

La Crescent Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes
La Crescent Chamber of Commerce and Tourism - Keep Company Conference Room
March 11, 2024

- 1: Call to Order: Chair Sarah DeLacy called meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Roll Call: Members Present: Sarah DeLacy, Michael Welch, Alan Voss, Lori Kadlec, Brett Kemmer, and ex-officio City Council Member Cherryl Jostad

Members Absent – Troy Nolop

Staff Present - Larry Kirch, Community Development Director, Brian Meeter, Chamber Executive Director

4. Approval of Agenda: Mike Welch made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Lori Kadlec, the motion carried unanimously.
5. Approval of January 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Al Voss to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024 meeting, seconded by Mike Welch, the motion carried unanimously.
6. Additional Commission Member – Status: The Commission discussed a number of possible potential members including Tom Stahl, Angel Klankowski, Honor DiDonato and Olivia Lamke. Brian Meeter said he would contact Olivia Lamke and Mike Welch said he would speak with Honor DiDonato. Larry sent Honor and Olivia a copy of the city's Boards and Commission application form.
7. Staff Report:

- a. Updated Project List/Workplan: Larry went through the spreadsheet item by item and reviewed the status of the projects and grant applications that the city is working on.

Root River Trail Extension / MOA to Jointly Cooperate: The Root River Trail Extension – Citizens Exploratory Committee met on Friday, March 8th. Their next meeting will be on April 3rd. Larry Kirch drafted a "trail plan" as required by the MOA. The content of the plan summarizes previous efforts since 1977 and recent activities and next steps along with funding. At the March 8th meeting staff from the Parks and Trails division at the DNR went through many many details of the trail planning, funding and construction process. They also discussed the ins and outs of property acquisition and using state land. Tim Miller from the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Upper Mississippi Wildlife and Fish Refuge was also present and offered information on using refuge lands for trails. There is an example in Winona where the Flyway trail will encroach on the refuge near Winona. The committee still has one vacancy that has to be filled by the City of Houston. The city was not successful in its Federal Transportation Alternatives Grant Application for a multi-use trail along south Chestnut from the base of the Wagon Wheel bridge to S 14th Street then to Kistler Manufactured Home Park. The city is finalizing the scope of services for the \$30,000 IJJA Technical Assistance Grant which will now include both the trail segment noted above as well as the portion from S 14th Street to Miller's Corner from S 14th Street.

Active Transportation Action Plan: MnDOT still has not submitted any comments on the final adopted plan. Actions include the Transportation Alternatives Grant and a Safe Routes to School Grant for the portions of the plan within the city. The city is attempting to meet with MnDOT officials to agree on a project scope for the technical assistance grant from the Wagon Wheel Bridge to Millers corner

Overlook Plaza – We are meeting weekly with the class and have a project committee meeting on April 2nd via zoom and the final presentation will be April 30th in La Crescent. The three students are interviewing Native Americans to get their input on what the Overlook Plaza should contain. A landscape architecture class in the Fall will design the final feature and there may be a summer graduate student that may refine the work of the current class.

Walnut Street Corridor planning –The city is awaiting word on the bonding bill application (should hear in May), the Local Road Improvement Program (should hear week of April 1), and the MnDEED Small Cities Development Program (Application due April 17th) for approximately \$5,000,000 for total project costs.

Kwik Trip - The city staff is meeting with Kwik Trip staff on April 3rd to discuss both properties.

West Channel bridge (Wagon Wheel Phase 4) is in the engineering design phase and permitting. City staff has met with MnDOT, WisDOT and City of La Crosse staff to work on the portion of the project where it will connect to the Wagon Wheel Trail and the MnDOT permits and coordination with Us Fish and Wildlife.

There is a poster in City Hall advertising the housing rehabilitation loans through SEMCAC. Larry will reach out to the staff person at SEMCAC for an update for next meeting. Larry, Brian and Allison Wagner are working with Lansing Office Works (now called The Office Works) to help operate the coworking space with us. Then we can close out the Arlyn Falck grant. The Office Works teams with an Iowa-based Rural Ideas Network so that members can use any number of co-working spaces.

The city is working on a preliminary application to USDA Rural Development program for loan funds for the city hall, police station and library. There are also Library grants available through the State. Several funding sources will likely be needed to complete these projects.

We did receive word that the city did receive a grant from MnDEED for matching funding for the demolition of the laundromat. A grant agreement will go to the city council in April.

8. Discussion Items:

a. Member Reports: Brian noted that the Chamber had received its 501 c 6 status, he mentioned the \$17-million-dollar International Owl Center project, and also noted the sale of the city-owned lot to Uriah Hayes for an athletic training center with a skating treadmill. Council Member Cheryl Jostad mentioned that the two Eagle Scout projects were proceeding for the Blue Lake Canoe/Kayak launch and the dog park. The dog park has been moved to some city-owned land near the county's recycling yard west of the CPKC RR tracks. La Crescent Live has announced five summer concerts and are seeking council approval this evening, Mike Sexhauer's proposal to build on the city's twindo lots at Horsetrack Meadows was approved and the first foundation was poured already. Lori Kadlec mentioned that Affogado Lane held a spot for Girl Scout Cookies and sold 241 boxes (nearly as many as were sold at the Onalaska Walmart the same weekend). The dog park location process was also

discussed and how the public process worked/didn't work with city-wide support but neighbor opposition. There was discussion that the final location was not optimal as people would tire of getting caught by trains and the site is not as park-like as the other sites.

a. Other Items – None

10. Next Meeting Date/Time: The commission decided to have their next meeting on Monday, April 1st, 2024 at the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Building at 3:00 p.m. Mike stated that he won't be able to make that meeting.

11. Adjourn: Mike Welch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lori Kadlec, the motion carried unanimously. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Larry Kirch

DRAFT