

HIGHLAND, ILLINOIS
MINUTES OF REGULAR SESSION
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
CITY HALL, 1115 BROADWAY
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2010
7:00 PM

Call to Order

The meeting of the Industrial Development Commission was called to order at 12:06 pm by Darell Bellm.

Roll Call

Members present: Darell Bellm and Jon Greve.

Also present: City Manager Latham, Director of Finance Sharon Rusteberg, Building Zoning Kevin Limestall, Ad Hoc Jami Jansen, Executive Director of the Highland Chamber of Commerce, and Dennis Rinderer.

Approval of Minutes

Jon Greve made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 4, 2010 meeting of the Industrial Development Commission. The motion was seconded by Darell Bellm. Corrections were noted – the name of the town in Indiana was Scottsburg, not Scottsbury and the name of the Mayor is Graham, not Graehm. All voted in favor, none against, the motion carried.

New Business

Discussed a letter from Robert Ady – He offered alternatives. Mark said the website is the number one improvement we need.

Latham stated Willy Frey may have a buyer / lease Devtron building. The info came from websites. The interested party goes around and purchases restaurant equipment and refurbishes it and sells it nationwide. It doesn't provide a lot of jobs but fills a vacant building - 5 jobs at tops. Mark Latham sent them a business application form. Website development is crucial. Mark is looking into website developers. Bob Ady's daughter does website development. Pretty comprehensive approach to changes in website. Latham suggested that IDC take a strong look and come back next month on how they want to proceed with the website. Darell Bellm asked if the IDC has a budget? Latham stated their expenses come out of the City's Community Development Fund. Kevin is responsible for the current, Grow Highland website. It was developed by Tony Smalling through Mid America web.com. The City currently pays \$40 per month on a month to month contract. Mid America hosts the website content,

trains, etc. The website was developed in 2006 – 2007 when the Economic Development Director was at the City. Discuss website next month.

Second thing – the IDC needs to work on a strategic plan of action – where we want to go and how we get there. Darell suggested the City should have a sight-ready area for any prospects. Latham - We don't have any property or industrial park. He spoke with Ralph Korte about his area. If we could put Ralph's Commerce Place property on our website, we'd at least have one product. One strategy is to retain and grow with the existing industries. It was hard when Artex and Jakel left town. The Mayor and City Manager continue to visit large employers every two years, including the three auto dealers. The City does an economic summit, meeting 2-3 times a year, to get industrial heads together along with other business leaders. They have had energy audits had Peggy Sebastian talk about the Hospital and listen to the needs of the businesses in town. In Sept, Dan Cook will discuss fiber and reveal costs. Successes beside Devtron. Head of Tri-onics met with the Mayor and City Manager to discuss consolidating their corporate offices from O'Fallon MO to the Highland location. Tri-onics in Highland has 26 employees and 12 in O'Fallon MO. The City has some incentives to offer. They have 45 major international customers. This move would bring 12 white collar jobs to Highland. The City will continue to work on that. The City should continue to work with existing industries. Wicks business has picked up, Smurfit is still making money. There's a rumor that Tom Head may purchase and expand the Schmitt house which is in the TIF district.

Darell Bellm has been collecting and tabulating the surveys. One of the main comments he sees is that the City should be looking to expand employment opportunities in Highland. Citizens feel strongly about this. Citizens will support what we have to do to keep businesses here and bring more into town.

Land – Denny Rinderer contracted with the City and is working hard on purchasing land outside the city limits for the NE Quadrant peripheral route. He has been successful. Latham stated that for an industrial development site, Peggy Sebastian asks that the City not consider the Grotfendt property at this time. Bellm stated that leaves three properties left to consider – Ottensmeier property – 100 acres north side of tracks. Denny Rinderer asked that the City need to get the land purchase for the NE route first. The purchases should be completed by the end of the year.

Darell asked if there is a possibility to discuss property purchase for an industrial park? Could discuss Sievers property (88 acres) – it's north of 40 and 143 and south. The land is cut up by roads and RR. There's a gas line running through it. Others, like Dow Jones and Smurfit Stone found it was cheaper to bring in by truck and not use the rail. Bellm stated the cost is 75% higher bringing in by truck over rail. Ottensmeier has a lot of property, but may be split by peripheral route. Rinderer suggested the City keep closer to north side of Highland in case we get the interchange. DB - ; looks at Schmitt, Yann,

and Weder property on the west end. Sievers property and Ottensmeier ground is fairly wet. Limestall stated you have to watch the type of soil. Consider Ruth Steiner's farm to the west of middle school and east of Wal-Mart right north of Troxler. Also property north of Wal-Mart. It has pretty good drainage and may be in the City limits and has 82.61 acres. Roadways would be close. Board asked Denny to talk to Ruth Steiner about property. Latham is trying to contact Joe Pearson from the US Economic Dev Organization in Chicago. This is who the City of Scottsburg Indiana used for grants. Monday, Mark Latham will contact him and outline what services they provide for us to build an industrial park. What types of funds are available?

President of Tri-onics said over in Missouri, they have some very good training for industry. In the Metro east – training is very poor. Jon Boulanger sent info – Basler works with the Illinois Extension center – they have discount costs for training. They do training for half of what it normally costs. Latham - we had a job fair. Have someone call all HR directors. More jobs coming in. Majority paid by county for training for the job fair.

Bellm - Did you read info on Edwardsville Incubator project from Marilyn? Would it help to go over to see them? It would be good if we had some association with the college. Highland has a problem because our representative on the county board doesn't cooperate with anyone at the county. Latham - in the last 5 years, the City is trying to improve relations with the County. Rinderer stated there's another property – part of the Raeber farm with close to 80 acres to the west of the Korte Rec Center. We bought those acres for \$30,000. Also, Mersinger's property west of Ralph's property. Latham stated – everyone likes the Steiner property.

Direct City Manager to look into a job fair. Public really doesn't understand the importance of keeping businesses in Highland. Darell Bellm - Robert Sawyer is the name that Scottsburg used for Economic Development.

Copy of info to Marilyn. How to finance – US Economic Development also gives money to states for industrial development parks. County could help us.

Next Meeting

This next meeting of the Industrial Development Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at 12:00 pm at City Hall, 1115 Broadway.

Adjournment

Jon Greve made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Darell Bellm. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.