

City of Winsted
Downtown Vibrancy Commission
Winsted City Hall – Lewis Room
Tuesday, April 12, 2016
3:30 p.m.

Downtown Vibrancy Commission Members Present: Ms. Nancy Fasching
Mr. Robert Hamilton
Ms. Tami Rosenthal
Mr. Joe Swanson

Downtown Vibrancy Commission Members Absent: Mr. Chip Guggemos

Staff Present: Mr. Dan Tienter, City Administrator
Mayor Steve Stotko, City Council Liaison
Ms. Amanda Zeidler, Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Ms. Nancy Fasching, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes

Mr. Robert Hamilton approved the minutes of the Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting on February 9, 2016. Ms. Tami Rosenthal seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

3) No Staff Report.

4) Old Business

a) 2016 Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Program

Mr. Dan Tienter, City Administrator, stated that on March 16, 2015, the Downtown Vibrancy Commission reviewed and recommended to the City Council the award of four (4) grant applications under the Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Program. The Commission recommendation was reviewed at the April 7, 2015 City Council Work Session and approved at the April 24, 2015 City Council Regular Meeting. The recommended awards totaled \$14,128 or \$4,128 more than the originally budgeted amount of \$10,000.

Mr. Tienter stated that three (3) of the four (4) projects are complete and project funds were released per the amounts awarded in the initial grant applications. At present, one project remains pending. He added that per the Loan Program Policy, while project construction must begin within six (6) months of the loan date, there is no time limit or deadline for completion. Mr. Tienter stated that City staff will continue to monitor the project and will make payment upon completion.

Mr. Tienter stated that on August 11, 2015, the Commission discussed recommending another application round of the Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Program. During the discussion, Commission members considered possible modifications to the program, including, but not limited to:

- Adding design or other costs as eligible expenses;
- Expanding the program's eligibility area;
- Increasing City cost participation for certain activities;
- Increasing the budgeted amount for the round from \$10,000 to \$15,000; and
- Limiting the amount of allowable time to complete an approved project.

Mr. Tienter made a recommendation for the Commission to discuss each of these items before recommending authorization of another round of Loan Program applications. However, given the above-mentioned situation with the remaining project and the level of resources available to the Loan Program, he made a recommendation to consider the following amendments:

- Limit the amount of time to complete an approved project to one year from the date of Council approval; and
- Maintain the existing Loan Program area and provide administrative authority to expand it, as needed.

Mr. Tienter stated that at present, City staff expect the Council to consider any amendments and approval of the 2016 Loan Program at the April 19, 2016 City Council Work Session.

Mr. Hamilton asked if all of the completed projects were related to the downtown area and were existing businesses. The Commission clarified that the projects were completed by existing businesses in the downtown area.

Ms. Fasching stated that a timeline should be included in a future program.

Ms. Rosenthal stated that there are items that could be done during the winter and the Commission could accommodate, in order to allow more time. Ms. Rosenthal also asked why the previous loan program only included 1st Street North. Mayor Stotko stated that the goal of the previous loan program was to improve the Lake Promenade and East side of the buildings on 1st Street North, between Main Avenue West and Winsted Avenue.

Mr. Hamilton asked if other businesses are aware that this program is available, so they can be informed that they may be eligible for project financing. Mr. Tienter stated that, City Staff would mail another letter to the eligible buildings if the Commission decides to do another round with the loan program.

Ms. Rosenthal stated that if you maintain the same geographic area, then those businesses will have an advantage over the other businesses in town. Mr. Tienter stated that the policy can be amended to give administrative approval to change the geographic area at any time.

Mr. Stotko asked if the funding for the proposed program was included in the 2016 budget. Mr. Tienter stated that this amount was not included in the budget; however, there are adequate reserves to cover the cost of the program.

The Commission discussed the timing of the proposed loan program. They also discussed the proposed transition to an Economic Development Authority (EDA), how it may affect the loan program, as well as creating other opportunities.

Mayor Stotko stated that if the Commission members hear of a business that is interested in coming to the community, as well as the existing local businesses, they should inform the City Administrator, so the City can assist in their efforts.

The Commission discussed other improvement and expansion projects that are proposed or underway in the City.

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to postpone the Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Program until the transition to an Economic Development Authority (EDA) takes place, and request funding from the City Council for the loan program and solicitation of new businesses. Ms. Rosenthal seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

5) **No New Business.**

6) **No Announcements.**

7) **Adjournment**

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Rosenthal seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12, 2016.

Dan Tienter

Dan Tienter,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda J. Zeidler

Amanda J. Zeidler, MCMC
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk
City of Winsted