

CITY OF ANOKA  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 11, 2023

Call to Order: Chairperson Thompson called the EDC meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. at Anoka City Hall, 2015 First Avenue North in the City of Anoka.

Roll Call: EDC Members present were: Mike Allen, Brian Beaudoin, Mathew Finn, Ephantus Mwangi, Dave Sanasac, Julie Smith, and Logan Thompson. EDC members absent were: Jeff Lee and Curt Rekstad. Staff present: Community Development Director Doug Borglund

Approval of Minutes: MOTION BY COMMISSIONER FINN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMTIH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 9, 2023 EDC MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Downtown Outdoor Sidewalk Seating: Mr. Borglund stated that the outdoor seating program is running with nine permits already issued. He noted that the City updated its equipment that is then rented by the businesses. He stated that although the program began with different requirements in 2017, it was morphed during COVID and will continue as the businesses and residents enjoy the additional outdoor seating space.

Downtown Social District Discussions: Mr. Borglund stated that with the assistance of Representative Zach Stephenson, a bill was passed that included a provision specifically for the City of Anoka. He provided an update on a recent meeting between some members of City staff, the City Council, and local businesses to discuss the social district concept. He provided additional details on the concept of a social district along with the infrastructure element. He also provided details on the State Law on social districts. He noted that they would begin seasonally, and the social district could grow to include winter events in the future. He confirmed that there would be a licensing fee, yet to be determined by the City Council, for businesses to participate and explained that those fees would be used to assist the City in cleanup and security. He also explained how sales tax can be used to assist in covering costs which would spread those costs among users rather than increasing property taxes. He noted that they are still in the beginning stages of these discussions and the Council will be having additional discussions to determine these details.

Commissioner Finn expressed concern with a situation where someone brings a cup from a previous event and refills it with their own liquor. He also asked if the cups would be reusable or recyclable.

Mr. Borglund noted that those details are still being worked out. He provided additional details on the requirements for the cups through the State Law.

Commissioner Smith stated that people could collect cups and at a certain number they could secure a discount of \$1 or something of that nature.

The Commission discussed the number of cups that would be used under these types of regulations and the logistics of whether a customer should, or should not, be able to enter another establishment with a cup from another business.

Mr. Borglund provided a recap and noted the next steps in establishing the social district and its regulations.

Development Update: Mr. Borglund provided an update on ongoing development project activity and interest.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

##### Marketing and Communications Updates:

- Discover Anoka: Chairperson Thompson stated that Discover Anoka has been discussing their upcoming events, noting the success of the Mother's Day event.
- Chamber of Commerce: Commissioner Beaudoin provided an update on the recent meetings he has attended for the Chamber. He stated that he was invited to make a presentation on behalf of the EDC and summarized the topics he felt would be appropriate.

Chairperson Thompson stated that he agrees with those topics.

Commissioner Beaudoin stated that the Chamber would also be interested in providing a presentation to the EDC in the future as well.

- ABLA: No report.

Subcommittee Updates: None.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

Discuss June Meeting Agenda: Chairperson Thompson suggested discussing the business survey questions.

Mr. Borglund stated that they could begin by reviewing the questions used during the last survey.

Staff Update: Mr. Borglund commented that there has been a lot of activity downtown and there are not many vacant storefronts.

Chairperson Thompson commended the Code Enforcement staff for quick response.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner [REDACTED], a second by Commissioner [REDACTED], and a unanimous vote of those present at 9:06 a.m.

Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*