

**BIG LAKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Alan Heidemann called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Donna Clarksean, Ken Geroux, Alan Heidemann, Paul Knier, and Kim Noding. Commissioners absent: Jim Dickinson and Cindy Lemm. Also present: BLEDA Executive Director Therese Haffner, BLEDA Assistant Treasurer Deb Wegeleben, and BLEDA Secretary Corrie Scott.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

5. APPROVE BLEDA MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 17, 2023

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve the July 17, 2023 BLEDA minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6. BLEDA BUSINESS ITEMS

6A. REDEVELOPMENT TIF DISTRICT – 160 LAKE ST. N

Haffner reviewed a resolution establishing that the community school building parcels attached to City Hall qualify for a Redevelopment TIF District project and that the BLEDA would have three years once a demolition permit is pulled to create a TIF District. She asked the BLEDA to review and approve Resolution 2023-07 making certain findings with respect to substandard buildings.

Commissioner Geroux motioned to approve Resolution 2023-07 making certain findings with respect to substandard buildings. Seconded by Commissioner Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6B. JOINT CITY COUNCIL & BLEDA MEETING – DISCUSSION ON 160 LAKE ST. N

Haffner recommended that the BLEDA hold a joint meeting with the City Council to discuss next steps and provide input and direction on the future of the site that includes both City Hall and the community school buildings.

Geroux asked how soon in the process should a meeting between BLEDA and City Council should take place. He stated that he would like to expedite the meeting with the Council. Wegeleben stated that it is important to meet with City Council to get an idea of if their vision is similar to the BLEDA. Knier asked if this meeting would set back the project as he believes that it could be assumed that City Council is on the same page as the BLEDA. Geroux stated that although the assumption could be safely made, it would be wise to have some type of agreement on paper. Knier stated that Council would like some more detailed information before they agree to move forward with the project. Geroux stated that this conversation would be very high level and not include specific details.

Knier asked if renovation of the building is an option. Noding stated that if renovation was an option it would not have sat on the market for so long. Geroux stated that if renovation was likely, then the BLEDA would not have gotten involved in the project. Haffner stated that one party who was interested in renovation went on a tour of the building and then stopped communication shortly afterward. Wegeleben stated that part of the conversation would be to talk about what options they would consider for the location of City Hall. Haffner stated that this meeting would help give staff direction on whether an RFP should be posted.

Geroux reiterated that the meeting could give reaffirmation for staff and then this would allow the BLEDA to move forward in creating a plan for the project. Noding stated that City Council is sitting on the most expensive piece of land in Big Lake and a building that is difficult to renovate. She asked if this project has come up to previous City Councils. Geroux confirmed that this project has been brought up before and it wasn't supported at that time.

Commissioner Clarksean motioned to hold a Joint City Council & BLEDA meeting to discuss future of City Hall and Community School Buildings. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6C. BIG LAKE MANUFACTURING MONTH – OCTOBER OF 2023

Haffner reviewed that in recognition of the critical importance of Manufacturing to Minnesota's economy, CareerForce, in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), has deemed October as being, "Manufacturing Month."

Commissioner Noding motioned to recommend the Big Lake City Council approve a Proclamation proclaiming the month of October 2023 as Big Lake Manufacturing Month. Seconded by Commissioner Knier, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6D. VACATED BLEDA COMMISSION SEAT

Haffner reviewed that Commissioner, Cindy Lemm, has submitted her intent to resign from the Big Lake Economic Development Authority (BLEDA) to be effective on October 31, 2023.

Commissioner Geroux motioned to accept the resignation of Commissioner, Cindy Lemm, and authorize BLEDA staff to advertise for the open position and collect letters of interest from residents who live within city limits, or are a managing agent of a business located within the city limits of the City of Big Lake. Seconded by Commissioner Clarksean, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6E. BLEDA BUDGET AND LIST OF CLAIMS

Commissioner Geroux motioned to accept the budget report and approve the BLEDA List of Claims for July and August 2023 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Noding, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Haffner discussed the status of various projects within Community Development. This update included Housing, Commercial and Industrial, BLEDA, Planning and Zoning, and Building.

Scott reviewed that she needs two volunteers for the upcoming Movie in the Park on September 15 to help with parking. She stated that the Winter Market will be limited with space due to the hallway near Carousell Works being closed, but that she is working with the Food Shelf to ensure that pictures with Santa can still take place in December. Scott also stated that staff is working with the Cable Commission to create promotional videos for the City of Big Lake.

Knier asked about the marketing budget and if those funds have been used. Haffner stated that the City has used those funds on the MNCAR Expo and a site selector ad, but other than that they haven't been used. Wegeleben stated that those funds could be used to market the sale of the school building.

7. OTHER

Knier asked the BLEDA what their expected outcome would be for the Joint City Council and BLEDA meeting. Wegeleben stated that City Council will have to be in support of having the meeting. Geroux stated that his vision would be to get some kind of general agreement that the Council wants to move forward with the site being redeveloped. He stated that it is not likely there would be time for conversation regarding logistics. Wegeleben stated that instead of having a joint meeting the conversation could be had at a Council Workshop meeting with the BLEDA present. Haffner stated that she would bring up the topic of having a meeting at the next Council Workshop.

8. ADJOURN

Commissioner Knier motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Clarksean, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.