Motion by Donney, second by Sagen to approve a letter of support as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Chamber of Commerce Report

There was no chamber report.

Prospects/Community Update

Giesen reviewed several updates with the board. He presented an updated marketing handout with general demographic and community information used as a handout and one the city website.

Skaalen entered the meeting at 8:10 AM. Skaalen assumed the gavel.

The board discussed the special joint meeting with the city council and Fillmore Central School board held on March 12, 2019. Consensus was that the meeting was very productive and informative. It was agreed that the investments the school district is making in the high school is very encouraging and exciting. The board agreed to host a similar meeting again next year.

Giesen also reported that staff had calculated estimated financial assistance for the proposed Dairyland expansion project in the industrial park and given that estimate to Dairyland staff to help better define project cost projections. Giesen and Illg explained

that based on the offer made by the board, the estimated tax increments created from the concept plan provided by Dairyland, and the possible site plan configurations in the industrial park, the likely maximum infrastructure cost Dairyland would need to cover related to their project is \$80,000. This maximum cost would come into effect if they decided to locate their project within phase II of the industrial park. If the project was wholly within phase I of the park, the infrastructure cost would be \$0 as the board has already priced phase I infrastructure into the lot and assessment prices of existing lots. Skaalen asked that staff keep in touch with Dairyland and keep the board informed.

Giesen mentioned that there were no new updates on the bike trail project or new city entrance monument projects at this time. He also mentioned that the latest CEDA grant report was included in the agenda packet as an FYI and he would be giving a presentation to the Rochester Area Builders Association, which Harmony is a member, on development opportunities in southeast Minnesota. The presentation would include information on opportunities in Harmony.

Experience Harmony Projects/Goals

Giesen gave an update on the video marketing project. He said that a kick off meeting had been held with both the video producer and digital marketing team. The first final draft of the video was planned to be complete by August 1, 2019. The chamber is recruiting people to star in the videos.

The board discussed the proposed solar energy workshop at length. There was not a consensus on the benefits of the proposed activity. Giesen reported that the city council did review the approval request given by the board but did not take any action as there were concerns about promoting solar to the detriment to the city's electric utility. After a lengthy discussion, no further action or direction was given on this item.

The board also discussed possible next Experience Harmony goals to work on. Receiving several ideas from the goal list, the board asked if the Trash and Treasure day concept had received any traction from the city council. It was reported that the council had not formally discussed the item. Consensus of the board was that it was a worthy project to consider moving forward. Motion by Donney, second by Kingsley to recommend to the city council that a Trash and Treasure day be established. Motion carried unanimously.

Other project goals discussed were placing recycling receptacles in public areas such as city buildings, parks, and Main Street. There was some concern about the logistics of recycling receptacles and collection but it was agreed that the city should look into solutions and include the discussion on the next agenda. It was also the consensus of the board that a discussion of the transportation goal should also be included on the next agenda.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Hearing no objections, Skaalen adjourned the meeting at 9:44 AM.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2019 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.