

MINUTES
HARMONY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2026 Council Room 7:30 A.M. Community Center

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:31 A.M. by EDA President Stuart Morem

☒ Steve Donney (Mayor)	☒ Kelsey Bergey (EDA)
☒ Keith McIntosh (City Council)	☒ Alissa Stelpflug (City Administrator)
☐ Greg Schieber (EDA)	☒ Chris Hahn (EDA Interim Director)
☒ Stuart Morem (EDA)	☒ Other: Erica Thilges, Amy Bishop, Aaron Bishop, Lisa Miller, Becky Jones

AGENDA/ MINUTES (Consent Agenda)

Motion to approved the June 4th Meeting Agenda and May 7th Meeting Minutes was made by Keith McIntosh, 2nd by Steve Donney carried unanimously with no discussion

REPORTS:

Chamber of Commerce Report:

In Addition to a written report from the HACC, Amy Bishop and Lisa Miller updated the EDA Board on resignation of Erin Dorbin, and plans for the Interim Chamber Director to be Kelly Collins for the next several months. Kelly will be focusing on organizing the HACC Director Position, and streamlining internal processes, noting that she has extensive experience in tourism

- **Interim Chamber Director Kelly Collins** - scheduled to be at the Visitor Center M-W-F from 10:00 am -3:00 pm.
- **Visitor Center Seasonal Hours** - Now active Mon-Sat 10:00 am -3:00 pm and will be staffed as usual
- **Board Member Resignations** from Jen Gold and Mason Weedman. The HACC is seeking two new members to complete their terms. For now, the board will continue to operate with a 5-person Board of Directors for the balance of 2026. With the plan to fill open board seats for the 2027 year.
- **Marketing** - Inspire(d) Magazine and Rochester Media Guide (On-going Coop Advertising Opportunities) Press Release Created and Shared for the Non-Biker Trail Ride
- **Social-Media** - Noticeable increase in social media engagement. Current analytics show 195,520 views over the last 28 days, representing a 109% increase over the previous 28- day period. This growth is believed to be the result of increased posting frequency as well as select paid boosted posts. Spring blog post running as a paid Facebook promotion targeting the communities of

Decorah, Rochester, and La Crosse, along with a 50-mile radius surrounding. Regular posting to social media (authentic content) - Regular sharing of Member business posts

- **General** - Completed Paperwork for EMT Grant (\$2000 reimbursement from Explore MN Tourism)
- **Closed Meetings** - Two held this past week regarding personnel matters.
- **4th of July** - confirming vendors, musicians and ect..
- **Golf Tournament** - As far as the Board knows, there has been nothing started for the Golf Tournament
- **Ladies' Bingo at the Golf Course** - Dates: June 23rd - July 14th - August 11th Permit submitted
- **Back Alley Jam Concert Series** - June 18th - July 16th - August 20th: 6-8pm Promotional Poster for the Back Alley Jam Series Created and Sent to Print

Financial Report and Claims:

The April Month End EDA RED Loan Summary was presented and reviewed by the board. All RED Loan accounts are current and in good standing. Motion to Approve the Financial Report as presented was made by Steve Donney, 2nd Keith McIntosh, carried unanimously with no discussion

Prospects & Community Update:

None presented at this time

CEDA Work Update:

Business Updates and Meetings:

The City of Harmony has a signed contract from Cody Burroughs to maintain and cut hay on the industrial park vacant lots, and is coordinating with the City staff to schedule mowing for the summer.

Bee Balm will have a retail space available at 65 Main St. Starting in July. For \$650.00 per month. This is a great location with easy street access for the public.

Director Hahn contacted Gold Grooming (Jennifer) regarding her decision to close her business in June. However, it was mentioned that a new owner will be keeping a grooming business in that location and is hosting a meet the groomer event from 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. June 4th.

EDA Loans and Programs:

Tinker Makes (Mason Weedman) requested an additional \$1000 for repairs added to his approved \$25,681.52 Downtown Revitalization project. During the tuck pointing of his building, they encountered an issue with a capstone that crumbled when removed. The Capstone needed to be reconstructed and reinstalled. (*see new business*)

Farm Charm Farm Charm completed is Downtown Revitalization project submitting the last invoice for \$1,500.00. Per Becky Jone, this is the final invoice for the renovation, bring the project to completion approximately \$1,917.00 under budget! Total approved amount was \$9,857.00 and total cost reimburse are \$7,940.00

EDA Loan Process: Director Hahn also informed the EDA Board that a renewed focus will be directed to the process for Revolving Loan, Commercial Rehabilitation Loan programs, noting that several files needed to be updated as documents were missing. The missing documentation has since been provided.

Other Updates:

The Fillmore County RCCIP Core Team's Child Care Appreciation was held May 7th. This was the first event in the development of Fillmore County's Comprehensive Child Care Plan. Surveys have also been sent out to businesses, parents, and providers to gather feedback on the needs in Fillmore County. The goal of these events is to create a Comprehensive Plan of Action to address the ever-growing childcare need in Fillmore County. A Child Care open house is scheduled for July 28th in Harmony.

Follow-up was presented on the question of utilizing space within the Harmony Community Center for after school child care. Director Hahn stated that in speaking with the County RCCIP Core team, the first step would be to have the Fire Marshall do a walk through, followed by a MN State Licensor walking through and offer feedback. At this time, Chris Hahn and Greg Schieber will contact Umbelina Cremer and better assess what her needs may be to further investigate this as an option.

Saturday, June 6th is the Non-Biker Trail Ride. People are able to sign up at City Hall or contact Vicky Tribon at 507-251-6695. This event will offer wagon rides to residents from the Harmony trailhead to Niagara Cave along the scenic bike trail on June 6th, to celebrate the Trail Opening and National Cave Day.

Reminder- DNR: Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail repaving delayed: Section north of Harmony, plans to start in July with completion in September.

Public Forum: None presented

Old Business:

CEDA / EDA Contract Increase 2 days per week

At the recommendation of the EDA Board during its May 7 meeting, EDA Director Hahn met with the City Administrator to review the 2026 budget and evaluate the financial feasibility of increasing the CEDA EDA contract from the current five days per month to two days per week. Director Hahn noted that there is sufficient economic development activity to support an expanded level of service.

The estimated cost to increase the contract to two days per week for the remainder of 2026, assuming a July 1 start date, would be \$7,846.50. Hahn further noted that the position would be filled through CEDA and that staffing may not be in place by July 1. The full annual increase, estimated at approximately \$16,000, could be incorporated into the 2027 budget.

Administrator Stelpflug indicated that funds are available within the EDA budget that could be used to support the increase in contracted CEDA services.

A robust discussion followed between members of the EDA Board and the Harmony Area Chamber of Commerce (HACC) regarding the value of increasing the CEDA contract without a corresponding increase in the City's annual financial contribution to the HACC, which is currently \$30,000. Several members noted that the HACC provides a full-time presence in Harmony, while CEDA services would be available one to two days per week.

The discussion also included consideration of making the HACC Director position a City employee and/or combining the EDA Director and HACC Director roles. Both Mayor Donney and Administrator Stelpflug stated that establishing a City employee position to oversee these functions would be significantly more costly due to employee benefit and insurance obligations. Hahn further noted that the City does not provide benefits or insurance for CEDA staff and that the current contract includes a 30-day termination clause for either party.

Hahn also commented that while combining the positions may appear advantageous, experience has shown that the event-planning and operational demands of a Chamber Director role often result in economic development activities receiving lower priority.

Following discussion, the consensus of the EDA Board was to recommend that the City Council establish a committee to evaluate future organizational options and identify the most effective use of resources to support both the HACC and EDA Director functions. Committee volunteers consist of City Administrator Stelpflug, Kelsey Bergey, Erica Thilges, Becky Jones and Amy Bishop.

New Business:

Tinker Makes (Mason Weedman) requested an additional \$1000 added to his approved \$25,681.52 Downtown Revitalization project. Motion to Approve the additional \$1,000 was made by Keith McIntosh, 2nd by Kelsey Bergey, and passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

President Stuart Morem adjourned the meeting proclamation at 9:04 a.m.

The next EDA meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 10, 2026 at 7:30 a.m. at the Community Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Hahn".

Chris Hahn – CEDA
Interim EDA Director