

**Board Minutes of the
Martin County EDA
December 11, 2023 at 5:15 pm**

The regular meeting of the Martin County Economic Development Authority was called to order by Wes Anderson at 5:16 pm. Those present were: Brent Schultze, Tim Terfehr, Steve Fosness, Elizabeth Miller, and Richard Koons Absent: Jaime Bleess. Also, present Scott Higgins, County Coordinator, Amber Patten, CEDA, Jeff Rouse, Executive Director of Imagine Martin County, Josh Schuetz. CEDA (via on line video).

Motion by Koons, seconded by Schultze, to approve the agenda as presented. Carried unanimously.

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Terfehr to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2023 EDA meeting. Carried unanimously.

Rouse reviewed the handouts included in the Board packets for the proposed sponsorship, stating that Imagine Martin County is a nonprofit dedicated to promoting Martin County, is requesting \$3,000 for a three-year sponsorship. We are looking create and establish a Visitor's Station and Gift Shop in downtown Fairmont, which will feature information about points of interest in the county and merchandise from participating businesses. The EDA's sponsorship would allow it to be prominently featured at the information hub and at the gift shop. With the EDA sponsorship, we would include listing the names of all cities in Martin County.

Koons stated that with a sponsorship the cities in the county would not have to pay sponsorships.

Rouse responded in the affirmative.

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Terfehr, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA Board hereby approved expenditure of \$3,000 for a three-year EDA sponsorship to Visitors Station and Gift shop, to include promotion listing of cities in the county as part of the sponsorship. Carried unanimously.

Schuetz and Patten reviewed the November 2023 Client Report with the board. A total of twelve projects were worked on in that period of time.

Patten reviewed and requested the Board for EDA Staff to begin work on an application to the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Development Grant Program (USDA), for the purposes of acquiring capital funds for a Façade Grant Program and Revolving Loan Fund.

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Miller, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA Board, after careful consideration, hereby approve and authorize the EDA staff to pursue a grant though the Rural Business Development Grants program for the purpose to acquire funds through the Façade Grant Program and Revolving Loan Fund. Carried unanimously.

Patten reviewed the draft CY2024 EDA Priority Plan stating that the Board had received the draft priority plan a previous meeting and requested further input from the board on the proposed plan.

After further discussion,

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Fosness, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA Board, after review and consideration, hereby approve the proposed EDA 2024 Priority Plan as presented, to include the following priorities and initiatives, Broadband, Childcare, Housing, EDA Marketing, Business Retention an Expansion, Community Development; and to authorize staff to work on the aforementioned initiatives. Carried unanimously.

Patten reviewed the Retail Coach survey information received and gave an update to the board on the EDA's retail recruitment project, including data surveys on two businesses in Fairmont, MN. Wal Mart Supercenter Mobile Data Survey and Hy Vee Grocery Store Mobile Data Survey. Additionally, gave an update on Martin County's retail recruitment profile.

Patten stated that recently, the county received State Aid Housing Assistance funding in the amount of \$98,920 per year over the course of two years. The EDA staff have reviewed the guidelines for the establishment of such funds and believe allowing for investments in workforce housing and housing for those with low to moderate incomes would be good way to invest these funds, and that the EDA board request these funds to be transferred to the EDA for the establishment of a housing trust fund.

Higgins stated the County Board will be establishing an internal committee to develop a plan for the expenditures of these funds and that member of the EDA Board and/or staff would be appropriate members to include on the committee.

After further discussion,

Motion by Fosness, seconded by Miller, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA Board, after review and consideration, hereby request and recommend that the state aid allotted to the county for Housing Assistance in the amount of \$98,920 per year over the course of two years, be transferred to the EDA fund to invest these funds for the establishment of the housing trust fund. Carried unanimously.

Schuetz requested the Board to all Schuetz to participate in the Leading Economic Transformation Course through the University of Minnesota Extension in the amount of \$225 and that it would be beneficial for his role in the EDA.

Motion by Terfehr, seconded by Schultze, Be It Resolved that the Martin County EDA Board, after review and consideration, hereby approve request for Josh Schuetz to attend the Leading Economic Transformation Course through the University of Minnesota Extension in the amount of \$225 on February 28, 2024. Carried unanimously.

Patten asked if the Board wished to give a donation/sponsorship of the proposed Bravo Zulu House located in Martin County. The funding was need to remodel the farm that was purchased by the organization to ensure ADA compliance in the home, to build hydrophone farming operations, build kennel for 10+ dogs to pair up with men with PTSD, and provide Van transportation to jobs, meetings, VA appointments, Legion meetings, etc.

There was some concern on the purpose and what would the included with the sponsorship.

No action was taken.

Higgins presented the bills to be paid for November 6, 2023-December 11, 2023 in the amount of \$287.40.

Motion by Koons, seconded by Fosness to approve and ratify the bills for November 6, 2023-December 11, 2023 in the amount of \$287.40. Carried unanimously.

Higgins presented the CY2023 year to date activity financial report for November 2023.

The letter from the Trimont Area Chamber of Commerce dissolution update was reviewed. Board asked that staff contact the Trimont Chamber what the EDA could to help.

With no further business to wit,

Motion by Koons, seconded by Terfehr to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously.

The Meeting was adjourned at 634 pm.



Tim Terfehr, Board Secretary/Treasurer



Wes Anderson, Board President