

La Crescent Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes

La Crescent Chamber of Commerce

Keep Company Shared Workspace, August 1, 2022

1: Call to Order: Chairman Stryker called meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance:

3. Roll Call: Members Present - Brett Kemmer, Julie Hatlem, Cherryl Jostad, Troy Nolop, Larry Stryker, Alan Voss, Michael Welch

Members Absent - Lori Kadlec , Sarah Danielson (excused)

Staff Present - Larry Kirch

Guest(s): None

4: Approval of June 27 Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Mike to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2022 meeting, seconded by Al, motion carried.

5. Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Mike to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Brett, motion carried.

6: Staff Report:

a. Larry K presented an updated project list/workplan.

- The Root River Trail communities (Houston County, La Crescent, Houston, Hokah) are still meeting monthly and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA to Jointly Cooperate nearing completion with just some insurance/liability wording needing to be resolved with agreed upon language. Houston has appointed their two community members. La Crescent staff and Allison Wagner from the County are taking the lead.
- The city received approval for a MnDOT Active Transportation Planning corridor study to study the corridor from the new Wagon Wheel bridge landing to Miller's Corner. MnDOT's Consultant will contact us later this summer to start the planning process. There will be a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of local residents and officials to help as a steering committee.
- We are waiting to hear from SMIF on a Small Towns grant to fund a community process for the ultimate streetscaping of Walnut Street.
- We are still waiting to hear from the Blandin Foundation on whether our Letter of Interest has been approved for a full grant application for the design of a monument at the bridge landing area to provide education about the indigenous peoples who inhabited the downtown area before white settlement.
- Larry K called and congratulated Jack Zabrowski (now with La Crosse County) for his efforts to get a new bike-ped bridge constructed next to the West Channel Bridge which was funded by the Wisconsin DOT as a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project. WisDOT awarded \$4 million toward the project. This is known as Wagon Wheel Phase IV.

- The city is attempting to apply to the League of American Bicyclists for Bronze Bike Friendly Community Designation. The city applied in 2017 and did not get approved but the city has many accomplishments since that time. An important factor is having some Bike Friendly Businesses designated in the community as well.
- The Sportsman Road improvement project bid are to be opened this week.
- Larry K is trying to set up another meeting with the Government Affairs person from Kwik Trip to continue dialogue with them on both the north and south convenience stores.
- Larry K will update and revise the projects work plan spreadsheet for the next meeting and consolidate the projects as many are completed now with the new bridge being installed this week. It will take another month or so for the bridge to actually be open Larry K is working on an invite list for the ribbon cutting.

7. Discussion Items:

a. Member Reports: Larry K noted that he handed out a brochure from Drift Share Bike Share and that he spoke with Jacob Sciamas and their model is for 5 bikes and the cost is \$10,000 for two years with 70 percent business funded and 30 percent from local government. Jacob thinks that two stations could be here in La Crescent, one by the new bridge and one by the new hotel. Larry K also noted that the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) has funding for day care providers and is announcing a program called Child Care Economic Development Grants to reduce child care shortages.

Troy mentioned that storm sewer is the biggest issue for Walnut Street along with overhead lines that should be buried if the city is going to make the area nicer. August 12 and 13 is the JDRF Ride and brings 45 bicyclists into La Crescent and parked behind the PD building while they are eating pizza. Larry K mentioned the Apple Blossom Tour on the 13th of August and the coordinators have worked with JDRF to collaborate on routes. Troy inquired whether the city had an ordinance on biking on the sidewalk in the downtown area as it is a problem of people biking and going too fast on the sidewalks.

Brett noted that the city should tout the bridge project and all the funding partners as many people are commenting that they think the city is wasting money on the bridge. There should be a sign "Funding Made Possible By" and the city should put that information on their website.

Cherryl mentioned that Explore La Crosse is conducting a "dry run" of the Trolley Experience next week. The tour is scheduled for four hours with 85 minutes here in La Crescent with three stops. There are still four tour dates and the tour is limited to 24 people and the cost is more than their usual \$20.00 trolley tours. The step-on guide is very good and they are still finalizing the verbiage for the trolley tour this Fall.

Al inquired about the city house that is for sale or for moving. Larry K noted that any bidder would be able to go inside. The house looks nicer on the outside than on the inside. It would be costly to move with relocating overhead wires, etc. The window are decent and the fire place is very nice but the house is dated otherwise.

Julie mentioned that the new neighbor is Kayla Stanton who was at the Makers Market and she will be doing engraving and laser engraving and also will sublet space for other makers. The former antique shop is now going to be a dental lab...

b. Other items: Larry K noted that he sent the press release for the Keep Company shared working space in the agenda packet and that the press release highlights small business assistance that is being offered and scheduled by Allison Wagner from the County EDA. Larry also reviewed the hand out and brochure for the Bluff Country Collaborative and that the group is seeking \$10,000 from local business to help underwrite the career navigator position for the program.

8. Adjourn – Chairman Stryker adjourned the meeting at 4:01 pm.

Next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. at the Chamber building.

Minutes submitted by Larry Kirch