

# Harmony EDA Minutes

March 7, 2024  
7:30 AM

Community Center  
Council Room

Present: Kerry Kingsley, Steve Donney, Greg Schieber, and Michael Himlie

Also Present: Stephen Devereux, Chris Morem, Kyle Scheevel, Jesse Grabau, Brian Krambeer, Kent Whitcomb, Erica Thilges, Sam Grabau, and Chris Giesen

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:30 AM by Kerry Kingsley.

## Minutes

The board reviewed the minutes of the February 1, 2024 and February 29, 2024 meetings. Motion by Himlie, second by Schieber to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Donney entered the meeting at 7:32 AM.

## Financial Reports & Claims

The board reviewed both the loan and new home rebate schedules. All loans were current and one new home rebate of \$17,750 has been approved by the loan committee for a twin home on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave SE. A payment claim of \$1,700 for the first half 2024 digital marketing campaign was presented. Motion by Schieber, second by Donney to approve the payment claim as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

## Eden Renewables Solar Project: Preliminary Development Agreement

The board heard from Stephen Devereux of Eden Renewables on a potential plan to install a solar array in the undeveloped portion of the industrial park. He presented the project, and discussed considerations relating to possible purchasers of the electricity generated on the site which included the city's utility. MiEnergy Cooperative and the city's utility committee have been discussing this project with the developer over the past few months and were in attendance as well for input and discussion. The developer requested that the board consider approval of a preliminary development agreement. This would allow the developer to conduct a feasibility study to determine the exact costs and project scope. The question of whether or not this project was the highest and best use of the development property as well as the potential price of electricity for the city if the city were the purchaser were discussed at length. Consensus was to take no action today but to investigate further and consider again at the April meeting. Kingsley appointed Morem and Schieber to discuss any further considerations and next steps with the city's utility committee prior to the April meeting.

## 2024 Goals & Objectives

The board continued discussion on 2024 goals and objectives, reviewing the list presented in the packet. It was agreed that the list seemed reasonable and that projects can be added at anytime. Additions to the project list included maintenance of the existing bike trail between Harmony and Preston and consider possible concepts/ideas related to a new city campground.

### **Development Agreement Compliance**

Giesen reported that Mr. Jeff O'Connor was agreeable to signing a quitclaim deed for the industrial park lot in question, transferring ownership of the real estate back to the board, and removing all equipment by March 20, 2024. The board discussed. Motion by Schieber, second by Himlie to accept the counter offer made by O'Connor; accepting return of ownership of the real estate to the EDA, drop the lawsuit, and relieve O'Connor from the requirements of the development agreement provided a quitclaim deed for the property is signed in the EDA's favor and all equipment is removed by March 20, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Chamber of Commerce Report**

Erica Thilges was present to give the chamber report. The chamber welcomed new board member Mason Weedman, working on a job description for a part time director, they are working on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July events, and the new guide book. The board reviewed the chamber financials. The board requested a simplified budget vs. actual report to help track major categories.

Giesen noted that a request for payment of the first half of 2024 funding, for \$15,000, had been received. Kingsley noted that he would want to discuss payment of the second half 2024 funding if a part time director was not hired. Motion by Kingsley, second by Donney to approve payment as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

The board briefly discussed the joint EDA/city/council meeting that occurred on February 22, 2024. A second meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2024. Kingsley noted that he desires to keep the scope of the next meeting limited to make as most progress as possible. It would be best in his opinion to limit participation in the meeting to two members from each organization.

Schieber left at 9:31 AM.

### **Prospects/Community Update**

Giesen discussed several prospects. He noted that he will meet with the DNR in regards to the bike trail project later this morning. Tree removal could begin as soon as next week on the first phase of the project.

Giesen also noted that June 7, 2024 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Harmony Economic Development Authority.

There was no other business.

Hearing no objections, Kingsley adjourned the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:41 AM.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2024 at 7:30 AM at the Community Center.