

**MINUTES
CITY OF LONSDALE
ECOMONIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING
APRIL 18, 2024**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Furrer called a meeting of the Lonsdale Economic Development Authority to order at 7:00 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Austin, Wermerskirchen, Furrer and Simon

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Daleiden, Prigge and Pelava

STAFF PRESENT:

City Administrator Joel Erickson and Community Development Planner Cory Hinz-Ibarra

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

2. AGENDA

Furrer asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda. A motion was made by Simon and seconded by Wermerskirchen to approve the agenda as presented. Vote for: Austin, Wermerskirchen, Furrer and Simon. Against: None; Vote 4-0. Motion carried.

3. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 21, 2024 MEETING

Furrer asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the minutes. Wermerskirchen questioned if the motion associated with Obsidian Group was to move forward, sign an agreement and get the City's properties listed. Erickson said that was the initial motion but due to not having seen the agreement, the motion was revised to request a proposal/listing agreement from Obsidian for consideration at the April meeting. Austin and Simon stated they agreed it was revised to get a proposal/listing agreement from Obsidian for consideration at the April meeting. Wermerskirchen said he abstained from voting when requesting the proposal/listing agreement during the March meeting. A motion was made by Wermerskirchen and seconded by Austin to approve the minutes from the March 21, 2024 meeting with the noted correction. Vote for: Austin, Wermerskirchen, Furrer and Simon. Against: None; Vote 4-0. Motion carried.

4. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 2024 TREASURER’S REPORT AND MONTHLY BILL(S)

Erickson said March had a beginning balance of \$79,488.03, revenues of \$1,104.16, and expenses of \$759.62 for an ending balance of \$79,832.57 between the two accounts. He said the revenue consisted of The Pet Stop Vet Clinic’s February and March monthly revolving loan fund payments. Erickson said expense(s) included payroll/benefits. He said the expense(s) to be paid in April consisted of APG digital marketing and legal expenses. Wermerskirchen asked if staff had heard anything more from the business that was interested in applying for a revolving loan. Hinz-Ibarra said neither the City or the Southern MN Initiative Foundation have heard more from the business about financial assistance. A motion was made by Wermerskirchen and seconded by Simon to approve the March 2024 Treasurer’s Report and monthly bill(s). Vote for: Austin, Wermerskirchen, Furrer and Simon. Against: None; Vote 4-0. Motion carried.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on the EDA’s Small Cities Development Program Grant

Erickson said until MN DEED approves the environmental review, the grant is in a holding pattern. He said the release of funds request was published in the Lonsdale Area News Review and there was a two week delay for public comment. Erickson said since the publication, there has been increased interest in participating in the program. Hinz-Ibarra agreed and said several residents have stopped into City Hall for information. Furrer said it is good that there is interest and hopefully, they take advantage of grant.

b. Update on the Marketing Videos

Erickson said yesterday, he met virtually with Tim Mart of APG regarding the marketing campaign. He said Mart is satisfied with the results since they are above the national average and are the numbers they like to see. Austin said APG says they use technology but with no businesses moving to Lonsdale based on the marketing campaign, how many time does a person need to see the ad and how much longer will the EDA continue to campaign. Erickson said a person needs to see an ad 2-3 times before they think about it. Austin said there has been no businesses locating to Lonsdale because of the campaign. Simon said the marketing campaign is marketing and not sales. The Board held general discussion on the campaign, options and why it is not working. Erickson asked the Board if they wanted to change the target area for June, July and August. The Board asked about the cost to terminate the agreement and did not decide on the target location for June, July and August.

c. Discuss the Quarterly Lunch & Learn Events

Erickson said he received confirmation MN DOLI that they would be at the June 18th event and speak on labor law, specifically, ESST, wage theft, 2025 paid family leave, maternity leave and an update on the 2024 legislative session. He said staff intends to send multiple invites to businesses to hopefully increase attendance.

d. Update on the City's Website

Erickson reviewed the progress made on the website design. The Board said the design looked good but to change the color of the active mass notification ribbon and to move how to register for the mass notification system higher up on the homepage. The Board also said they preferred two columns instead of three. Austin suggested the City asked residents for photos for the website. There was discussion on when permission is needed to use a private photo versus a photo taken by the City. Hinz-Ibarra said the design is clean, useful and full of potential.

e. Update on the City's MN DEED Minnesota Investment Fund (MIF) Application and Support for a Job Creation Fund (JCF) Application – Minnesota Millwork & Fixtures

Erickson said the City Council held the required public hearing at the February 29th and continued at the March 28th meeting. Erickson summarized Minnesota Millwork & Fixtures project and the MIF application.

f. Discuss Contracting With a Real Estate Broker to Sell Land in the Lonsdale Business Park

Wermerskirchen said the agreement with Obsidian should be for all or nothing. Erickson reviewed the listing agreement and provided an update from a meeting held yesterday with a potential business in the Business Park. Furrer asked if the EDA owns the Business Park. Erickson replied no. Scott Jackelen of Obsidian said they have whispered the listing to trusted businesses. He said at \$2.00/sq. ft., he did not see a problem selling the property but made no guarantees. Jackelen said he sees leads coming quickly and they would get on it right away. Wermerskirchen said he spoke to Commissioner Dokken about a potential business lead. He said that the business is looking at Northfield and Faribault first and if not one of those communities, then, maybe Lonsdale. Erickson reviewed the meeting with the potential business, said the business is very interested in locating to Lonsdale and that he would not be surprised if the City received a purchase agreement in two weeks. Simon said she was not comfortable moving forward and recommended the EDA wait a month or two to see how the potential lead plays out. Erickson said the Board should be looking at the big picture because there are more properties the City could have for sale. The Board held general discussion on the topic. Austin said because things are in motion, he suggested waiting for more information. A motion was made by Austin and seconded by Simon to table a decision until the May EDA meeting. Vote for: Austin, Furrer and Simon. Against: None Abstained: Wermerskirchen; Vote 3-0-1. Motion carried.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. None

7. OTHER BUSINESS

a. Additional Items to be Discussed
None

b. Items for the May 18, 2024 Agenda

The Board did not request any specific items for the May 18, 2024 agenda.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Wermerskirchen and seconded by Austin to adjourn the meeting. Vote for: Austin, Wermerskirchen, Furrer and Simon. Against: None; Vote 4-0. Motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:22 am.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joel A. Erickson, City Administrator