

**Vergas EDA/HRA
Vergas Event Center Council Chambers and Zoom
2:00 PM on Tuesday, April 4, 2023**

The City of Vergas Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) met on Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at 2:00 pm on zoom with the following members present: Bruce Albright, Joy Summers, Vanessa Perry and Kevin Zitzow. Absent: Duane Ditterich. Also Present: City Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers, Ron Zeigler, Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA), and Hillary Tweed(CEDA).

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Vice President Bruce Albright.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Approve agenda as presented.

Kevin Zitzow joined and chaired the meeting, from this point forward.

Minutes

Motion by Zitzow, seconded by Summers to approve minutes for the March 7, 2023 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Financial Update

Lammers provided financial information for EDA/HRA-no change from last month.

Old Business

2023 Housing and Economic Goals.

Goals and timelines have not changed.

CEDA (Community and Economic Development Associates)

Ron Zeigler, CEO and President of CEDA provided information on programs available and samples of what they are doing for other communities. He also stated they could adjust time allotted as the committee feels is needed. Albright stated one of our goals for this year is to meet with business owners and determine how things are going for them and if they need our assistance. CEDA has done this and knows how to develop the surveys as is beneficial to have someone have the surveys to get good information. We are also trying to find trainings that would be beneficial for our businesses, information on what is needed could be gleaned from the survey. Albright stated if the EDA/HRA hires CEDA it will take up all of the funding available in a year if we have them here 1 day a week. Lammers currently explained the EDA/HRA could afford to hire CEDA 1 day every two weeks beginning June 1 and review in December this would be \$7,237.00. Zitzow questioned adding hours to our current office staff and asked if Council would be open to extending the current city office parttime position. Lammers stated she would discuss this with the personnel committee about the options of office staff. Discussed the option of a college intern for EDA/HRA. Discussed specific topics like grant writing and we can connect CEDA for single projects. Discussed how to raise funds like adding a sales tax or lodging tax. Lammers stated she could contact the county regarding the amount of tax they are receiving from Vergas from their .05 sales tax. Zitzow asked Vanessa if the community club would be interested in having an employee and she stated they are not.

Tax-Forfeited Land in Vergas

Discussed Sunny Oaks Development with 11 lots that have been given back to the State of Mn. This development has city streets, water and sewer. It is in the best interest of the City to have this area developed. Ottertail County has jurisdiction of these lots, and the city may get the lots for either public use or public purposes. If the City does not purchase these lots

for public purposes or public use, they will go to a County auction. No date has been set for the next County Auction currently. The HRA needs to decide if they want to pursue this development or wait for the county to develop. They currently have 3 projects they are working on and will not be able to move forward with this project until they are completed. Perry stated she has spoken with someone at the state level, and she is working on information to be able for City to gain control of the lots. Members asked Lammers to find out what the County would like for the lots and if we can sell the lots for resale.

EDA/HRA Annual Meeting

The annual meeting on Tuesday, April 25, 2023 will begin with a 5:30 pm social hour and 6:00 pm meal and program. The meeting will be held at the Vergas Event Center and catered by Loon's Nest. Speakers are tentatively Amy Baldwin, Erik Osberg, Sherri Hanson and someone from SBDC. The format will be the same as the last few years with Kevin opening the meeting, Bruce reviewing budget and EDA/HRA goals and accomplishments, the meal and then the speakers. Albright stated we have businesses in town who could develop the lots.

THC

Zitzow requested why EDA is not involved in businesses being allowed to sell THC in Vergas. Lammers explained Otter Tail County as a moratorium on the sale of THC and Council has voted to comply with the moratorium. Lammers has attended training on THC and the planning commission is reviewing zoning for it. Zitzow stated the EDA should be involved and Albright explained we need to wait and see what laws are passed at the state level as it is still illegal at the federal level.

Donating to EDA/HRA

Zitzow questioned donations to West Central Initiative as he tried to donate with Thrivent funds and was unable to do so. Lammers stated she would check with West Central Initiative.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Julie Lammers
City Clerk-Treasurer
City of Vergas

Council Recommendations

None.

Follow up Actions.

Lammers to add Give to the Max Fundraiser to the August meeting agenda.

Lammers confirm speakers for annual meeting.

Lammers to find out what the County would like for tax forfeited lots and if we can sell the lots for resale.

Lammers stated she would check with West Central Initiative regarding donations.

Lammers to discuss with personnel adding staff hours for EDA/HRA office work.

Lammers to look into a City sales tax.