

City of Winsted
Downtown Vibrancy Commission
Winsted City Hall – Lewis Room
Tuesday, December 9, 2014
3:30 p.m.

Downtown Vibrancy Commission Members Present: Ms. Nancy Fasching
Mr. Chip Guggemos
Ms. Tami Rosenthal
Mr. Joe Swanson

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

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Mr. Chip Guggemos, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes – October 14, 2014

Mr. Joe Swanson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting on October 14, 2014. Ms. Tami Rosenthal seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

3) No Staff Report.

4) Old Business

a) Downtown Vibrancy Forgivable Loan Policy

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that City Staff forwarded the proposed Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Policy to the City Attorney and the City's financial consultant for review. The financial consultant, Shannon Sweeney of David Drown Associates, recommended that the City eliminate as much administration as possible to make the program as simple as possible, and he advised against charging interest.

Mr. Wilfahrt distributed a copy of the policy to the Downtown Vibrancy Commission with the revisions included. He stated that the result is a much shorter policy with fewer requirements. He also added that Mr. Sweeney has used similar versions on Small Cities Development projects.

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission reviewed and discussed the policy and proposed guidelines.

Mr. Wilfahrt made a recommendation to have the policy reviewed by the Economic Development Authority (EDA) and make a recommendation for the City Council to approve the policy, contingent on a review by the Economic Development Authority (EDA). Mr. Wilfahrt added that if the EDA approves the policy, the City Council can approve the policy on January 6, 2015 at the regular City Council Meeting. Once approved, City Staff would like to begin accepting applications around January 9, 2015, and the initial review of the applications will take place on February 10, 2015 at the regularly scheduled Downtown Vibrancy Commission meeting. Any applications received after the initial review can be reviewed on an on-going basis at the regular Downtown Vibrancy Commission meetings, until the funding is exhausted.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that there is a plan to market the program in the utility bill, newspaper, social media, cable channel, website, chamber newsletter, and any other mediums recommended by the Downtown Vibrancy Commission, EDA, or City Council.

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission discussed the buildings and streets that will be eligible for the program. They agreed that language should be added to the policy stating that 2015 will be a pilot year and will focus efforts on businesses along the promenade, along First (1st) Street North, between Main Avenue and Winsted Avenue, with the possibility of allowing other properties to apply if funding is still available.

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission discussed the creation of a score sheet to develop an evaluation process and specific set of criteria for reviewing applications and allocating the available funding. Mr. Wilfahrt stated that he would research ideas for scoring to develop an evaluation process at the January, 2015 Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting.

The total amount of funding that has been budgeted for 2015 is \$10,000, with a maximum of \$5,000 per loan, matching dollar for dollar. Projects are currently limited to exterior beautification.

Mr. Wilfahrt stated that an agreement will be made with each property owner, stating that construction will need to begin by a certain date to receive the funding. He added that the City Council or Downtown Vibrancy Commission could make a decision to rescind the funding if construction is not started by the date in the agreement.

Mr. Guggemos made a motion to recommend the proposed Downtown Beautification Forgivable Loan Policy Guidelines and Application, with the following additions:

- 2015 will be a pilot year for the program
- Eligible properties will be limited to those on First (1st) Street North, between Main Avenue and Winsted Avenue, along the Winsted Lake Promenade.
- If funding is still available after a given period of time, program eligibility may be expanded to include other geographic locations.

Ms. Nancy Fasching seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

5) No New Business.

6) Announcements

a) Open Commission Positions

Mayor Stotko announced that there are several open positions on commissions in the City of Winsted. If any current members are aware of anyone that may be interested, they can contact City Hall with any questions, or to obtain an application.

7) Adjournment

Mr. Swanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Fasching seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Clay Wilfahrt

Clay Wilfahrt,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda J. Zeidler

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