Meeting of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Held at the Elk River City Hall
Monday, May 6, 2024

Members Present:	Councilmember Jennifer Wagner, Commissioner Dennis Chuba, Commissioner Nate Ovall, Commissioner Lynn Caswell, Commissioner Mel Beaudry
Members Absent:	
Staff Present:	Economic Development Director Brent O'Neil, Economic Development Specialist Joshua Mollan, and Sr. Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary Jennifer Green

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

   Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

   Chair Chuba led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA

   Moved by Commissioner Nate Ovall and seconded by Commissioner Lynn Caswell to approve the May 6, 2024, HRA agenda. Motion Carried 4-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

   Moved by Commissioner Nate Ovall and seconded by Commissioner Mel Beaudry to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion Carried 4-0.

   4.1 Minutes from April 1, 2024

   4.2 Check Register

   4.3 Balance Sheet

   4.4 Revenue/Expenditure Reports

5. OPEN FORUM

   No one appeared for Open Forum.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

Commissioner Wagner arrived at 5:35 p.m.

6.1 Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program Update

Mr. Mollan presented the staff report. He noted an ad was placed in the Spring Home Improvement section of the Star News promoting the loan program funds.

Commissioner Ovall asked if the loan program interest rate should be raised to be in line with the current market, noting that prime is currently at 8.5%.

Mr. O'Neil stated the HRA can review the loan program policy at any time to discuss changing the interest rate.

Chair Chuba stated he doesn't feel it's necessary to raise the interest rate, and felt it was a benefit to the residents to have a lower rate.

Commissioner Caswell asked about the loan criteria for the loan program.

Mr. O'Neil explained the criteria. He asked that the upcoming utility mailer highlight the low interest rate of 4%.

6.2 Placer.ai Renewal

Mr. Mollan presented the staff report.

Commissioner Ovall asked if the data from Placer.ai is available to outside users or strictly staff.

Mr. Mollan indicated only staff are allowed the use of the software and sometimes staff shares information with outside entities.

Mr. O'Neil stated the license agreement restricts the usage to staff only.

Moved by Commissioner Lynn Caswell and seconded by Commissioner Nate Ovall to approve a one-year renewal of the Placer.ai subscription. Motion Carried 5-0.

6.3 State Affordable Housing Aid

Mr. O'Neil presented the staff report. He indicated future work sessions would be held for the HRA to develop programs to provide funds to support affordable housing initiatives.

6.4 Furniture Placement at 724 Main Street

Mr. O'Neil presented the staff report and stated the agreement is being finalized. He ask the HRA to approve the placement of the outdoor furniture, stating it was important to recognize the efforts of our community partners and the furniture will be a nice amenity to this area.

Moved by Commissioner Jennifer Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Mel Beaudry to approve placement of outdoor furniture at 724 Main Street by Furniture and Things (FT), Plants and Things (PT), and the Downtown Business Association (DERBA) for public use

during the 2024 summer season, conditional on a written memorandum or agreement between the HRA, PT, FT and DERBA in a form approved by the city attorney. Motion Carried 5-0.

6.5 General Updates

Mr. Mollan discussed the placement of temporary signage to support the local businesses impacted by the Main Street closure due to the 169 construction. He stated the Together Elk River Committee is placing a 4x8 double-sided changeable copy sign temporarily at the HRA Main and Gates property from now until at least the end of June and will work with Ron Touchette to remove the sign once the property closes. He stated the potential is to keep the sign throughout the summer encouraging travelers to visit the businesses impacted during road construction.

Mr. Mollan provided an update on the downtown flower baskets, noting the baskets will be placed the week of May 20. He discussed the 3-year contract ending, and wanted to note the current company, YardWorx, offered to do a 3-year extension at the same price as the current contract. Mr. Mollan asked if the HRA had feedback on either placing an RFP for bids or extend the current contract for an additional 3 years.

The HRA discussed the RFP and timeline, noting the need for a decision was by mid-July whether to renew the current contract or go out for bids. Commissioner Wagner felt that decision would be based upon their performance this year and felt it was very nice of them to extend the contract, but in her opinion, she wants to ensure they have good product this year.

Commissioner Caswell felt that at the price of plants, he was surprised they would extend the contract for another 3 years.

Mr. O'Neil noted YardWorx provided this offer today so he has not had time to review the public bid requirements and was not sure if they can even accept the offer.

Chair Chuba felt they had an incentive to provide good product this year.

Commissioner Ovall inclined go out for bids to keep things honest and competitive. He noted he was Impressed with Yardworx's ability to identify and fix issues, but felt an RFP was a good way to go.

Chair Chuba asked how many bids were received last time. Mr. O'Neil stated he would check on that.

Mr. Mollan provided an update on the Duffy Coachman II project, and is still working wtih them on a general letter of support of the project, which was not a commitment to funds. He stated the letter should be ready for next month ahead of their mid-July deadline for the HRA to review. It was the consensus of the HRA to support the letter and review at the June meeting.

Mr. O'Neil explained the downtown small area plan process, noting the RFP is posted and the Planning department will be leading that project. He provided detail about the project area and discussed the two capital components: street reconstruction of Jackson and Main, and resurfacing and some replacement of parking lots. Timeline was as soon as next construction season with the planning piece/engineering piece done this year. Funding is coming from the city's budget. Mr. O'Neil stated the various aspects of other items will be discussed as part as the capital improvement process. He stated there would be some amenities that would require alternative funding sources such as grants, and would involve the HRA or EDA.

Commissioner Wagner asked if the HRA would be open to recognizing the owner Jeff Krueger of Daddy O's Restaurant. Jeff is retiring and closing the doors of the restaurant May 24. The HRA will add recognition of this longstanding business in the city to the June agenda.

7. MOTION TO ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Councilmember Wagner and seconded by Commissioner Ovall to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Denny Chuba, Chair

Tina Allard, City Clerk