

UNAPPROVED

**CITY OF BLAINE
BLAINE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Monday, June 15, 2020
7:20 PM

Blaine City Hall
Council Chambers
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:28PM. by President Ryan followed by the Roll Call. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually.

PRESENT: President Tom Ryan, Commissioners Andy Garvais, Wes Hovland, Julie Jeppson, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson, and Dick Swanson.

ABSENT: None.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; Public Services Manager/Assistant City Manager Bob Therres; City Engineer Dan Schluender; City Planner Lori Johnson; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Communications Coordinator Ben Hayle; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Commissioner Robertson, seconded by Commissioner Jeppson, that the Minutes of June 1, 2020, be approved.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

4.1 EDA Resolution No. 20-10, Establishing an Emergency Funding Program for Businesses Related to COVID-19.

Moved by Commissioner Robertson, seconded by President Ryan, that Resolution No. 20-10, "Establishing an Emergency Funding Program for Businesses Related to COVID-19," be approved.

Community Development Director Thorvig stated since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been a multitude of programs offered to businesses from the state and federal level to assist them with the financial impacts of COVID-19. Staff has been monitoring programs that other cities have offered. There are several peer cities, including Edina, Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove, St. Louis Park, Richfield, and Minnetonka that have adopted grant/loan programs. The structure between cities is very similar and generally

involves a \$250,000-\$300,000 allocation from the HRA or EDA, a maximum loan/grant amount of \$7,500-\$10,000, and an application scoring system to prioritize need. Staff feels it is an appropriate time for Blaine to consider adopting an emergency program for businesses related to the financial impacts of COVID-19. The proposed structure of the program was discussed and it was noted this program was modeled after similar programs in other cities. Staff commented further on the proposed program and noted the program may be eligible for reimbursement through the CARES Act, but staff was still uncertain.

President Ryan commented he supported the proposed loan program.

Commissioner Robertson explained she would like more information on whether or not the program would be reimbursed by the CARES Act. She understood this was EDA dollars and not general fund dollars, however, she also knew this was a challenging time for the City. She supported the City offering loans versus fully forgivable grants.

Commissioner Hovland stated wanted to see the EDA supporting its local businesses because they pay taxes and provide jobs. He explained he could support providing loans with a 0% interest rate.

President Ryan reported the local businesses have been struggling March through July. He anticipated these dollars may save a few businesses.

Commissioner Jeppson agreed the EDA should be giving preference to the businesses applying for aid. She recommended the EDA use these dollars to help businesses survive and make it through these tough times.

Commissioner Garvais stated he also supported President Ryan and Commissioner Jeppson's comments.

Commissioner Paul explained he supported using these funds to help local businesses that were struggling at this time. He reported he supported the EDA offering loans without interest.

Commissioner Swanson supported the EDA offering grants.

Commissioner Robertson commented she wanted to make sure the EDA's message was consistent, given the fact the City has had several requests in the last six months from other struggling local business owners. She recommended the loans be described as being forgivable.

Commissioner Jeppson agreed the program should be established with full forgivable loans and not be deemed grants.

Commissioner Garvais supported this recommendation.

Amendment moved by President Ryan, seconded by Commissioner Swanson, that the program be established with fully forgivable loans.

A roll call vote was taken. Amended motion adopted unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Commissioner Jeppson, seconded by Commissioner Robertson, to adjourn the meeting at 7:47PM.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion adopted unanimously.

Tom Ryan, President

ATTEST:

Catherine Sorensen, City Clerk
Submitted by Minute Maker Secretarial