

Chair Graner called the regular Rockford HRA meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall, 6031 Main Street, Rockford, MN.

### **Roll Call**

Roll call was taken and the following members were present: Graner, Hafften, Martinson and Wenz. Absent: Beyer. Also in attendance were: Joanne Foust, Economic Development Consultant and Administrator Carswell.

### **Approve Minutes/ July 26, 2011 & August 9, 2011**

MOTION was made by Martinson, seconded by Hafften to approve the minutes of the July 26 and August 9, 2011 HRA meetings.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

### **Financial Report**

Joanne Foust presented the financial report. Expenditures year to date and Revenues year to date and a fund balance of \$50,820.24.

Motion was made by Wenz seconded by Hafften to accept the Financial Report for the HRA.  
MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

### **Initiative Foundation Presentation**

Representative Mary Bauer from the Initiative foundation provided a presentation about the foundation and some of their history. The Initiative Foundation serves 13 counties, has provided 3,541 grants totaling \$21.9 million, made 863 loans totaling \$38.8 million, awarded 661 scholarships totaling \$529,072, leverage over \$244.4 million in private business investment, created/retained over 10,812 jobs and provided training and assistance to several communities, non-profits and lake association early childhood coalitions.

The economic recession of 2007-2009 has cost Minnesota more than 10,000 jobs in manufacturing and construction. More than 92,000 homes foreclosed statewide. Regional unemployment still ranges from 6.5% to 12.5%.

The Initiative Foundation impact on WrightCounty over past 25 years includes: \$1,095,444 grants, \$3,165,212 in business loans, 950 jobs created or retained and leveraged \$19,808,635.

The most recent priorities and goals for economic growth and recovery priorities include –

- resilient businesses,
- thriving communities,
- effective organizations (non profit leadership programs)
- local philanthropy

The Initiative Foundation has assisted River works Community Organization in Rockford and they are featured in a new article in their IQ magazine. The Initiative Foundation reported that they have also assisted Sharks and Auto Chlor (VerTech) from Rockford with business loans.

Mary Bauer thanked Rockford for their continued support and will continue to be a local resource to help fill the gap for business, non profits, and communities.

### **Approve 2012 HRA budget**

Carswell presented a draft budget proposal for approval. The budget revenues total antenna rents, loan repayments, and a fund transfer for a total of \$24,831. The expenditure budget for 2012 includes funding for our consultant, Initiative Foundation, and B3/Food Co-Op assistance for a total of \$24,300.

MOTION was made by Martinson seconded by Wenz to approve the 2012 HRA budget as presented.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

### **Grocer/Food Co-op**

The two prospective grocer's staff had been working with contacted staff last week to let us know that now is not a good time for them to start up a store in Rockford. Therefore, staff is going to proceed with forming a committee for a food co-op and hold a town meeting to see if there is support in the community. We have about eight members that have signed up for the food co-op committee currently.

### **Region 7W Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Projects**

The re-establishment of an EDA in Region 7W which includes Wright County is being considered by an interim Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Projects committee that is working with the East Central Regional Development Commission. They are considering projects that will assist cities and businesses and assist in creating and retaining jobs that could be eligible for federal funding.

The deadline for submittal of these potential projects is September 29, 2011. Therefore, Joanne Foust and Nancy Carswell have provided a list of four (4) projects that are part of the cities Capital Improvement Plan to be considered for federal funding as follows:

- Industrial park/Business park Development \$3.5 million
- Acquisition of Non-conforming, blighted properties in downtown. \$320,000
- Highway Commercial Redevelopment and Storm Water Improvements \$1.5 million
- Highway 55 and Autumn oaks/Electric Drive Traffic Signal, Autumn Oaks extension, downtown access management \$1.5 million.

MOTION was made by Hafften, seconded by Graner to authorize staff submit the following projects to the CEDS:

- Industrial park/Business park Development \$3.5 million
- Acquisition of Non-conforming, blighted properties in downtown. \$320,000
- Highway Commercial Redevelopment and Storm Water Improvements \$1.5 million
- Highway 55 and Autumn Oaks/Electric Drive Traffic Signal, Autumn Oaks extension, downtown access management \$1.5 million.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

### **Marketing Video Update**

Joanne Foust reported that the draft of the marketing video is complete and will be edited into a short version. The following community/business members were included on the video:

- Dr Perry & Kimberly Buffie
- Denise Kesanen, Riverworks Organization
- Renee Hafften, Council Member
- Ben Sachs, MN Diversified Products
- Chamber Meeting
- Paul Durand, Rockford School Superintendent

- Ryan Jensen, Rockford High Principal
- Taylor Dumas & Emily Koenen, Rockford Students
- Mike Beyer, Mayor
- Steve Huston, Bank West
- Pastor Jon Rhodes, Our Father's Lutheran Church

#### **No Interest Loan Request/ ABC Lettering**

We are in receipt of a no interest loan for ABC Lettering in the amount of \$2,000 for two new doors, awnings, and improvements to the wood portion of the façade. Terms of the loan would be 18 months with payments of \$111.11. The applicant is not ready to move forward with this project yet, however, wanted approval from the HRA at this meeting.

MOTION was made by Hafften, seconded by Martinson to approve a No Interest Loan in the amount of \$2,000 for ABC Lettering; 8200 Bridge Street for 18 months starting after the project is complete contingent upon a favorable credit check.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

#### **Resolution 11-39/Declare Intent to Create Redevelopment District/6127 Mechanic Street**

The HRA recently approved the acquisition and demolition of a blighted structure at 6127 Mechanic Street. Therefore, prior to the demolition of the structure the building official has inspected the building to ensure that it meets the guidelines of a substandard structure.

If the HRA adopts a resolution declaring the intent of establishing a TIF Redevelopment district then if there is a project within three years TIF may be used for the redevelopment of the site.

MOTION was made by Hafften, seconded by Wenz to adopt HRA Resolution 11-39 Declaring Intent to Create a Redevelopment District.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

#### **Economic Development Report**

The HRA reviewed Joanne Fousts' report on the status of the following projects: Chamber development meetings, Valspar MN Beautiful Grant, B-3 program, Marketing available sites, Manufacturers week, other miscellaneous items. SCORE has met with 15 business people.

#### **Redevelopment Grant**

Redevelopment grants are available through DEED for projects such as: contamination remediation, redevelopment TIF projects, Redevelopment potential within the municipality, etc. Grants pay up to half of redevelopment costs for a qualifying site for applicants such as: cities, HRA's, EDA's, counties and port authorities.

#### **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by Hafften, seconded by Martinson.

MOTION CARRIED-VOTING IN FAVOR: GRANER, HAFFTEN, MARTINSON AND WENZ.

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.