

VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)

Minutes of the Meeting on
Tuesday, January 24, 2012

Members Present: Luis Alvarez, Craig Chapello, Elizabeth Garvey,
Jan Grisemer, John Karstrand, Molly Hughes,
Steve Potter, and Elyce Rembos

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Timothy Scott, AICP, CNU-A
Director of Economic Development

Others Present: Dan Grisko, Direct Advantage
Jan Anderson, Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce

Call to Order

At 7:00 p.m., Chairman Karstrand called to order the meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of Tuesday, January 24, 2012. (Agenda Item 1)

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Chapello made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting of the EDC that was held on November 16, 2011. Ms. Grisemer seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. (Agenda Item 2)

Tax Revenue Review: Sales and Food & Beverage

Staff reported that base sales taxes had increased 11.4% for January, the ninth month of the fiscal year, and that this period reflected sales from November, the first of the two holiday shopping months. Staff stated that total sales tax revenue through January had increased by \$125,219 or 7.1% in relation to last year. (Agenda Item 3)

Staff stated that for December, the eighth month of the 2011-12 Fiscal Year, the Village received \$29,488 in food-and-beverage tax revenue and added that for the fiscal year-to-date, this revenue source was up \$21,715 or 11.4% in relation to the Village's budget projection. (Agenda Item 4)

Holiday Program

Staff relayed that feedback received on the holiday lighting program had largely been positive and noted that the effort came in a little more than one thousand dollars under the EDC's budgeted amount. Discussed by members was the potential for additional lighting and decoration in Burlington Park but acknowledged was that electric capacity would have to be increased. In addition, mentioned briefly was the potential for a more inclusive holiday celebration.

Mr. Grisko provided a summary of the "Distinctly Hinsdale for the Holidays" event, noting that attendance for the gingerbread man factory (heated cookie tent) was approximately 1,140, which reflected a nice increase over last year. He added that the horse-and-carriage rides were again well-received by the community and that the vendor was particularly accommodating given the challenging weather on one of the weekends.

Ms. Anderson of the Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce expressed gratitude for the Village's support for the "Christmas Walk" and happily relayed that the new date for the event produced a significant jump in attendance over the last couple of years.

Advertising Program

Staff relayed that execution continued for the EDC's local and regional advertising campaigns, "Spree-cycling" and "Historic Hinsdale," respectively, and noted that *The Hinsdalean* and *West Suburban Living* Magazine remained that vehicles to reach these targeted audiences. Shared were samples of recent advertisements.

Staff informed members that the online regional advertising campaign had been launched, with banner advertisements placed on websites such as Savvy Hinsdale, Patch, West Suburban Living, and Style Chicago. Staff added that viewers of these banner ads have the ability to click through to the EDC's new micro-websites, which provide store listings in the categories of fashion, home furnishings, accessories, and design, spas, and dining. Mr. Grisko reported that click through rates to date had exceeded industry standards. (Agenda Item 6)

First Street Walkway Wall

Staff reminded members of the EDC that the rehabilitation of the elevated walkway wall on the south side of First Street between Il Poggiolo and the Hinsdale Chamber of Commerce included the construction of a new poured-in-place, reinforced concrete cap and the grinding and re-pointing of mortar joints. Staff reported that the project was completed in time for the Christmas Walk. Members who had seen it provided positive feedback, remarking that the finished product was a marked improvement. Staff added that the existing guard fence and railing system shows signs of deterioration, with dull paint, rust, and several broken welds evident.

Acknowledged was that the railing, preventative maintenance, and other related items should be considered by the EDC during their upcoming discussions related to the group's work program for the 2012-13 fiscal year. (Agenda Item 7)

Sales Promotion

Staff summarized the EDC's inaugural "Customer Appreciation Celebration" of last April, highlighting that 64 retailers had participated and that there was representation from all three of the Village's main business districts, namely, Downtown, Gateway Square, and the greater Grant Square area.

The three retailers of the EDC commented that last year's effort was a good first attempt and that there would at least be familiarity among retailers when the next promotion is announced. Staff and Mr. Grisko shared the idea of a website that, in addition to allowing merchants to sign up for the promotion conveniently, would allow consumers to view a list of participating retailers, their contact information, and their special offer.

Additionally, members discussed the rough draft of the letter that would announce the promotion to the retail community. One suggestion was to break the information up into smaller parts, such as an attention-getting letter of invitation followed by a question-and-answer sheet about the promotion. Given the experience and perspective of the EDC's retail members, Chairman Karstrand asked them to provide feedback and develop additional ideas for the promotion and the means to effectively communicate the opportunity and its value. (Agenda Item 7)

Other Discussion

Since key attributes of the Village's historic central business district are its compact layout and walkability, Ms. Hughes suggested that the issue of pedestrian-safety be considered by the EDC. Members echoed the importance of an hospitable environment for commerce and personal safety.

Adjournment

With no additional business before the Commission, Mr. Potter made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Garvey seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The January 24, 2012 Meeting of the EDC was declared adjourned at 9:18 p.m. (Agenda Item 8)

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy Scott, AICP, CNU-A