

Meeting of the Koochiching Economic Development Authority

Monday, May 15th, 2017
County Boardroom

Board Members Present: Bob Anderson, Allen Rasmussen, Wade Pavleck, Mike Hanson, Brian McBride

Members Absent: Harley Droba

Staff Present: Paul Nevanen, Kyra Hasbargen, JoAnn Smith

Others Attending: Laurel Beager (The Journal), Crystal Clance, Gary Kaunonen (KCC-TV), Nathan Heibel, Matt Gouin

Meeting called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Chairman Rasmussen.

- 01 Approve agenda – **Motion by Pavleck, a second by Anderson to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 02 Approve minutes from 4/10/17 – **Motion by Hanson, a second by Pavleck to approve the 4/10/17 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 03 Public Comment – None.
- 04 Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer McBride presented the CWT financial reports for April and monthly bills for May in the amount of \$11,211.72 for regular bills and \$4,680 for JLR bills. McBride noted a transfer of \$16,000 from CWT account KEDA. **Motion by McBride, a second by Pavleck to approve the April CWT financial reports and bills for May in the amount of \$11,211.72 and \$4,680 for JLR with a \$16,000 transfer CWT to KEDA. Motion carried unanimously.** McBride presented the KEDA financials for April and bills for May in the amount of \$20,470.87. **Motion by Pavleck, a second by McBride to approve the April KEDA financial reports and bills for May in the amount of \$20,470.87. Motion carried unanimously.**
- 05 International Falls Business Park – Nathan Heibel gave a brief background on the Business Park, noting there is tax forfeited land near the park and it being in the best interested for the KEDA to acquire ownership of the property, and explained the process for doing so. Matt Gouin explained the process further and the review process. Discussion on the process and timeline. Gouin referenced the zoning controls, noting the parcels are currently zoned “Open Space” and will need to be rezoned through the process. Short discussion on the parcels and wetland areas. Anderson questioned a buffer area. Discussion on a buffer and its size. McBride stated the development site is the only one within City limits with utilities and it makes the most sense to develop it. Pavleck questioned the next step. Heibel stated a formal letter of request to acquire the property will need to be sent to the County. Short discussion on the platted road that goes through the property and having it vacated, along with traffic and buffers. **Motion by Anderson, a second by Pavleck to authorize the Executive Director to send a letter to Koochiching County requesting the acquisition of addition land in the Business Park by KEDA and begin the platting process. Motion carried unanimously.** Addition discussion on the timeline and process of acquiring the land. **Motion by Pavleck, a second by Anderson to authorize the Executives Director to secure the proposed plat of area land in the Business Park. Motion carried unanimously.** Nevanen explained the Quit Claim Deed on lots 1 & 2 fell through the process and is working to get signatures, noting the property was conveyed to KEDA, but the City retained the road ownership.

- 06 Director's Report – Nevanen thanked Jerry Struss for facilitating the Planning meeting, noting he did a great job and referenced an article in the newspaper on CN last month which had quote stating there would be an additional 30 trains per day going through Ranier, adding the quote caused a stir as the statement was reported incorrectly. Short discussion on CN. Nevanen reported on Granite Digital stating they continue to work on financing and property acquisition in support of the project, adding the County is developing a Business Subsidy Policy and Agreement as required by statute. Nevanen stated he sat in on the discussion and a public hearing is scheduled for the Business Subsidy Agreement on June 13th. Nevanen stated the KEDA was notified earlier this month that a DEED Innovative Business Development Public Infrastructure (IBDPI) grant was awarded as part of the funding for the next JLR cold box and thanked the City and County for their support. Nevanen stated he is working with Mark Meester and Tim Jackson on the project details and will be putting out bids shortly, noting the target to have the cold box completed is November for the upcoming text season, adding JLR continues to run durability vehicles through June. Discussion on CWT projects and trends. Nevanen stated the KEDA is in the process of refreshing and updating the website with Big Fish Digital, adding the latest e-newsletter went out earlier in this month. Nevanen mentioned KARE 11 from the Twin Cities was here last month and interviewed him as part of a story on the local economy, adding the story aired 5/11 in the Twin Cities market. Nevanen noted a reporter from MinnPost publication interviewed him regarding the projections by the state demographer's office on the projected loss of population in the County. Nevanen referenced the new "Quiet Zone" in Ranier for the trains crossing, adding CN was a sponsor for the recent Chamber Gala. Short discussion on the number of trains crossing and the quiet zone.
- 07 Other (City/County Updates) – Anderson stated he met with Jordan Metsa of Senator Nolan's office on concerns of the Army Corps wetlands and challenges, and explained the cost verses credits issue. Discussion on wetland challenges or credits, process and costs. Anderson referenced the Bonding Bill and the hope for the Airport and Sewer projects to be successful in receiving funds. Hanson stated today is the last day of sturgeon fishing season, noting he has never seen so many anglers as there were this year and referenced the Americas Parade on July 4th in Birchdale. Nevanen questioned if there is a way to track and count the number of anglers. Hanson responded there is no specific way. McBride stated the 1st half of taxes are due to the County today.
- 08 Public Comment Period – None
- 09 The next board meeting was scheduled for Monday, June 19th at 10:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers. **Meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.**