

CITY OF ANOKA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 12, 2022

Call to Order: Chairperson Finn 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, Mathew Finn, Jeff Lee, Dave Sanasac, and Julie Smith (virtual attendee). EDC members absent were: Quinn Garrick, Curt Rekstad, and Logan Thompson. Staff present: Community Development Director Doug Borglund and Public Services Administrator Lisa LaCasse

Oath of Office: Mr. Borglund administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Sanasac.

OLD BUSINESS:

Legislative Items: Social Districts and NorthStar Rail: Mr. Borglund stated that it is the last few weeks of the session and Anoka has been following potential legislation related to the NorthStar Rail. He noted that he has not yet heard anything that would impact the NorthStar continuing to run. He also provided an update on the concept of social districts as proposed by Anoka.

Anoka County Jail Facility Expansion: Mr. Borglund stated that Anoka County has a desire to expand the jail on the edge of downtown. He stated that the Anoka City Council has taken the position that the County needs to review alternate options as downtown is not the desired location.

Chairperson Finn asked the economic benefit that would bring to the City.

Mr. Borglund replied that there would not be an economic benefit as the City would lose tax base, among other concerns. He noted that the County has a 193-page feasibility study, with all possible locations in Anoka therefore it does not appear the County looked at too many options.

Chairperson Finn commented that this would seem to go against everything Anoka has planned for its downtown area.

Commissioner Lee asked if there would be benefit in the EDC putting a resolution forward to the Council opposing this concept as it would not benefit Anoka in terms of economic development.

Mr. Borglund confirmed that staff could prepare a resolution for the Commission to consider in June.

NEW BUSINESS:

Boat Slips and Electric Boats: Ms. LaCasse provided background information on the existing rental boat slips on Rum River, noting that there is currently a waiting list of 34 people for slip rental. She reviewed the rental rates and highlighted potential expansion locations that were considered. She noted that ultimately the decision was made to add rental slips at Akin Park.

Chairperson Finn asked for details on liability for the City. He also asked who the renter would call if someone parked their boat in their rental spot.

Ms. LaCasse replied that would be an issue for the police but noted that the City has not experienced that issue thus far with the other rental spots. She stated that the gate makes it very clear that those are rental slips. She also provided details on UffDa Adventures boat rentals noting that staff has had discussions with the company for an Anoka location.

Chairperson Finn asked if there would be any grants available if the boats were to be electric. He also asked if there has been thought of focusing on the upper Rum as the lower Rum has become busy and has a lot of activity.

Ms. LaCasse stated that most grant funds for river use are for bank stabilization and not boating. She also provided details on boat use on the lower and upper Rum. She noted that beginning this year the funds generated from dock rentals will go into the parks fund rather than the general fund. She also provided details on conversations staff has had with Minneapolis Water Taxi Company.

Commissioner Lee asked if Anoka has considered reaching out to other communities to the north along the river consider the potential of creating a dredged channel up the Mississippi.

Ms. LaCasse stated that the Mississippi is a national waterway overseen by the National Parks Service and was unsure what would be involved in a request to dredge in that manner. She provided details on a paddle share concept the City previously explored with other communities and the National Parks Service, noting that the National Parks Service eventually chose to locate that further south along the Mississippi because of the availability of public transportation.

Chairperson Finn stated that he would like the EDC to stay informed on the potential for canoe and kayak rentals.

Ms. LaCasse confirmed that she and Mr. Borglund work closely on these topics. She also provided an update on grant funds the City was awarded for riverbank stabilization.

Chairperson Finn noted that online, the wrong meeting time is listed and that should be updated.

Planning Development Bus Tour Event: Mr. Borglund recognized the previous desire to bring the bus tour back and noted that he would like more details on when this should take place, who should be invited and what the group would like to see.

Chairperson Finn suggested that this be on the next agenda to discuss more details. He stated that if there were room, he would like to invite all Boards and Commissions in order to tour some of the development sites.

Mr. Borglund asked if the tour should begin and end at Greenhaven. He noted that there could be refreshments at the end of the tour as well. He noted that some local realtors and others in the development community could be invited as well.

Development Update: Mr. Borglund provided a brief update on recent development activity and interest.

Approval of Minutes: MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SMITH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 14, 2022 EDC MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ALLEN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 10, 2022 EDC MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS:

Marketing and Communications Updates:

- Discover Anoka: No comments.
- Chamber of Commerce: No comments.
- ABLA: No comments.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Discuss June Meeting Agenda: Mr. Borglund highlighted items that will be on the June meeting agenda. He stated that he would like to get the resolutions from the EDC related to the golf course and East River Road corridor on the regular Council agenda in June and asked if a member of the EDC could be present for that meeting.

Staff Update: No comments.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner Lee, a second by Commissioner Smith, and a unanimous vote of those present at 9:11 a.m.

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