



NORTH BRANCH

—Minnesota—

Sara Paul
Chair

Dennis Johnson
Vice Chair

Jessica Thelander
Commissioner

Kevin Schieber
Mayor

Peter Schaps
Councilmember

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR AGENDA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024 @ 11:30 AM
CITY HALL, 6408 ELM STREET, NORTH
BRANCH, MN 55056**

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sara Paul called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. OATHS OF OFFICE

- a. Oaths of Office for Nyle LaGrange and Marshall Saunders

INFO

EDA Executive Director Jason Ziemer administered the Oaths of Office to new members Nyle LaGrange and Marshall Saunders.

4. ROLL CALL

5. ADOPT AGENDA

- a. Approve Agenda

ACTION

Commissioner Thelander moved and Commissioner Saunder seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion passed 6-0.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: None
SECONDER: None

AYES: Sara Paul, Jessica Thelander, Kevin Schieber, Nyle LaGrange, Marshall Saunders, Peter Schaps
ABSENT: Dennis Johnson
Notes:

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve Meeting Minutes - Economic Development Authority Regular Meeting - January 16, 2024 11:30 AM ACTION

Chair Paul moved and Commissioner Thelander seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed 6-0.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Sara Paul
SECONDER: Jessica Thelander
AYES: Sara Paul, Jessica Thelander, Kevin Schieber, Nyle LaGrange, Marshall Saunders, Peter Schaps
ABSENT: Dennis Johnson
Notes:

7. PRESENTATIONS

8. REPORTS

- a. North Branch Area Schools Update VERBAL UPDATE

EDA Commissioners watched video regarding the School District update from student Amelia Bjerkevedt.

- b. Chisago County HRA-EDA Update VERBAL UPDATE

Chisago County HRA-EDA Executive Director Nancy Hoffman reviewed ongoing County-wide business and development efforts. She reported the County and City staff continued to work together on a proposed child care center to be located in the former outlet mall. She noted the proposal update the County housing study was delayed; it was initially completed in 2018. She noted the HRA-EDA board was looking for funding to do the study update.

Commissioner Schaps inquired as to staff's review of the County study in comparison to the City's project. EDA Executive Director Ziemer reviewed the differences between the County proposal and City study, noting the County's study was broad across the County and was looking at all housing in general, and the City's focus was North Branch-specific and narrowed on rental housing. He added the North Branch study was also developing an implementation plan and not just a technical review of existing housing gaps. The firm the County was proposing to use does not do the planning side of the project, which is implementation and land use, and that firm's study was less because it did not include that work, which was what the City's RFP requested.

Commissioner Thelander added the County study was all housing, all Chisago County and the City's was specific to North Branch rental, and noted the proposals were different in deliverables. She noted although there may be similarities in the studies, there were differences. Chair Paul noted it would be good that the County and City are sharing with their work and results. Ziemer noted there was partnership between the City and County, and both can benefit from each other's work.

Commissioner Schieber inquired as to any overlap and whether the City could wait until the County study has started, and allow the City consultants to look at the County data. Zierner noted the contract was moving forward and work commenced. He suggested any data collected could be used by the County to inform its work, and that sharing does not result in a complete reduction in cost to either party as the data still needs to be evaluated during the RFP process. He said it was uncertain as to when the County was looking to move forward and the City saw opportunities to move forward with the study based on other development activities. Schieber requested the Hoffman and the County be given an opportunity to be involved. Zierner noted the County was identified as one of several partners in the City study.

Chair Paul thanked Hoffman and the HRA-EDA for putting on a grant writing workshop.

c. North Branch Area Chamber of Commerce Update

VERBAL
UPDATE

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Melissa Collins provided an update from the Chamber, noting the upcoming Spring Fling event planned for April 25.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discuss Proposed Amendments to the EDA Bylaws

INFO

Executive Director Zierner reviewed proposed amendments to the EDA bylaws. He noted he was not looking to take action at the next meeting. Chair Paul added members should provide any thoughts but that the new members should be permitted additional time to review and share their thoughts.

Commissioner Schieber inquired as to whether there should be language that would allow EDA members to go to the Chair or Vice Chair, as an extra step, should the Executive Director feel certain items should not be on the agenda. Zierner explained the purpose of the process is both to ensure topics placed on the EDA agenda are pertinent to the EDA and fall within the EDA's role. He added the process was not about keeping items off an agenda, but rather to work with members requesting agenda items so that the topic is clear for discussion. Chair Paul noted Zierner does review the agenda with her, as Chair, and discuss issues and topics, and felt he was open to working through topics. Zierner noted it was important to have a main point person for adding items to the agenda, and that should solely be the Executive Director as the staff liaison; that person can continue to collaborate with the Chair on matters.

Commissioner Schaps questioned whether the EDA should retain the Assistant Treasurer. Commissioner Thelander felt the planned, routine reporting by the Executive Director or Finance Director was more important than the position. Zierner said he would look at adding that back in for discussion purposes.

Zierner said he would update the bylaws and provide a clean version at the next meeting in addition to the relined version. No further action or discussion was taken regarding this item.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. Economic Development Authority 101 & Updates

INFO

EDA Executive Director Zierner provided an overview of the EDA and its roles and responsibilities, and also discussed more specific duties of the EDA in terms of a more traditional definition and definitions of today in terms of the EDA's impact on the local economy. He also reviewed what the EDA is currently doing that fits the vision and goals of the EDA, as previously established.

Chair Paul noted the effort being put forth to tell the community's story. She added it was good to see what goes on behind the scenes of the meetings, and added continued clarity of the EDA's role is good as it relates to the authority resides with the Commission. Ziemer noted the enabling resolution that established the EDA and related City Code makes the EDA an advisory board, not stand alone entity. He said the Council can provide some level of autonomy to the EDA, which it has regarding the business park. That autonomy allows the EDA the ability to make land transaction decisions in the business park. He said the EDA can still act as allowed by State Statute, but most actions are recommendations to Council and Council approval.

11. NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024 @ 11:30 AM

12. CLOSED SESSION

13. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Thelander moved, and Commissioner Saunders seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 1:31 p.m.

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Jessica Thelander

SECONDER: Marshall Saunders

AYES: Sara Paul, Jessica Thelander, Kevin Schieber, Nyle LaGrange, Marshall Saunders, Peter Schaps

ABSENT: Dennis Johnson

Notes:

APPROVED: _____



ATTEST: _____

