

**OSSEO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 8, 2021**

1. ROLL CALL

President Poppe called the regular meeting of the Osseo Economic Development Authority to order at 6:00 p.m., Monday, November 8, 2021.

Members present: Teresa Aho, Deanna Burke, Harold E. Johnson, Sherry Murdock, Duane Poppe, and Alicia Vickerman.

Members absent: Larry Stelmach.

Staff present: Executive Director Riley Grams and City Attorney Mary Tietjen.

Others present: Kenny Nelson.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Vickerman, seconded by Aho, to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion carried 6-0.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 11, 2021

A motion was made by Murdock, seconded by Burke, to approve the minutes of October 11, 2021, as presented. The motion carried 6-0.

4. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

Kenny Nelson, 509 3rd Avenue NE, stated he believed the Small Business Saturday event was a good plan, but encouraged the City to shoot for something even bigger next summer or fall that includes all Osseo businesses and not just small businesses. He indicated the local businesses have taken a hit and suggested an Eat In Osseo day that draws people to the community. He encouraged the EDA members to be cognizant of how they would benefit from a vote on certain matters.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None.

6. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Grams presented the EDA Accounts Payable listing.

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Vickerman, to approve the Accounts Payable. The motion carried 6-0.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. FINALIZE SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY EVENT

Grams stated at the October 11 meeting of the Economic Development Authority, staff presented a tentative plan for the city's support of the 2021 Small Business Saturday on November 27. The plan is to close Central Avenue from 2nd Street to 3rd Street from 9:30 am till 4:15 pm on Small Business Saturday. Staff has spoken directly with the majority of owners on the 200 block of Central Avenue, and none has expressed any concern. Staff plans on speaking directly with the remainder in the next week and addressing any potential concerns they have.

Grams explained staff has reserved two large propane fire pits that will be put in place at either end of the street. They are being rented from Broadway Party & Tent Rental for a total of \$194. Public Works will take charge of placing and removing them and will be organizing picking up/returning the pits to the rental location. Staff has currently arranged for PJ's Grill food truck to be present during the event. They plan on arriving around 10:00 am to serve food through the end of the event. Given the high numbers the city has seen across all outdoor activities this year, staff has also reached out to secure a second food truck. These will be located at the southern end of the closed area, with a fire pit placed in between for those eating or ordering to gather around. City staff has arranged with Minuteman Press to handle the printing of 500+ passports. Staff will be distributing these to businesses the week of November 15-19. Minuteman Press has estimated it will take 1-2 business days to complete printing from the time the design is received. Given that timeline, staff will be working to finalize a business list as late as possible, then sending the passport design to the printer on November 12.

Johnson stated he did not support another street closure. He commented on how the closure of the City Hall block has been disruptive. He indicated he did not support the City bringing in food trucks because this could adversely impact local businesses. Johnson noted he would be voting against the proposed plans.

Aho explained she owns a business on the 200 block of Central Avenue. She stated she was really excited about the proposed event and having the street closure. She believed the street closure would provide greater pedestrian safety while also providing an energy in downtown Osseo.

Vickerman stated she agreed with Johnson that closing down another block would be difficult for visitors. She reported if the City Hall block were reopened in time for the Small Business Saturday event, she could be more supportive. She indicated she was concerned with the food trucks and feared these would be taking money away from the local restaurants. She noted she spoke to Red Savoy Pizza and they opposed the event having food trucks.

Grams reported half of Central Avenue concrete was poured today and the remainder would be poured tomorrow. He explained the area would be covered and would then need seven to

ten days to cure and harden. He indicated this would mean the City Hall block of Central Avenue would be open the weekend before Small Business Saturday.

Vickerman stated she was also taking into consideration the fact that Dean's Supermarket opposed the road closure.

Murdock stated she could support a one block closure, but not two blocks. She commented she supported the City providing free hot chocolate with the fire pits and recommended the food trucks not be brought in. She noted she was not a business owner in Osseo and stated she would be taking into consideration the words of local business owners for this matter.

Aho indicated she spoke to a customer today from Rogers who had fallen in love with Osseo. She discussed how this customer had believed people were looking for family friendly events and experiences. She believed the proposed event with the road closure would be a fantastic way to draw people into the community. She discussed how her role on the EDA differed from her role as a business owner and at this time she was trying to get people into Osseo for Small Business Saturday.

Further discussion ensued regarding having food trucks at the Small Business Saturday event.

Grams requested direction from the EDA regarding the street closure and food trucks.

Aho stated she would like to see the 200 block of Central Avenue closed if the City Hall block was open. She noted the detour would only be a block or two for residents and visitors.

Murdock concurred from a safety standpoint. She questioned where the food trucks would be located. Grams discussed potential locations for the food trucks.

Vickerman commented she would support one block being closed but noted she did not support the food trucks.

Aho questioned if the EDA would support a mini donut food truck.

Poppe stated this would be more unique versus bringing in a grilled food truck that would be competing with local restaurants. Grams indicated he could investigate this, but stated it was difficult finding food trucks that were interested in participating in an event on November 27 because weather and attendance were unknowns.

Johnson questioned how the passports would be collected. Grams discussed how the passports could be turned in at City Hall or at the local businesses.

Johnson asked if the EDA would be financing the drawing. Grams commented the local businesses would be providing gift cards or other items for the drawing.

The Commission further discussed how the prizes drawn and gifted. The EDA recommended gift cards be awarded for use at participating local businesses with one grand prize gift basket.

A motion was made by Johnson to have three \$25 vouchers and one \$50 voucher to be redeemed any business in Osseo, along with a grand prize gift basket as prizes for the Small Business Saturday event.

Grams expressed concern with the fact not all businesses in Osseo may want to participate in this event and therefore would not want to honor a voucher.

Johnson withdrew his motion.

Murdock stated the vouchers may not be a possibility for this year.

Poppe agreed.

A motion was made by Murdock, seconded by Vickerman, to recommend the Small Business Saturday event move forward with no food trucks and with only one street block closure for this event. The motion carried 4-2 (Johnson and Burke opposed).

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. REVIEW 2022 EDA BUDGET

Grams stated each year the EDA sets its own fiscal budget for the following year. The budget is usually approved during the last meeting of the year in December. The EDA should discuss any potential changes to the 2022 budget and direct staff accordingly. Staff will make any EDA recommended changes and update the budget worksheet accordingly. The updated EDA budget will come back to the EDA for final approval at the December 13 EDA meeting.

B. EDA PRESIDENT FINDING OF NEED FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS DUE TO ON-GOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Poppe questioned how the EDA felt about holding in person meetings.

Vickerman explained she supported the EDA moving to virtual meetings.

Johnson agreed stating this would allow meetings to be held with all members in attendance. He stated he would like to have more information regarding hybrid meetings. City Attorney Tietjen discussed the legal authority that was in place to return to virtual meetings, which was the fact there was an ongoing health pandemic. She reported the determination lies with the presiding officer, which meant the President of the EDA. Legally, the EDA could hold hybrid meetings. Grams reported the City did not have the technology in place at this time to hold hybrid meetings. He explained he was looking into this further with CCX noting upgrades to the system would be required. He reported the options at this time were all in person or fully virtual via WebX.

Murdock commented she did not support going back to virtual meetings. She stated she has missed the personal interaction between the EDA members. She commented the City was working under different parameters than it was in March 2020.

Aho indicated she was indifferent.

9. REPORTS OR COMMENTS: Executive Director, President, Members

Aho encouraged residents to visit the Annabelle House, which is the new coffee shop in town. She stated the Peppered Porch was a new business that would be opening on November 18 at 204 Central Avenue.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Aho, to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. The motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Guenther
Minute Maker Secretarial