

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 7, 2023, COMBINED MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEES, 6 p.m., Council Chamber. Members present: A. Christianson Sr., N. Johnson, J. Hoover, G. Pedersen, S. Weiss. Others present: B. Grotzinger, A. Kenyon, A. Strom.

Call to Order:

Christianson Sr. called the meeting to order.

Tourism Promotion:

Chamber of Commerce Director Andy Strom appeared and commented on the following:

- *Reviewed statistics underscoring the significance of visitors to the Rusk County economy.
- *Identified trends in tourist activities here and elsewhere. Dark sky watching. Cultural tourism.
- *Identified ways to improve local tourism marketing, including but not limited to upping the budget.
- *Noted what a turn off poor upkeep of highly visible property can be to visitors. Signage controls could help as could creation of a City maintenance (not cleaning) position.

A concern was raised about seeming micromanaging of the visitor center.

Historic Preservation Ordinance:

It was noted that the next step in implementing the recently adopted historic preservation ordinance is to establish the committee to carry out its functions.

Charging Stations:

Mr. Hoover will see what he can do to determine the cost of installing electrical vehicle charging stations at the visitor center, or elsewhere.

Welcome Signs:

There was discussion of next steps to upgrade or replace current welcome signs. Identifying desired images will be next, once permission to use these images is granted.

Economic Development:

There was discussion of how to increase economic development efforts, with the following mentioned as possible ways to do so.

- *The County is rumored to be considering re-creation of a position, which could relieve the City of some Joint Management efforts it currently performs.
- *A support position at City Hall or the Visitor Center could be created which could assist with time consuming research and handling of routine resident questions that consume much City Administrator time.
- *Charging more economic development operating costs to TIFDs could help with the cost aspect.

Other:

There was some grumbling about discussing certain topics over and over without taking action on them.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned after 7 p.m.