

KENTWOOD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
MINUTES
March 20, 2023

Members Present: Green, Tyson, DeBruyn, Deluccia, Blubaugh, Coughlin (remote), Gaffin (remote), Clements (remote)
Members Absent: Swoboda with notification
Others Present: Lisa Golder, Economic Development Planner, Mayor Stephen Kepley, Keith Morgan, Wyoming/Kentwood Chamber of Commerce

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes:

Motion by DeBruyn with support from Blubaugh, to approve the minutes of February 20, 2023.

--Motion Carried--

3. Discussion regarding Metro Cruise:

The MetroCruise is being managed by another entity. The Wyoming Kentwood Chamber of Commerce had been managing the event for many years. Mr. Brandon Simmons was unable to attend the meeting; he will be able to attend the next EDC meeting in April. He will be requesting the City/EDC support of the MetroCruise. The center of the activity is intended to be relocated from Rogers Plaza to Woodland Mall, as had occurred last year. Deluccia said that the MetroCruise activity at the mall was not a problem last year. Tyson said that it would be beneficial to have numbers on the economic impact of the MetroCruise to discuss next month. Mayor Kepley said that the city is somewhat limited in providing publicity for the event.

4. Small Business Training Program

The EDC members discussed the Small Business Training Program that is now scheduled to take place over 4 Tuesday afternoons (May 23, May 30, June 6 and June 13th) from 3:30-5:30PM. There was discussion regarding how to let people know about the program and the format for an application form for the program. Keith Morgan is working on this; he would like to use a fillable form. He said he has talked to Spring GR about whether to charge a fee for the training in order to make the businesses have "skin in the game", and Spring GR recommended a \$50 fee. He said we could have a scholarship program if this is a hardship. Keith said that WKTU has agreed to video the classes so we can use as a teaching tool for other businesses. There was discussion as to whether the businesses would be required to attend all of the classes, or whether they could miss one. Tyson said because of the specialized training she is providing, she thinks that all of the businesses would have to attend all the classes to receive the benefits of the Chamber memberships and business coaching.

Lisa said she will be working with Sabo PR on a flyer to attract candidates; Commissioner Clarkston Morgan may have some businesses in mind that would be good candidates. There was a discussion about the type of candidates that would be eligible and the fact that the businesses would have to be located in the City of Kentwood in order to be eligible.

5. Liquor License-Main Event entertainment

Golder said that Main Event Entertainment is planning make application soon for the quota liquor license.

6. There was discussion on the benefits of sponsoring personal finance classes in the city. There are many entities that offer this sort of counseling (Lacks, Junior Achievement, banks) but it was acknowledged that the need is great. Classes for tenants can be offered, because there are many evictions in the city. Resources for financial help could be provided in these classes. It was acknowledged that many renters may come from different countries that have different currencies or laws. Discussion ensued on whether and how the city could play a supporting role.

7. The next meeting of the Kentwood EDC is scheduled for April 17, 2023.

Meeting adjourned.

Action Items for April:

Meet with Sabo PR regarding program advertising and timing

Develop application form

Start list of eligible businesses