

**CITY OF MASCOUTAH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**JUNE 29, 2021
6:00 p.m.**

The minutes of the Regular Combined (In-Person and Virtual) Meeting of the Economic Development Commission of the City of Mascoutah.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Donna Mae Schlueter called the meeting to start at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Donna Mae Schlueter, Keith Cook, Tony Sax, Brent Bergheger and Bill Millikin. Charles Jefferson attended virtually.

Absent: Tim Boyce

Other Staff Present: City Manager Brad Myers and Executive Assistant Tiffany Barrows.

There was a quorum of commission members.

MINUTES

The minutes of the May 4, 2021 Economic Development Commission meeting were presented and approved as presented.

BOARD BUSINESS

Schlueter asked for hard copies of incentive packets to be distributed to all members.

Schlueter asked that they amend the agenda and discuss the letter to the EDC from mayor. All were in favor. The highlights of the letter included the focus of EDC be to attract new business to the area. Schlueter believes that eye appeal is important. Mayor insists that the chamber assist in this regard. Schlueter stated that she doesn't believe they have enough funds to do some the beautification projects. Schlueter explained that the chair used to go to the progression of who has been on the board the longest was appointed the chair. The former mayor, 3 years, always stated he had the right to appoint the chair. The mayor chooses for the EDC to vote on the chair.

Jefferson asked that during the next city budget cycle, money be adjusted and a portion of another department's funds go towards beautification projects instead of it coming from the EDC. He referenced a Mascoutah Herald commenter recommendation/suggested the planning commission and the zoning board being combined. He believes that type of action is good and it showcases that our city is updating processes. City Manager responded that when the budget is prepared in January, the council gives guidance and mayor gives suggestions as well; it would not be for the EDC to decide. City Manager also stated that EDC has \$8500.00 to attend local conferences, trade shows, and things that would promote

economic development such as brochures and other items; and the mayor has suggested that more money be allocated to the EDC.

Sax spoke about the beautification portion of the Mayor's letter. He believes that it is important for the beautification project funds to come from the EDC budget. New businesses and residences will be more attracted to areas that are cleaned up and nicely presented. Millikin agreed that EDC needs to continue to focus on beautification and is currently doing so until another board or group takes over; Parks and Rec would be a great committee to take on some responsibilities downtown. Millikin stated he believes that EDC should continue to do small projects, if possible, with the little budget they have.

Cook commented on the general focus of EDC – doesn't feel like what we can do is meaningful or sustainable unless there is someone at the city with their job description including that of economic development; there needs to be economic development with metrics to measure performance; bigger picture would be that someone in city hall measures performance of how to add value. Cook agrees with what everyone is saying but is worried that with the current situation and resources, he feels that EDC is unable to make a major impact or add value.

Schlueter asked about job fair notifications and other business opportunity. She asked that someone look into what is available.

Bergheger stated that he has a problem with the whole budget going towards beautification. He would like to see EDC bring in new businesses. Mascoutah is made up of small businesses. He believes there needs to be more incentives to attract new small businesses. Ideas discussed include assisting new businesses with utilities hookup deposit. Schlueter agreed and said that if a business signs a particular contract, EDC could assist out of EDC budget. She stated that chamber discussed putting together an incentive package that would assist new businesses; if the city budgets EDC more funds it could be used for a small business loan. City Manager stated that he likes the ideas and suggested the EDC committee put together a subcommittee for such an idea. He then referenced that the EDC is responsible for making recommendations to the city council and also work in coordination with economic coordinator with the sole promotion of commercial and residential development within the city. City Manager referenced Sec. 4-5-6 in the city ordinance which states, "These include, but are not limited to, recommendations to establish tax increment financing districts, special service areas, enterprise zones, economic development incentives, intergovernmental agreements, marketing programs, annexation, and final actions on acquisition and sale of real property". City Manager summarized that the EDC should come up with a list of items to present to council; the city council is the final approving authority on all actions that come from this commission.

Jefferson suggested the group organize a city cleanup event. He stated that the group identify what areas need the cleanup and have citizens come out and help the city. He referenced a popular Mascoutah citizen Facebook group of people that love the city and are most likely willing to participate in such a cleanup. Schlueter stated that she has an update on cleanup program further down the agenda.

Review of Current Businesses

There are prospects looking at land at the moment but is to remain anonymous until they have actual plans.

The old Jefferson's building has some new interest. No business named yet.

Boeing ground breaking update – No new date set.

MidAmerica addition update – there has been no time period established yet. Schlueter asked about vendors and the promise that the city receive money from new businesses/vendors. The city gets sales tax from new business not additional funds from parking, taxes besides sales, or any other fees. Schlueter asked if EDC should make a motion to contact city council and mayor with some sort of revenue from parking, etc. from MidAmerica addition. City Manager stated that the businesses will push back because they are bringing big business and now we want to tax them. He also stated that every 6 months, EDC must present ideas to council; six months is the minimum, EDC can present as much as they want to council.

Schlueter proposed that members come up with ideas/plans to source and use of funds so that it is a win/win for both sides, in regards to possible funding from MidAmerica parking and/or MidAmerica airport. Bergheger asked if city council would have to present these to the county. City Manager answered that the city is home rule but the county operation is within city limits therefore it would have to be an intergovernmental agreement.

Discussion and update on Main Street planters

Schlueter announced that at a Chamber meeting Vicky from Trinity stated they were interested in helping with planters.

Millikin gave update that Silver Creek garden club and chamber have been planting and also donated a lot of the plants. Businesses are reaching out to purchase additional planters for their business. Waiting on the city as to where they would like for the planters to go. There are 20 major intersections to spread them out and get maximum coverage and create a fair distribution. Millikin will get the map out to City Manager for approval of the placement at major intersections ideas. Millikin stated that the city has some summer employees that will assist with water and support maintenance. Trinity will also help support watering. Replanting ideas were discussed for the Fall and moving them in the winter. Planters need to be placed before homecoming.

Discussion and update on "beautification" project

Schlueter, in the absence of Tim Boyce, presented the yard signs for the beautification project. Boyce has created his own committee and listed their names. They will go to businesses and residences monthly. The committee will focus on residential yards that are not part of a subdivision. The paper agreed to have a monthly article on the yard of the month with a picture.

Schlueter asked committee members to look into where and what EDC type meetings are available in the area. City Manager will reach out to area city managers as to what they do and how they get that kind of information.

Bergheger brought banner information with handouts of pricing as well as the sample of the product. He brought the old version that has been used in the past as well as a sample of what material will be used for new banners. The materials used is warranty for 3-5 years and will come with grommet at the top and bottom. The cost will be \$120 each or \$110 each if order five or more. Costs do not include brackets. Brackets are available but not included. City Manager stated that the brackets are something they would need to research to go on the poles. The turnaround time is less than one week, once the EDC decides. EDC committee discussed the intersections would be nice additional with 2 banners at High School/Scott Credit Union, 6TH/Main, 4-way near city hall, and 10th /County. Bergheger made a motion to purchase 8 banners at the cost of \$110 each. City Manager agreed to cover the cost of the brackets. All in favor.

Schlueter then stated that at the next meeting they will vote on EDC chair position. Jefferson gave his opinion that anyone that wants to run for chair needs to put together a bio of their economic development experience and information of their vision for the EDC. These submissions then should be sent to the city manager to review who then sends to members. The vote should then be made after member's champagne their experience. He believes the city is stuck in the past.

Incubator update from Jefferson

Jefferson stated that he and Tim Boyce have talked to commissioner with metro east cooperative agreement and sent their findings to the EDC members. Jefferson is working on survey and when he has the final product will send out to committee members. After the committee reviews, they will then send to the city council.

The next regular meeting will be on July 27, 2021 at 6 p.m. in council chambers

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

MISCELLANEOUS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:09 p.m. All were in favor.

Tiffany Barrows, Executive Assistant