

Harmony EDA Minutes

April 4, 2019
7:30 AM

Council Room
Community Center

Present: Steve Donney, Andy Batstone, Kerry Kingsley, and Steve Sagen

Also Present: Jerome Illg and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:32 AM by Steve Donney

Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes of the March 12, 2019 and March 14, 2019 meetings. Motion by Kingsley, second by Batstone 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 for \$7,573.25 from Community and Economic Development Associates for second quarter economic development staffing services. Motion by Donney, second by Sagen to approve the financial report and claim as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Revolving Loan Request

Giesen presented a request for a new revolving loan to Shannon and Emily Onsager. The requested loan was to reopen the former Village Square Restaurant as The Faclon's Nest. They planned to purchase the building and remodel it, hopefully opening in May 2019. The request was for \$25,000 at 5.25% APR fixed for 7 years. The loan committee had reviewed the particulars of the request as well as financial details and recommended approval. The loan proceeds would fund building renovations. Shannon Onsager was present to discuss their project in more detail and answer any questions. The board discussed. Motion by Batstone, second by Sagen to recommend that the city council approve the loan as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Experience Harmony Projects/Goals

The board discussed several Experience Harmony project goals. Giesen reported that he had discussed transportation services with SEMCAC's Rolling Hills Transit and that they were interested in serving Harmony; possibly by partnering with other communities. Giesen said that it was his understanding that the state provided most of the funding for operation of this service with user fees covering the remaining portion, while the city would be responsible for the capital cost of the physical bus. He said that it appeared some cities paired up to split bus costs and that perhaps Harmony could pair with Preston, Fountain, or Canton. He did say that it may be difficult to provide services under this model to destinations in Iowa though, because of the state funding. He said that SEMCAC was interested in further discussions and that if the board was willing, they would set up a meeting to answer specific questions and discuss next steps. Consensus of the board was to have staff set up a meeting with SEMCAC, either at the next EDA meeting or at an alternate time with less than a quorum of board members, depending on availability.

The board discussed the environmental sustainability goal and the possible placement of recycling receptacles in public spaces. Illg reported that Waste Management was agreeable to providing a recycling dumpster to the city at no cost which would allow city staff to collect recyclables at various locations throughout the city. Discussion occurred as to whether the main dumpster should be located at the city shop or community center. Consensus was that either location would work and that individual receptacles should be located on Main Street, the Visitors Center, public parks, and possibly within the community center itself. Illg said he would find and price receptacles.

Giesen reported that he and the chamber of commerce continued to work on the community video but that filming had yet to begin. It was hoped that a final draft would be available before August 1, 2019.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Giesen read a report received from chamber director Becky Hoff. He said that guidebooks will be delivered in about one week, that Sydnie Huffman was hired as a season chamber employee, and that the visitor center opens to the public on April 13, 2019 for the season.

Batstone reported that at the chamber's annual meeting several comments were received in regards to building a pool. The board discussed at length. Consensus was that such a project could be very beneficial to the community but with the construction and ongoing operational costs it may be a difficult project to move forward. Giesen suggested that it may be most appropriate and effective that if the council thought it was a worthwhile project that they could appoint a project-specific committee with volunteers to explore the details of moving such a project forward. The board concurred.

Prospects/Community Update

Giesen have several updates. He reported that the Fillmore County EDA held a summit at Eagle Bluff in Lanesboro recently to discuss countywide tourism; it was a good event and well attended. He also reported that there was no new updates on the bike trail project or the new community entrance monument projects. He also mentioned the latest CEDA grant bulletin was included in this month's agenda packet.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Hearing no objections, Donney adjourned the meeting at 9:14 AM.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2019 at 7:30 AM, at the Community Center.