

**MINUTES OF THE
WATERTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**
Regular Meeting Friday, March 27, 2020

Ken Grotbo
Cory Mitteness
Roxanne Wilmes
Deborah Everson
Lindsay Guetzkow

1. Please note that, pursuant to the authority provided by Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.021, subd. 1(1), the City Administrator and the City Attorney have determined that in-person meetings of the EDA are not practical or prudent due to the COVID-19 public health pandemic and the declared national, state, and local emergencies. Further, the City Administrator and the City Attorney have determined that it is not feasible nor practical or prudent due to the health pandemic to have members of the public, city staff, or members of the EDA in attendance at the regular meeting location. Meetings of the EDA will be conducted by electronic or telephonic means. Under Minn. Stat. Sec. 13D.021, subd. 3, to the extent practical and possible, the EDA will allow individuals to monitor the meeting electronically as provided below:

Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/126420952?pwd=UkpJZ1c2d2R5OUNhUmpjYk9RdmUxdz09>

Meeting ID: 126-420-952

Meeting Password: 702288

2. Roll Call

Chairman Ken Grotbo called the EDA meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Monday March 23, 2020 via electronic meeting conducted using Zoom.com.

EDA members checked in online: Grotbo, Roxanne Wilmes, Deborah Everson and Lindsay Guetzkow.

Staff check in online and present at City Hall: City Administrator Shane Fineran and Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Tschudi.

Guest checked in online: Kyle Jarvis.

3. Adopt Agenda

WILMES MOVED, EVERSON SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. WILMES AYE, GUETZKOW AYE, EVERSON AYE, GROTOBO AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. New Business

- A. Emergency Pandemic Response Rebate Program

City Administrator Fineran recapped the joint meeting with City Council on March 23rd to discuss Emergency Business Pandemic Rebate Programs. After that meeting, staff was given direction to revise the program to reflect relief to all businesses in Watertown. Fineran said there were 58 businesses identified in Watertown. These are brick and mortar businesses, not residential based businesses. The EDA has \$447,000 in uncommitted fund balance available to assist in business type economic development activities. Fineran showed a comparison of the rebates that could be offered to the businesses ranging from \$16,000 to \$49,000. In order to complete this giving a 100% credit would require staff to enter the credits manually due to the complexity of coding required with current utility billing software.

Everson asked if business owners should apply for this or if the EDA should just apply it across the

board. Fineran said it is not structured as an application currently. Roxanne asked who is deciding the length of the local emergency. Fineran said the city council is and currently it runs through April. Grotbo asked if there are any businesses that we can identify that would all of a sudden start using more utilities that would alter the estimates. Fineran said not unless someone is doing a lot of heavy outdoor watering. Guetzkow asked about granting credits to landlords and knowing how the tenants receive the credits. Fineran said we do not have the ability to assure they receive the credit, but he hopes it would get passed along. Grotbo asked if there will be any negative feedback. Fineran said the message is that the EDA is stepping up to help the Watertown businesses. The criticism could be that the EDA is using taxpayer dollars to help businesses, however these are resources we have in place that gives us the flexibility to do this. We currently help new business, new development, existing businesses. The city and EDA have all authority to do this through state statute.

Kyle Jarvis said the percentage method seems to be the most fair rather than the \$100.

Chair Grotbo abstains from the voting.

Chair Grotbo will sign letters to inform businesses of the utility credit coming from the EDA. Everson suggested making a press release with the local newspaper.

EVERSON MOVED, WILMES SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2020-03EDA, ESTABLISHING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES IMPACTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC APPROVING 100% REBATE FOR ALL LOCAL BUSINESSES. GUETZKOW AYE, EVERSON AYE, WILMES AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Adjournment

WILMES MOVED, GUETZKOW SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:30 AM. WILMES AYE, GUETZKOW AYE, EVERSON AYE, GROTO AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Ken Grotbo, Chair

Shane Fineran, Executive Director