

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

March 28, 2022

The Economic Development Committee of Chardon City Council met on Monday, March 28, 2022, at 6:00 PM in Conference Room A of the Municipal Center.

Kyle Martin, Chairman of Economic Development Committee presiding.

Members of Economic Development Committee present: Kyle Martin, Heather Means.

Others present: City Manager Randy Sharpe, Community Development Administrator Steve Yaney, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Mayor Christopher Grau, Adam Hendrickson.

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Martin seconded to accept the minutes of the Economic Development Committee meeting from December 9, 2020. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Regarding the Think Local Initiative**, Ms. Means stated that she would like the City to support small local businesses through a Think Local campaign.

Ms. Means explained the 3 parts of the campaign:

1. Create a message and logo which would be posted around the City and actively have messaging about supporting local.
2. Develop a business directory.
3. Expand the City's Economic Development page.

Ms. Means presented samples of logos which Adam Hendrickson has been helping design.

Mr. Hendrickson reviewed how he would develop the directory and keep it updated.

Mayor Grau stated that he would like the logo colors changed from the proposed black, red and white.

Ms. Means asked that any proposed changes for the logo be sent to her.

Discussion occurred regarding how to direct individuals to the City's website.

Mr. Martin asked what options exist for metrics.

Mr. Hendrickson explained that he would use Jet Engine which will also do trafficking and algorithms.

Ms. Means reviewed the proposed cost of the campaign:

- Cost to originate the campaign and design the directory by Adam Hendrickson: \$3,700
- Banners \$1,000
- Window Clings: \$200

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Martin seconded to take the think local campaign to Council and request an expenditure of \$5,000 for 2022. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Regarding Thrive Performing and Visual Arts - Theater and 106 Water Street**, Ms. Means stated that she would like to propose the City purchase banners to promote Thrive and the Geauga Theater. She envisioned 4-6 banners for Thrive at a cost of \$200. In addition, she is proposing that the City purchase signs for the building at 106 Water Street promoting that it is a facility that is available to rent including a corrugated sign for the front window and a sign for the side of the building identifying what it is. She stated that helping Thrive advertise the spaces is a way for the City to help them in a small way, and having the space rented benefits the City.

The Committee discussed presenting the proposal to Council in May since Thrive will be coming to Council in April.

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Martin seconded to ask Council for \$1,500 for signage and banners for 106 Water Street at the May Regular Session of Council. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

**Regarding the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program 2022**, Steve Yaney provided an update on the status of the program which is being done in coordination with Geauga Growth Partnership (GGP). He reported that GGP has fully implemented the BRE program and have begun visitations in some communities. He has been working with GGP who created a list of businesses to visit in 2022, with a goal of visiting 5-10 major employers and manufacturers. In addition to that, he would like to visit 5-10

local restaurants and service businesses separate from GGP.

Mr. Martin inquired about the goal and purpose of the business visitation program.

Mr. Sharpe stated that the program is to forge relationships with the business community and inquire what the City can do to support them.

**Regarding review of Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF),** Randy Sharpe reviewed the CRA and TIF Programs which are two economic development tools the City has to offer. The CRA was established in 1984 and is meant to encourage development, redevelopment and revitalization in defined areas of the City. The CRA program provides tax abatement to property owners who have a need to build or make structural improvements. Currently there are 3 businesses utilizing the CRA program. He explained that there are other areas in the City where CRA districts could be formed to incentivize development in those areas.

Mr. Martin asked how businesses are made aware of the CRA districts.

Mr. Yaney stated that most of the property owners are aware that they have a parcel in the CRA and market their property as such.

Mr. Sharpe stated that staff also shares this information when developers inquire about a parcel.

Mr. Sharpe explained the TIF program. He stated that TIFs are an economic development tool available to governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. The way the program works is that the property tax money that would have gone to the County, gets diverted to the City to pay for identified public projects that benefit the area.

Mr. Sharpe reviewed the details of the existing TIF and RIDs.

**Regarding the Retail Strategies Contract and Program,** Mr. Sharpe reviewed the current contract and explained the work that Retail Strategies has done to this point. He noted that the contract indicates that Retail Strategies is to contact a minimum of 30 retailers, restaurants or brokers on an annual basis; however, he has not seen a list prepared by Retail Strategies.

Committee members expressed that they would like to see a list.

Mr. Sharpe asked Mr. Yaney to arrange a call with Retail Strategies to discuss the list.

Mr. Sharpe noted that the contract also indicates that Retail Strategies is to proactively recruit local retailers and/or restaurants with three or more stores within a 50-mile radius; however, he does not know if they have done this.

Committee members expressed that they would like to inquire if Retail Strategies has done this.

Mr. Sharpe noted that the contract also indicates that Retail Strategies is to provide one market visit per calendar year.

Committee members expressed that they would like to inquire about an annual visit.

Mr. Martin stated that he is interested in Retail Strategies' goals and milestones for the year.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - none.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Yaney reported on the status of discussions with Catylist to create a commercial real estate database. There have been discussions with Geauga Growth Partnership and Geauga County about collaborating on this effort, and staff would like to see this effort investigated prior to the City considering this on its own.

**ADJOURN**

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Martin seconded to adjourn. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM.

Attest:

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AMY DAY  
Clerk of Council