

La Crescent Economic Development Commission Meeting Minutes

La Crescent Chamber of Commerce

Keep Company Shared Workspace, January 9, 2023

- 1: Call to Order: Larry Kirch called meeting to order at 3:05 pm.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the members.
3. Roll Call: Members Present – Brett Kemmer, Julie Hatlem, Alan Voss, Sarah DeLacy, Troy Nolop, Lori Kadlec, Cheryl Jostad

Members Absent – (Excused) Michael Welch

Staff Present - Larry Kirch

Guest(s): Mayor Mike Poellinger, Council Member Teresa O’Donnell-Ebner, Larry Stryker
4. Recognition of Larry Stryker (Mayor Poellinger): Mayor Mikel Poellinger read and presented Chair Larry Stryker with a recognition of appreciation for his 10 years of service to the City’s EDC. Larry provided a few words of thanks and encouragement of the committee to continue the important work of this committee.
5. Approval of Agenda: By consensus, the agenda was approved.
6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair: Sarah agreed to be the chair and Troy agreed to be the Vice Chair. Sarah made a motion to approve, seconded by Brett to appoint Sara DeLacy as Chair and Troy Nolop as Vice Chair, the motion carried unanimously.
7. Approval of November 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Sarah to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2022 meeting, seconded by Al, motion carried.
8. Staff Report:
 - a. Larry K presented an updated project list/workplan.
 - The Root River Trail Extension – Citizens Exploratory Committee is having their second meeting this Wednesday. Their first meeting was organizational in nature and at this next meeting they will continue map out a strategy for identifying and accomplishing tasks.
 - The MnDOT Active Transportation Planning (STH 16 corridor from the new Wagon Wheel bridge landing to Miller’s Corner) corridor study continues with the survey results of 279 respondents and a project webpage is now set up on the MnDOT website. The “planning committee” will meet again on March 2 in a virtual meeting. A third planning committee meeting as well as a public meeting and city council meetings are also to be scheduled in March and April. The project was to finish in March but is more likely to be April.
 - Blandin Foundation Grant - Overlook Plaza - We received \$60,000 from the Blandin Foundation for the design of a monument at the Wagon Wheel Trail bridge landing area (Overlook Plaza) to provide education about the indigenous people who inhabited the

downtown area before white settlement. We are reaching out to both the Prairie Island Indian Community and the Ho-Chunk Nation for their involvement in this project. The city is considering a professional services contract with the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center to help the city consult with the Native Tribes.

- Walnut Street - The city is posting a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a planning firm to do the plan. The RFP was posted on January 13th. The process will start March when the Council approves a contract with the selected firm.
- The City Administrator and Larry K are meeting on Friday, January 13th with Kwik Trip Rea Estate department staff to review the two KT stores and will update KT about the Walnut Street Corridor Planning Study and the work that MnDOT is doing to study the 4th Street South intersection.
- The Sportsman Road project is complete with additional close out with Houston County so the city can be reimbursed through the County.
- Phase 4 Wagon Wheel Trail - La Crosse is calling the project the Wagon Wheel Connector. WisDOT awarded \$4,010,400 million toward the project. The City of La Crosse has to come up with the design engineering for the project which will not just be the bridge but also widening the sidewalks to bike paths up to the new Mississippi River Bridge. The staff of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC) hosted an interagency meeting and another meeting will be held January 31st. MnDOT has been involved in the meetings along with City of La Crescent Staff.
- The Bike Trail Head project is all tied into the Blandin Foundation Grant and the Walnut Street Corridor Planning Project. The city has received several grants that are to be coordinated for a trailhead/Overlook Plaza.
- The Small Cities Federal Community Development Block Grant project has had 7 homes that have started the process of rehabilitation and SEMCAC staff is going through the waiting list and working with clients.
- Keep Company - A grant was approved by the Arlin Falck Foundation for the Keep Company shared workspace for \$8,400. The city was the applicant. Funds are for hiring a business/marketing college major staffing and business assistance, for six networking events, coaching and for the creation of a "business plan" to outline long-term financial sustainability. The grant outlined that the city was the fiscal agent and that the Chamber would take the lead on implementing the grant.
- No new information on the City Hall Project. The city council may be discussing some long-range planning items at their second meeting in February.
- Larry noted that he attended a webinar sponsored by the Minnesota DEED that outlined funding sources for economic development and downtown redevelopment.

9. Discussion Items:

a . Troy requested that the group supporting the Entertainment Venue be asked to provide an update to the EDC at the March meeting as this project was important to the city and this group's efforts. The city has authorized \$5,000 for Architect/Engineer Dave Holstrom to work with the group on design concepts. Larry K noted that the City Administrator had asked him to research and assist with grant writing for the group as it moves forward.

Julie mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism was holding their annual meeting on February 25th. The Bicycle Around Minnesota (BAM) group is coming to La Crescent in August. Sarah and Julie let the group know that Julie is leaving the Chamber at the end of January. Several members expressed their appreciation of Julie's efforts and leadership in her tenure at the Chamber.

b. Other items:

10. Discuss 2023 Meeting Schedule – 10 meetings were scheduled for 2023 as follows: March 6, April 3, May 8, June 5, July 10, August 7, September 11, October 2 and November 6

11. Adjourn – A motion was made by Troy, seconded by Al to adjourn the meeting which carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting is Monday, March 6, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the La Crescent Chamber of Commerce building.

Minutes submitted by Larry Kirch