

**OSSEO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 13, 2022**

1. ROLL CALL

President Poppe called the regular meeting of the Osseo Economic Development Authority to order at 6:00 p.m., Monday, June 13, 2022.

Members present: Teresa Aho, Deanna Burke, Harold E. Johnson, Ashlee Mueller, Kenny Nelson, Duane Poppe, and Larry Stelmach.

Members absent: None.

Staff present: Shane Mikkelson and City Attorney Mary Tietjen.

2. OATH OF OFFICE – ASHLEE MUELLER AND KENNY NELSON

City Attorney Tietjen administered the Oath of Office to EDA Members Ashlee Mueller and Kenny Nelson. A round of applause was offered by all in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Aho, to approve the Agenda as presented. The motion carried 7-0.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 11, 2022

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Mueller, to approve the minutes of April 11, 2022, as presented. The motion carried 7-0.

5. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR – None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

7. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Aho, to approve the Accounts Payable. The motion carried 7-0.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None

9. NEW BUSINESS

A. ELEVATE BUSINESS HENNEPIN COUNTY PRESENTATION – Tashie George, Hennepin County

Tashie George, Hennepin County, stated entrepreneurs and business owners are re-imagining and re-building their businesses daily with Hennepin County's Elevate Business program. Elevate Business draws together experts, tools and programs intentionally designed to help new and established businesses gain their footing, plan for their next steps, and take their success to a new level. Through Elevate Business, Hennepin County is investing in a business support ecosystem that is shaping the region to become even stronger and resilient. More than 900 businesses in Hennepin County have worked with Elevate Business consultants since January 2021 for help with social media, marketing, web development, legal and financial guidance.

Ms. George explained that any Hennepin County business owner or resident who owns or is starting a business can access 25 hours of free consulting. Hennepin County has contracted with 23 professional business advisors and specialized consultants to offer free expert support to local businesses in a wide range of areas including:

- Planning and evaluation
- Financial
- Access to capital
- Legal
- Marketing

Ms. George reported in practice, this could look like help researching and writing a business plan, financial or legal guidance, accessing classes and cohort-style learning, or tapping into our network of community-based lenders. Elevate Business HC began as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Guided by a diverse Business Advisory Council convened by Hennepin County during the height of the pandemic, Hennepin County teamed up with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber to partner with trusted experts that could help businesses meet the challenges of the pandemic and civil unrest.

Ms. George indicated the initiative has since grown into an innovative model to help diverse businesses in Hennepin County not only recover from the impacts of the pandemic, but to grow and build for success long into the future. The business advisors and resources available through Elevate Business serve entrepreneurs at every level and represent the diversity of Hennepin County businesses. It is our goal to provide business resources that support all businessowners, with a focus on the economic empowerment of people of color, women, and other underserved business owners that have historically experienced disparities and were further disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Ms. George stated together, Hennepin County is creating a business support ecosystem that will help our region emerge from the pandemic with an even stronger, more inclusive, and resilient economy over the long-term. Potential future services were discussed. She commented further on the initiative, noting 900+ businesses have been served and asked for comments or questions from the EDA.

Stelmach asked if the County helps individual businesses write their business plans. Ms. George explained the County had different advisors that help with this work.

Stelmach questioned if the County would assist both for profit and non-profit businesses. Ms. George reported this was the case.

Johnson stated he appreciated how the County offered all five of these critical services to businesses that were startups or struggling. He inquired if this program was directed only to minorities. Ms. George reported in 2018 a program was piloted for minorities, but noted Elevate Business was for all.

Johnson encouraged Ms. George provided City staff with handouts regarding this program.

Poppe asked if Ms. George would be willing to speak at a seminar to local business owners regarding the services that were available. Ms. George stated she would be able to do this for Osseo business owners.

Mueller questioned how the advisors were found to assist the County with this initiative. Ms. George explained an RFP process was followed to assist with selecting the County's advisors.

Johnson inquired if business owners were able to utilize this Elevate Business and SCORE. Ms. George reported business owners were able to utilize both of these initiatives.

B. EDA PROJECT UPDATES

Mikkelsen reported in May of 2021 the City received a \$20,000 grant from Hennepin County to fund a promotional effort for the 'Central Avenue Business Corridor'. This effort, conducted alongside LittleBox Social of Robbinsdale and CCX Media, would partner these two media companies with local businesses in an effort to increase the digital media presence of each business. It's important to note that this is being done at no cost to the businesses themselves. The actual products will consist of two major components:

- LittleBox, a social media company specializing in small- to medium-sized businesses, will work to increase each businesses' social media footprint and organize a larger, corridor wide marketing campaign.
- CCX will be working to create a brief promotional video for each business, which is to be owned by the business itself.

Mikkelsen stated additionally CCX Media will be creating a slightly longer promotional video highlighting the 'Corridor' as a whole. Due to a concern that the promotional efforts could not ramp up in time to adequately boost the summer and fall shopping seasons (and a fear that the CCX wouldn't be able to film in time to capture the summer weather), it was decided to postpone the actual work till 2022. City staff can now report that those efforts have begun.

Mikkelson explained at the current time, CCX and LittleBox are reaching out to businesses, arranging meetings, and beginning the work as outlined in the grant, with Staff stepping in to provide support when needed. LittleBox is currently looking to unveil their first round of social media promotions at the end of June 2022, and CCX is targeting late summer to finish production of their videos. Staff is looking to come back to the EDA in early fall with a more detailed outline of the work that was done, and the product of CCX/LittleBox's efforts. Ideally those two organizations will also be able to send someone to a meeting to better answer any questions from the EDA.

Nelson asked if the EDA would be using the entire \$20,000 grant. Mikkelson stated he would look into this and would report back to the EDA.

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

Nelson reviewed several slides with the EDA that he had on a civic infrastructure presentation.

Burke, Aho, Stelmach and Johnson welcomed Nelson and Mueller to the EDA.

Stelmach stated he supported a representative from Elevate Business meeting with local business owners.

Johnson encouraged the EDA members to view the recent Ehlers training regarding TIF financing.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mueller, seconded by Stelmach, to adjourn at 6:37 p.m. The motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Guenther
Minute Maker Secretarial