

City of Winsted
Downtown Vibrancy Commission
Winsted City Hall – Lewis Room
Tuesday, November 12, 2013
3:00 p.m.

Downtown Vibrancy Commission Members Present: Nancy Fasching
Chip Guggemos
Anne Schulenberg
Joe Swanson

Downtown Vibrancy Commission Members Absent: Mary Wiemiller

Staff Present: Clay Wilfahrt, City Administrator
Mayor Steve Stotko, City Council Liaison

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Chip Guggemos, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2013

Nancy Fasching made a motion to approve the minutes of the Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting on October 8, 2013. Anne Schulenberg seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

3) No Staff Report.

4) Old Business

a) Discuss a Brochure Emphasizing Winsted's Unique Opportunities

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission discussed the creation of a brochure to emphasize Winsted's unique opportunities, events, and businesses. Guggemos stated that he would like the group to start conceptualizing a brochure for the City of Winsted. He added that he would like to contact Niko Alexander regarding the development of a brochure, and asked if funding is available to compensate Alexander for the work. Guggemos mentioned that the Winsted Area Chamber of Commerce may be willing to help fund this project, as well. Clay Wilfahrt, City Administrator, stated that he liked the idea of publishing a brochure, and added that he would be willing to bring the request to the City Council, especially if the cost would be covered in conjunction with the Winsted Area Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Stotko agreed with Wilfahrt's response.

Fasching asked who the target audience would be for this brochure, and gave an example of a map brochure that was developed by a city in Northern Minnesota. Guggemos stated that the brochure would be printed locally, and he would like it to grab the attention of people, and make them notice that there is something different about Winsted when they see it. Guggemos stated that he would like it to emphasize the trails, the downtown, parks, and the quality of life in Winsted. He would also like it to reflect that jobs are available in Winsted.

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission also discussed creating a presence on the internet and social media, including Twitter, Facebook, and various websites. They also discussed connecting with other entities to expand the City's presence.

Once a rough draft brochure is developed, the Downtown Vibrancy Commission will have the opportunity to review and discuss the content, design and overall theme.

b) Discuss a Position (Vision) Statement

Guggemos stated that there had been previous discussion about creating a broader vision, or position statement for the Downtown Vibrancy Commission. Fasching elaborated by stating that this statement will bring the commission to a higher level, or overview, so that when they are presented with opportunities, they can steer those opportunities into creating a bigger cohesion, and fit it into the big picture for downtown Winsted.

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission reviewed and discussed the vision statement that was developed by the Downtown Vibrancy Task Force.

Schulenberg made a motion to adopt, for the time being, the Downtown Vibrancy Task Force Vision Statement, as it is stated on page fifteen (15) of the July, 2012 Downtown Vibrancy Report. Joe Swanson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

c) Brainstorm Ways to Stimulate Investment in Downtown Winsted

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission discussed ways to stimulate investment in downtown Winsted.

Suggestions include:

- Cultivate an environment where businesses would like to be
- Create a brochure to establish a presence for the City of Winsted and the downtown
- Make the downtown more attractive
- Create some unity in the appearance of the buildings that are located downtown
- Write letters to entrepreneurial colleges and universities to attract new types of business to town
- Find ways to occupy buildings with businesses, even if they are not high-traffic businesses, so the buildings do not look deserted
- Invest in advertising with reference to locating new businesses to Winsted
- Create cooperative work environments for telecommuters or people who are in need of an office area
- Research the possibility of installing broadband internet to attract business
- Utilize what already exists in Winsted (events, businesses, trails)
- Consider approaching business owners to create a Groupon for six (6) months of free rent in a business space
- Create a package for media, signage, technical assistance and loans to create and/or open a business; similar to the programs that the cities of Hutchinson and Princeton, Minnesota have offered, to motivate people to think about opening a business in downtown Winsted
- Research options for providing loans or grants to businesses

5) New Business

a) City Update

Wilfahrt provided updates about the following items:

- Hotel Feasibility Study
- Luce Line State Trail Improvements

6) Announcements

a) List of Business Owners and Occupants

Guggemos and Fasching requested a list of business owners and occupants to allow the members of the Downtown Vibrancy Commission the opportunity to communicate with them regarding their buildings and businesses. Wilfahrt stated that City staff can provide a list for the group.

b) December, 2013 Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission agreed to cancel the December, 2013 meeting, and resume meeting in January, 2014 on the regularly scheduled date and time.

c) January, 2014 Downtown Vibrancy Commission Meeting Agenda Items

The Downtown Vibrancy Commission established the following items for the January, 2014 meeting agenda:

- Presentation by Shannon Sweeney of David Drown Associates regarding financial and economic development tools
- Update regarding the progress of the brochure
- Update regarding city projects that may affect the downtown

7) Adjournment

Fasching made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Swanson seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Clay Wilfahrt

Clay Wilfahrt,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Amanda J. Zeidler

Amanda J. Zeidler,
Utility Billing & Payroll Clerk
City of Winsted