

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MINUTES
July 9, 2013
Waverly City Hall Council Chambers
7:00 a.m.

A. Call to Order:

1. Members Present: Dan Beenken, Chairperson
Deb Schroeder, Vice Chairperson
Brent Jones
Rose Meyer
Brad Roling (*Left at B.4*)
Jere Vyverberg

Members Absent: Patsy Reed
Jim Willis

Others Present: Brent Matthias, Economic Development Executive Director
Connie Tolan, Economic Development Office Coordinator
Emily Neuendorf, Waverly Chamber Executive Director
Bill Wilson, Waverly Chamber President
Dan McKenzie, Waverly City Council Liaison
Phil Jones, Waverly City Administrator
Duane Liddle, Waverly resident

2. Approval of Agenda:

Motion By: Vyverberg

Seconded By: Roling

Move that the agenda be approved as printed.

Yes: 5

No: 0

Absent: 2

Abstain: 1 (Jones)

3. Approval of Previous Minutes:

Motion By: Schroeder

Seconded By: Meyer

Move that the minutes of the June 11, 2013 Economic Development Commission Meeting be approved.

Yes: 5

No: 0

Absent: 2

Abstain: 1 (Jones)

4. Communication Items:

- New Commission Member Brent Jones introduced himself. He is the owner of Baja Trucking in Cedar Falls.

- Shelley Wolf, Bremer County Auditor, has been appointed to the Commission effective with the August meeting.
- The Economic Development student intern will be writing spotlight features on each of the Commission Members to be submitted to the Waverly Newspaper and posted to the Economic Development website. She will be contacting each commissioner to gather information for the feature.

B. Regular Business:

1. Business Park Update

Brent Matthias and Phil Jones have met with a second land owner about potential interest in their property for a future business park in Waverly. They have one more property owner to visit with, then will present a report on the top 3 properties to the Commission for review and discussion. Discussion took place on New Markets Tax Credits and one known application has been submitted for the eligible area in Bremer County.

2. Business Updates from Commission Members

Deb Schroeder spoke of plans for expansion at Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community. She also remarked that housing is booming and two more quads (8 total living units) are being constructed in Eisenach Village.

Brad Roling reported that business has been very good.

Jere Vyverberg is chairing the Waverly Broadband Task Force and their first meeting is on July 10. Jere also voiced his pleasure with the school district's high ratings in the Waverly Community Survey.

Rose Meyer shared that Shell Rock has a new area designated for housing development and noted a need for additional residential lots. Also, the Kwik Star in Shell Rock is expanding.

3. Economic Development Commission Direction for the Future

City and County Offices

The Bremer County Supervisors are looking into establishing their own Economic Development office and staff to represent the 8 communities in Bremer County. Waverly Area Economic Development (WAED) presently serves all of Bremer County and Shell Rock. The County pays the City of Waverly \$10,000/year for these services. The WAED office has fielded a number of questions about how the county economic development position would fit in with the existing economic development office, the Waverly Chamber and the Waverly Area Business Incubator, who all have roles in economic development. Most have expressed that adding a county department would be a duplication of services. The Mayor of Tripoli has expressed that his community would like housing assistance from the new county position. Brent Matthias shared that housing is not typically considered an economic development function. It is a community development function typically led by a housing commission, or in a small community is led by the Mayor and City Council. Denver, Iowa is a good example of how community leadership has created programs to incentivize housing. In follow-up to discussion at the last meeting on how to better engage the County Supervisors, a seat on the Economic Development Commission was offered to a Supervisor, and they decided that Shelley Wolf (County Auditor) would take the seat. She will join the commission starting with the August meeting. Emily Neuendorf and Bill Wilson, representing the Waverly Chamber, expressed that their organization has a good working relationship with Waverly Area Economic Development and is watching closely the developments with the County. Phil Jones suggested that the Economic Development Commission work with Waverly City Council to identify the top goals for WAED in the upcoming year and where to focus time and resources, rather than waiting to see what the County does. It was the consensus of the commission that dialog should take place between WAED, Waverly Chamber, Waverly Area Business Incubator and associated boards and decision makers to clarify roles, identify intersections of interest and focus, identify differences in focus, and determine ways these entities can work together optimally for the good of the communities they serve.

Funding – Public/Private Model

Discussion took place on the advantages and disadvantages of being one of only a few economic development organizations in the state that are entirely publicly funded. Ames is one of the others. The DeWitt organization recently changed from public to a public/private model. One major advantage to the public/private model is that it provides greater flexibility in the recruitment of businesses. Because the Chamber is membership-driven and the Business Incubator, as well as the Cedar Valley Alliance ask for funding from Waverly Area businesses, there would need to be dialog among the entities and a coordinated and well-planned approach should the decision be made to move toward a public/private model.

Strengthening the Commission's Role

Discussion took place on how to strengthen the Commission's role in economic development. It was agreed that a good first step would be to have a facilitated meeting including stakeholders in Waverly Area Economic Development, Waverly Chamber, Waverly Area Business Incubator, and the Bremer County Supervisors to clarify roles, determine commonalities, identify what each entity brings to the table, and determine how all entities can work together to strengthen economic development in Bremer County and Shell Rock. Dan McKenzie suggested that the discussion also include topics of funding and whether shared space for these entities would be beneficial. Emily Neuendorf shared that Jim Thompson of Main Street Iowa offered to help facilitate this discussion, and Dan Beenken mentioned that the Institution of Decision Making at UNI would also be a good resource for facilitation. Brent Matthias and Emily Neuendorf will work together to plan this session.

4. Business Updates from Economic Development Director

State Bank & Trust Company will be remodeling the lobby in their downtown facility, demonstrating a commitment to the Waverly downtown district. They will also be moving their New Hartford bank building to a Janesville location south of Kwik Star and relocating their downtown Janesville bank and staff to the new Janesville location.

Kwik Trip, Inc. is in the process of surveying the site for their new facility on 4th Street SW in Waverly. Site plans and renderings are available to view in the Zoning office. The Planning and Zoning Commission will be reviewing the rezoning request at their July meeting and setting the public hearing for August. Plans are to open the new facility in spring 2014.

The former Godfather's Pizza building at 1016 West Bremer Avenue in Waverly is still for sale.

5. Updates from Mayor, City Council Liaison and Chamber

Dan McKenzie told the Commission of a Waverly City Council Strategic Planning Session in late July and invited the Commission to bring issues for discussion.

Dan was very pleased with the Community Survey results and thanked everyone for their time and efforts.

Bill Wilson, Chamber President, shared that PDM Insurance is opening an office in Waverly in the former State Bank building by Willow Lawn Mall.

Emily Neuendorf shared that the Chamber is exploring the idea of establishing a Cultural and Entertainment District in downtown Waverly. This is a great marketing tool and also places projects in the designated area near the front of the line for historic tax credits which could be a good recruiting tool for development.

Emily announced that Waverly's Multi-family Rental Unit Production Grant was funded \$2.5 million for the construction of 26 new units in vacant upper stories downtown. The competitive funding of \$52 million statewide was awarded by the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Community Development Block Grant. Nineteen communities across the state received the federally funded awards which will assist communities to recover housing lost during the catastrophic flooding event of 2008. Waverly's project consists of six property owners and seven buildings containing a total of 26 units located in Waverly's Main Street District. The total project will invest over \$3 million into Waverly's downtown buildings

C. Old Business:

None

D. New Business:

None

E. Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2013, at 7:00 a.m. (location to be determined).

F. Adjournment:

Motion By: Vyverberg

Seconded By: Jones

That the Economic Development Commission meeting be adjourned.

Yes: 5

No: 0

Absent: 3