

Frankenmuth Economic Development Corporation  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 18, 2021

In accordance with an order issued November 18, 2020 by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the meeting was held remotely in order to ensure that the City of Frankenmuth complies with limits on gatherings. This meeting was open to the public and public participation is allowed and encouraged.

Attending: Tamara Tsulaia, Abby Curtis, Joe Cramer, Vickie Schmitzer, Todd Jennings, Beth Reindel, Mike Fassezke, John Benson, and Jamie Furbush  
Absent: Brandon Muller, Mike Grossi, Michael Southgate, Chris Rittmueller, and Tim Hildner

Also attending were Joann Crary of Saginaw Future, Bridget Smith, Ashley McKnight and Sheila Stamiris.

A roll call of members was held to determine attendance and the location of each participating member who were located in various locations in Frankenmuth. A quorum of members participated. There was no public input.

The minutes of the EDC meeting of January 21, 2021, were approved as written. Cramer moved; Benson seconded.

Membership. Member Mike Grossi has tendered his resignation from the board citing his inability to attend the Thursday meetings. His resignation was received with regret. Member John Benson announced that he would also be resigning in the near future as he will be retiring from Frankenmuth Insurance in September.

Staff shared that the board may have up to 15 members, per the bylaws. Applicants submit an application to the City Council for appointment. The EDC may recommend appointments to the City Council. Council members Schmitzer and Reindel concur that the Council will take into consideration any recommendation from standing committees before any appointments are made.

With the resignations of Monchilov and Grossi and the pending resignation of Benson (upon his retirement), membership will be reduced to 12, allowing one, two or three new members to be named. After discussion, it is the consensus of the Board to hold membership at 13, pending the availability and interest of someone with a needed skill set to help achieve the goals of the board.

Benson proposes that the Board consider the appointment of incoming Frankenmuth Insurance CEO Fred Edmonds. Edmonds has expressed interest in the appointment and has served in other community positions including Chamber president. Benson shared that Edmonds wants to serve the community through the EDC.

After discussion, the EDC recommends the appointment of Fred Edmond as a member of the EDC. Cramer moved; Furbush seconded. It is noted that the CEO/Chairman of the Board of Frankenmuth Insurance has been a member of the EDC since it began in 1999. Benson shared that Frankenmuth Insurance has been committed to the work of the EDC and welcomes the opportunity to continue its service to the EDC.

In other discussion, it was suggested that with the resignation of Mike Grossi, the Board might look for a representative of the "industrial" sector.

Executive Search Update. Stamiris shares that the deadline for applications is February 19. The DDA wants to appoint a new Director for start date May 1. Manager Smith shared that she sees the role of the EDC in a more collaborative process with the DDA. The DDA will be the first focus of the new Director and overseeing the work of the EDC will be joint effort with the Director and other City Staff. Saginaw Future President Joann Crary offered help to the EDC during the transition and until such time as the DDA director is able to work with the EDC.

Special Assessment Recommendation for the Installation of Street Lights on Keystone Way. Based on earlier discussions at the EDC and at the request of staff, Consumers Energy proposed the installation of four – 30’ steel street lights fitted with 72-watt LED fixtures along the south side of Keystone Way. The cost of installation is estimated at \$21,500 to be funded by special assessment on adjacent property owners. The cost of the project is calculated based on Consumers Pricing of \$18,156, plus restoration and administration (public hearing costs) of \$3344 (estimate.) Two of three property owners (Uptown North Main and Kremin) are aware of the discussion.

Previously, the EDC decided not to extend the street lighting project to the newly constructed Keystone Street nor to construct new sidewalks on the south side of Keystone Way or on either side of Keystone Street pending more development.

The City has an established protocol for managing street lighting and sidewalk special assessment formulas. Corner properties pay 100% of the cost based on their street frontage (and length); assessments on corner properties of their “second side” are charged the total length minus 60 feet. In this case, Uptown North Main and O’Reilly’s special assessments are corner properties and Keystone Way is their “second side.” Kremin’s frontage is Keystone Way and their special assessment will be calculated accordingly. When the City extends lighting to Keystone Street (and on Kremin’s “second side”) the fee will be discounted accordingly. The cost of a special assessment can be financed by the City.

The estimated assessment per property calculates as: Uptown North Main (52% or \$11,262), O’Reilly’s Auto Parts (20% or \$4,351.) and Kremin Inc (27% or \$5,887.) The actual special assessment will be calculated when the project is finished. Consumers Energy is ready to install end of March; staff will request May (after approval of Special Assessment.)

After discussion, the Board recommends that the City Council begin the Special Assessment process needed to fund the installation of street lighting on Keystone Way as described. Benson moved; Furbush seconded. Member Schmitzer, President of the Frankenmuth Credit Union (owner of the Uptown property) abstained.

(Meeting guest Joann Crary, President of Saginaw Future, left the meeting.)

Budget. Staff prepared the EDC budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, beginning July 1, 2021. The proposal includes the annual stipend for Saginaw Future, the cost of a shared membership in the Michigan Economic Developer’s Association, a Marketing initiative to create an attraction piece (print and digital) and enhanced website along with an opportunity share the cost of a “business development” video piece(s) with the DDA, and the hosting of a FAM (familiarization tour) for regional real estate developers and agents for a total budget of \$13,270.

Staff suggests there may be opportunities to attract outside funds for the FAM tour and the other outreach activities. The budget is in line with the EDC’s work plan. Manager Smith shared that EDC’s goals are consistent with the City’s newly adopted workplan and goals.

The Board recommends a budget for \$13,270 for the EDC as outlined. Furbush moved; Jennings seconded. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Around the Table. Curtis reports the Woolen Mill should break ground on the new building at the end of March; Abby's retail store is under renovation.

Tsulaia reports that her group is targeting early summer for the construction of the Greenfield condos.

Jennings reports that DTE is actively looking for solar panel and wind generation sites similar to those developed near Lapeer and St. John's Michigan.

Reindel shared that the City Council approved its strategy and work plan including its Vision, Mission and Goals. Staff will share with the board.

Benson shared that he'll be retiring as CEO of Frankenmuth Insurance in September. He reports that the company is picking engineers to move the Weber Farm project forward.

Furbush shared that most special events will happen in 2021 and likely through a modified form.

Smith shared that the City is working with a "scooter company" called "Bird" who has developed a small size city model. They have signed an agreement with Midland. Concern was expressed for how the scooters are managed and how they impact pedestrian traffic. Smith shared that Bird partners with a local company to provide maintenance and daily management. Also, they use "geo-fencing" to forcibly restrict the access of the scooters within certain areas. The Traffic Advisory Committee will review this proposal when more information is known.

Smith also shared that the City opened bids for the Flint Street reconstruction and is pleased to share that the bids are nearly \$500,000 below the engineer's budget. This project has been referenced on the City's Capital Improvement Plan to improve sanitary flows and capacity. The investment enables expansion at the Weber Farm.

Fassezke shared that the Star of the West Project on Main Street is moving forward with the installation of new steel on the east side to the eventual 6-story height. The exterior of the building will be an attractive finish.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Stamiris