

KASSON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING

Tuesday, June 2nd, 2020

12:00PM

MINUTES

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Kasson Economic Development Authority (EDA) was held at City Hall this 2nd day of June 2020 at 12:00PM.

The following board members were present: Dan Egglar, Liza Larsen, Tom Monson, Michael Peterson, Chris McKern, and Janice Borgstrom-Durst.

Absent: None.

The following staff members were present: Timothy Ibisch - City Administrator, Nicholas Ouellette - EDA Staff.

- I. Call Meeting to Order. Egglar called the meeting to order at 12:00PM.
- II. Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting. Ibisch explained there were two meeting minutes to be approved: the March 3rd minutes and the May 5th minutes for which there was no quorum. Larsen motioned to approve both the March 3rd and May 5th minutes. Peterson seconded.

Ayes (5), Nays (0). Motion carried.
- III. Financial Report. Egglar asked Ouellette if everyone was still up to date on loan payments. Ouellette noted all payments were up to date. Ibisch noted that he and Ouellette had gone over the EDA Budget and a copy of the update budget would be included in the next EDA packet. Ibisch mentioned some items included allocating more budget to advertising from other line items. Ouellette discussed that the STBIL loans were also included and that payments on the loans were not due until December. Ouellette also noted EDA Financials would be included in the EDA packets monthly.

Borgstrom-Durst arrived at the meeting.
- IV. Strategic Planning. Ouellette directed the Boards attention to the Board member's individual priorities, as well as his synopsis on what priorities he deemed to be the Board's overall priorities. Ouellette asked the Board to discuss their priorities, determine which priorities were highest and to identify how they would like to achieve the priorities. Ibisch noted he would like the Board to translate their large-scale ideas into tangible projects that Ouellette can work to complete. Ibisch also mentioned that a purchase of the old Shopko building would likely close next week. Ibisch explained to the Board that he wants the Board to drill down how Ouellette achieves these goals, who he talks to and where he looks for businesses.

Ouellette asked the Board to start discussing items from the list of key takeaways, beginning with business retention and attraction. Monson noted that he believed understanding and then addressing the COVID-19 impact on Kasson businesses is his highest priority for the Board. Monson discussed the possibility of advocating local business concerns to elected officials or providing assistance to businesses with COVID-19 relief loan payments. The Board expressed concern about the trickle-down effects that COVID-19 will have in the community as some business close, partially-reopen, and how that effects employees and consumers alike. McKern suggested surveying all Kasson businesses to determine how they were doing, what their outlook over the next twelve months is, what do you need and how can the EDA help. This could be a business survey looking out over the next twelve months, with some questions such as:

- How did the shutdown effect you? Closed completely, limited, no effect, etc.
- Where do you see business in the next 12 months? Will you be employing the same amount of people as today, do you expect business to be up or down, do you expect some other program to become available to help you stay in business?

Borgstrom-Durst noted this could be an opportunity to establish a comprehensive business directory. Monson discussed how the COVID-19 business survey could inform the longer-term priorities of the EDA Board while achieving the short-term goals. McKern suggested the business survey could be an annual activity to identify business competition, gaps in available services, growth opportunities, and other business growth and retention factors. The Board identified the Business Outreach/COVID-19 survey as their top short-term priority moving forward.

Ibisch asked the Board to determine what their long-term priorities will be. The Board expressed that they would like to take a first step with the business survey to help direct their long-term priorities. The survey will help them understand the shifting landscape of the Kasson business community. Monson recommended creating a presentable package of utility capacity, future development sites, comprehensive plan considerations, and market gap data to use as a tool to attract and direct future business development. Ouellette discussed his project to compile such metrics in one file to better understand what Kasson's capacity was for certain types of business growth in different areas of the City. McKern stressed that when Ouellette has conversations, he ask them to express their six to twelve month expectations and projections. To summarize the Strategic Planning discussion, Ibisch outlined the next steps to take as:

1. Business survey – including COVID-19 effect and creating a business directory
2. Developing the package of metrics to identify the capacity for business growth and attraction.

Ibisch moved the discussion asking the Board to characterize as the “Kasson Feel”, considering the gap between long-term and new residents of Kasson. Borgstrom-Durst brought up the relationship between Kasson and Mantorville. McKern related the “Kasson Feel” to the support of supporting local businesses, especially the outpouring of support during the COVID-19 crisis. Ouellette discussed how the EDA could encourage residents

to shop local and support the small business identity of Kasson. Borgstrom-Durst asked how this could relate to possible cooperation between Kasson and Mantorville. Ibisch suggested Ouellette formally request a joint meeting between the Kasson and Mantorville EDA's to discuss future collaboration. Monson brought up the idea of a more cohesive aesthetic (such as limestone), with matching signage directing to each City's businesses and attractions.

Peterson left the meeting at this point.

- V. Website Updates. Ouellette updated the board on his additions and redesign of the EDA webpages. Ouellette included local, regional, state, and federal resources available to businesses looking to start-up or grow. Monson recommended creating icons and sorting priority information, such as the program links, from top to bottom on the main page.
- VI. Coordinators Report. Ouellette reviewed his Coordinator's Report with the Board. Ouellette discussed the grant support he gave to Jerry Geese on KARE's MN Historical Society grant application, that he business subsidy reporting, his work on a MN Historical Society grant application for the WPA wall, and the utility metrics project.
- VII. Other Business. On the topic of the open Board seat, McKern stated that he was not comfortable appointing any of the applicants to the EDA Board and to reopen the seat for new applications.
- VIII. Items for the June EDA Meeting. The Board discussed a quorum for the July meeting, Ouellette will reach out to the Board mid-June to determine whether a quorum is likely to be met or not. Follow-up on the business survey.
- IX. Adjourn. McKern motioned to adjourn the meeting. Monson seconded.

Ayes (5), Nays (0). Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:03PM.

The next meeting will be held at 12:00PM on July 7th, 2020.

Minutes Submitted by: _____
Nicholas Ouellette, EDA Coordinator

Dan Egger, EDA President