



Geneva Economic Development Commission
Thursday, February 13, 2014, 8:00 AM
City Hall Council Chambers, 109 James Street

Present: Chairman Robert Mann and Commissioners Cathy Charhut, Brian Kay, Patrick Neary, David Quillen, Paul Ruby, Thomas Burgess. Also present: City Administrator Mary McKittrick, Economic Development Director Ellen Divita, Business Development Specialist Paul Evans, Economic Development Intern Neal Reeves, Public Works Director Dan Dinges, Fire Chief Steve Olson, Gary Kecskes of WCC, business owner and resident Christine Kiefer, Todd Latham, School District #304, Robert Skurland and Doug Berggren of East Dundee. Absent: Commissioner Scott Lebin.

I. CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 8:03 AM by Chairman Mann.

I. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA – There were none.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Commissioner Quillen, seconded by Commissioner Kay to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Waubonsee Community College presentation.

Gary Kecskes of Waubonsee Community College presented on “The Hidden Waubonsee,” the non-credit side of programming. Over 300 offerings occur every year, including courses, presentations, and seminars. There are 3 major divisions: Adult Education (ESL, GED, Literacy, etc.), Continuing Education (lifestyle and leisure classes, and lifelong learning), and Workforce Development (customized and group training). The latter includes an ability to help businesses with needs assessment, gap analysis, skills assessment, and work in progress assessments. The college can train on one of the 4 campuses, or on-site of the business. The College can help attract business, retain business, and spur entrepreneurial development. Adaptability is the new stability. Nationwide only 51% of EDC’s have a relationship with their Small Community College (per a California Study).

Status Update on East Side Tax Increment Finance – Seven responses have been received to the City’s “Request for Qualifications” and they are under review. The area being studied is north, east, and south of the former Mill Race Inn. Final boundaries, if a district is to be created, may or may not include all of the houses in the study area.

I. OLD BUSINESS

Public Process component of Downtown Business District investigation. Chairman Mann welcomed East Dundee Village Administrator Robert Skurlich and East Dundee Economic Development Coordinator Douglas Berggren, thanking them for coming to share their community’s experience with Business Districts. East Dundee has used Business Districts and TIF Districts

extensively with 95% of all retailers in one district or another. Their original Business District was created in expectation of losing their Walmart; they wished to collect additional sales tax to have a base to use in recruiting replacement companies. At that time Walmart was losing \$650,000 a year. Since implementing the business district and increasing the sales tax rate, Walmart has not yet left East Dundee and sales have increased. They reported Walmart has made a profit (\$37,000 the next year, \$500,000 after that, then \$1,000,000 and \$1,500,000 last year). They will however lose the Walmart to a neighboring town. East Dundee noted that even with the increased sales tax rate, the business has grown. Every commercial property in East Dundee is in a TIF and or Business District they use revenues from both to assist in recruitment and expansion. They chose this route rather than a Food and Beverage tax which was used in Freeport, Mr. Skurlich's previous community.

Asked if there was resistance to the additional sales tax, they said relatively little. They have been careful in boundaries and sensitive to competition – originally not all gas stations would have been in a business district but now are; one is in its own district and the revenues were used to fund \$900,000 of work required by IDOT which was required to open the new station. Their main intent in creating the District has been to recruit more retailers but they also use the additional sales tax to fund their economic development administrative costs. They have used the funds to bring an auto dealer and to expand GATT Guns and to renovate the former Summit School. The Council approves all Business District expenditures through annual budget or redevelopment agreements, but they do use the fund a façade program which is approve administratively. East Dundee voted in Home Rule.

The Commission turned their attention to the draft survey which will be sent to identify community thoughts on creation of the business district and use of a sales tax increment to fund projects in the district. They were comfortable with the document but suggested that it be modified as a hybrid with the last reviewed in November – i.e. to include broader general topics, using these actual projects as examples. For example “Traffic and Parking” with more angle parking on State Street as an example.

Regarding projects: The Commission did not vote to set criteria by which proposed projects would be evaluated. However, several Commissioners expressed the view that each project should be substantially beneficial to all businesses that would be required to collect any sales tax levied in connection with the Downtown Business District plan.

The next meeting will be March 13, 2014 and a revised copy of the survey will be reviewed.

- IV.** Motion by Commissioner Quillen, seconded by Commissioner Burgess, the meeting adjourned at 9:14.



Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Divita