

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EDA BOARD HELD ON JANUARY 9, 2007,
AT 6:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

Paul Whitcomb called the EDA Board Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Members present were Ken Haskamp, Sarah Lund, Thom Walker, Victoria Hallin, and Ben Hanson. Staff present were Jay Blake and Mary Lou DeWitt.

Absent were: Don King

OATH OF OFFICE:

Paul Whitcomb and Ben Hanson took the Oath of Office.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

HASKAMP MOVED, SECOND BY WALKER TO NOMINATE PAUL WHITCOMB FOR EDA BOARD PRESIDENT. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE EDA BOARD VOTED ON PAUL WHITCOMB FOR EDA PRESIDENT. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

HASKAMP MOVED, SECOND BY HALLIN TO NOMINATE THOM WALKER FOR EDA BOARD VICE PRESIDENT. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE EDA BOARD VOTED ON THOM WALKER FOR EDA VICE PRESIDENT. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

HALLIN MOVED, SECOND BY HASKAMP TO NOMINATE SARAH LUND FOR EDA BOARD SECRETARY. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE EDA BOARD VOTED ON SARAH LUND FOR EDA SECRETARY. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

LUND MOVED, SECOND BY HALLIN TO NOMINATE KEN HASKAMP FOR EDA BOARD TREASURER. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE EDA BOARD VOTED ON KEN HASKAMP FOR EDA TREASURER. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING ON DECEMBER 21, 2006

HALLIN MOVED, SECOND BY WALKER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 21, 2006. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

AGENDA ITEM CHANGE:

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Barry Kirchoff – Small Business Development Center

This item was moved before Unfinished Business for the convenience of Mr. Kirchoff.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. NorthStar Access – “Wireless Internet Proposal”

Blake informed the EDA Board that at the December 21, 2006, meeting, the EDA continued its discussion on wireless internet services for residents of the area. Staff noted that discussions had been held with two potential service providers. NorthStar Access has prepared a proposal for the City’s consideration that would offer wireless internet to the residents and businesses within Princeton and surrounding areas that are within NorthStar Access service area.

Blake introduced Paavo Pyykkonen and Chris Weise from NorthStar Access to the EDA Board who will explain the basics of wireless internet services with regards to the types, services, and definitions, and outline the details of their proposal. Should the EDA support the proposal, staff will work with NorthStar to meet with the Princeton Public Utilities Commission, and the City Council to develop the final terms of the project. Supporting this proposal does not preclude working with other service providers to extend wireless service to other surrounding areas.

Pyykkonen spoke that broadband is high speed access to the internet. It is also used for telephone service and video service. DSL is what the phone companies provide. Prices are coming down, but the service is going up. More is provided to the customer in regards to speed and access. NorthStar would build a wireless network to cover the downtown areas of Princeton. There would be multiple antennas throughout the area. It would be adequate speed and casual users would be free. Regular users can sign up for subscription and this would be less than the DSL price. If this were approved it would be promoted as Princeton Municipal Network brought to you by NorthStar Access. It would be built at NorthStar expense and maintained by NorthStar. NorthStar would need right-of-way to poles and towers. They are ready to proceed if the City would approve it.

Blake said that he has had an opportunity to sit down with NorthStar and believes this is a niche and not a complete service that would be available, but provides a community function. Before the first antenna goes up it would have to go through the City Council and then Princeton Public Utilities. This is a nice addition to our community to provide service. He does not want to see the City run this. This would provide service for Princeton and not the townships. Maybe in the near future we can provide for the townships with another entity. If the EDA Board is supportive, Blake would start the ball rolling.

Hallin asked if a business is currently here or newly coming in and if they were to sign up for this service would the cost be for the businesses only and not the City.

Pyykkonen said yes, no cost to the City. This service is not intended to provide the townships. There can be many towers in one location. Maybe NorthStar down the road can provide the townships. There are at least three wire providers now in the City with different technology.

Blake asked when hooking up the towers what does that pertain to.

It is under 20 for a charge if you were to sign up for it. said it would be possibly the water tower and lamp post.

Haskamp asked who would be a subscriber for this.

Pyykkonen said someone passing through town or does not need a high band width. They take their lap top. If someone needed this service more than the casual user, the charge is under \$20 to sign up for it.

Blake asked if this network is expandable to the west side of the City.

Pyykkonen said yes. If NorthStar were to upgrade the services, they would pay for the expense if the business demand is there. There would have to be justification for NorthStar to pay the expense to upgrade the services.

Blake said this is a current solution for filling what our needs are now. It might have to change in years to come if needs are greater.

Walker said as long as City Council and Princeton Public Utilities have to agree to this he believes it is a good idea.

HALLIN MOVED, SECOND BY LUND TO APPROVE STAFF TO TAKE NORTHSTAR ACCESS PROPOSAL OF SUPPLYING WIRELESS INTERNET TO THE CITY OF PRINCETON RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES WITHIN NORTHSTAR ACCESS SERVICE AREA TO THE CITY COUNCIL AND PRINCETON PUBLIC UTILITIES. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Barry Kirchoff – Small Business Development Center

Barry Kirchoff, Director of the Central Region Small Business Development Center, was present to provide an overview of services and programs available to local businesses and communities. Kirchoff recently moved from the Cambridge to St. Cloud office and he now serves the Mille Lacs and Sherburne County areas.

Kirchoff spoke about the Small Business Center Program. They receive a portion of funding from the Small Business Administration and the State. Minnesota discovered that linking them through the college has worked very well. He has worked with them for about two and a half years. They provide free one on one consulting for starting and expanding their business. They work a lot with business plans and operational management. They link with the financial institutes. They do not write the business plan but will assist in helping with them like polishing them up and the financial area of the plan.

Kirchoff explained that the main base is a Regional Center and from there is where the contact area would be established for the convenience of the client. They have an outreach center in Elk River and a satellite center in other areas. Satellite centers are operated at certain times and the outreach is full time. Kirchoff said his background is in marketing, human resources, and business relations. He teaches classes to the college students and as a project will set up business consulting. He works a little with the M.B.F.C. and S.C.O.R.E. The P.T.A.C. office is also at their location. Kirchoff commented that in February there is a Minnesota Franchise Spectacular. This is free and you can attend and visit with franchises there and see what the process is for getting into that franchise.

Blake commented that Kirchoff's program may be beneficial in helping local businesses grow or start.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. ThunderAlley

Blake said that Renee Stoddard is unable to attend this evening. He has heard from sources that as of 12-31-06, the doors at ThunderAlley were closed. Blake will speak with Stoddard and keep the EDA Board posted.

B. Web Page Discussion

Blake said that the City is updating its website and Erin Johnson has volunteered to do the City's website. Johnson has worked with the Chamber and School District. For \$150 dollars she would prepare the website to the City's liking. She uses Govoffice website. A City staff person will be able to download minutes and such on their own. It will not be high tech, but will work well for the City. She has done

three other websites and Blake believes it would work well. There is a mock up display that she has put together for an example that the EDA Board can view.

LUND MOVED, SECOND BY HALLIN TO HIRE ERIN JOHNSON TO FINISH UPDATING THE CITY WEBSITE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

MISCELLANEOUS:

A. EDA Balance sheet will not be available for January 9, 2007

B. Verbal Report - Blake

Blake would like the terms for the Aero Business Park lots. Blake understands the EDA Board does not want the buyer to purchase a lot and hold it then turn around and sell it. He also understands that there is a time limit to put up the building. Blake would like to know how the EDA Board is with the idea that if someone were to purchase a lot then assume the assessments for a period of time.

The EDA Board is okay with that. Assessments can be paid through a period of time.

Blake said there is a home interiors contractor that would like to purchase Lot One. Blake understands the EDA Board would like to see a restaurant or something in retail for that lot. Blake would like the EDA Boards view on selling it to this home interiors contractor.

The EDA Board would like to have Lot One for something other then offices. Lots 2 and 3 would be okay for office use.

Lund asked what the interior remodeling would use as a building structure.

Blake said he did not know. This party just wants the visibility and the two acres. There is another interested party who would like to purchase Lot One to build a restaurant but not build it for two years.

Whitcomb asked the EDA Board how far out they would want the buyer to build.

Blake commented that the two interested properties have to sell their current property first before building. The interested party for the restaurant if they were to come to Princeton would like to be on the west end of town and have visibility.

The EDA Board is concerned with not having the building even started in the 18 months they have required on City lots in the past.

Blake said that the interior remodeling company could not close their business until the other is being built. Same for the restaurant. Timing has to flow. That is why they need to extend the 18 months. Blake suggested construction be started in 12 months and finished within 24 months.

Walker asked if the City would buy the property back if they did not meet this agreement.

Blake said yes. While owning it the buyer would pay taxes and assessments while they own it.

Walker commented that if it is called a Business Park then it would not be bad to have an interior remodeling business in there.

Haskamp asked when the 12 months would begin.

Blake said it would be 12 months from the purchase date. Blake suggested building begin at 12 months and completed by 24 months. This could be given to potential buyers and see if they have another proposal. Blake will talk to the interested parties and bring it back to the EDA Board.

Haskamp suggested that if any interested party would like to speak to the EDA Board about what they would like to do with the lots, the Board would be open to listen.

Blake said maybe at the February meeting. The next item Blake reported on was that Fastenal Retail Outlet would like to come to Princeton. They came to City Hall and spoke to Blake today. He took him on a tour and showed him the Rivertown Crossing site, old Coborn's building, and Aero Business Park. If they were to purchase the Coborn's building, they would split it because of the large size. The anchor store process is still continuing. There has been no land purchased signed. The Golf Course Board has spoke with the City in hopes to help them with their financial situation. They would like the City to purchase the golf course for a dollar and then the City would lease it. Blake believes the golf course is a very good asset for the City.

Haskamp said there is a private entity that is looking at it.

Blake said Lex Croly is going to Cambridge. He was thinking of purchasing the Westling Hanger but the expense to update the building, he chose to go to Cambridge instead. It also looks like R.E. Systems will be going to Cambridge. The Visionary Committee is working hard at creating a park across the river, and the City is in the process of purchasing the land. The Economic Development Interim will hopefully be provided to work to the City for free. The Downtown Council is coming in February to make a presentation. A Stormwater Management Plan is going out for proposals. This would be were an anchor store could move a pond from the site and be someplace else where a building can be bigger or a road can be better. This is to create more usable land and add value to the commercial district.

HALLIN MOVED, SECOND BY WALKER TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 6 AYES, 0 NAYS. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:50 P.M.

ATTEST:

Paul Whitcomb , President

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assist.