City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
January 26, 2016 – 7:30 a.m.
Municipal Complex – City Council Chambers Conference Room

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m. by Mr. Fowler.

Roll Call/Attendance
Members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Haleblian, Leech, Maule, Reece, Saidler, and Fowler were present.

Michelle Rentzsch, Director of Community Development, and Katie Cowlin, Planner, were present from staff. Vanessa Baker, I Shop CL consultant, was also present.

Approve Minutes of the December 8, 2015 Meeting
Mr. Haleblian moved to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2015 EDC meeting as presented. Mr. Affrunti seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Dalzell, DeHaan, Haleblian, Leech, Maule, and Saidler voted aye. Members Affrunti, Reece, and Fowler abstained. Motion passed.

Public Participation
Mr. Fowler congratulated Mr. Haleblian for his appointment to the City Council. Mr. Haleblian thanked the members.

Presentations:
I Shop CL Social Media Campaign - Vanessa Baker
Ms. Cowlin said Ms. Baker had not arrived and asked that this item be moved to the end of the agenda.

Business anniversaries and tour updates
Ms. Rentzsch said the members received a list of the businesses who received anniversary awards in the past. There are no businesses in the queue for the next presentation. Ms. Maule said she sent a list of the anniversaries for Chamber members. Ms. Rentzsch said that is a good start. Ms. Rentzsch said there is another spread sheet for the members to review regarding when businesses started and asked that the members review the list and advise of any suggested anniversaries.

Mr. Fowler asked if there has been any movement on a tour with Mathews Company. Ms. Rentzsch said an email has been sent and she thinks they attend a trade show at the first of the year. Mr. Fowler asked who the members should e-mail with information. Ms. Rentzsch said to e-mail her.

Welcome Packet
Ms. Maule said the Chamber is in the process of creating a new Welcome Packet and are reviewing other Chambers' packets to see what they like. Advertisements are being sold to businesses for the book. They have received a lot of support from Diana Kenney with the Downtown Main Street. The Chamber is also redesigning the Shopping Guide. Ms. Rentzsch asked what they have already compiled and how the City can assist. Ms. Maule said there is a welcoming letter from Mayor Shepley. Also, she would like to include what new City residents need to know such as vehicle stickers, etc.

Organization reports:
Downtown Crystal Lake

Mr. Fowler said the annual dinner is coming up and discussed the Raue Center's recent lineup. The Downtown CL group is also working on a recycling program for the downtown. Mr. Leech said he was contacted and did respond to the survey.

Chamber of Commerce
Ms. Maule said they have announced the advocacy calendar for the year and the first event will be Feb. 5th. Their annual dinner will have US Chamber of Commerce speak on May 26. She reviewed other future dates and topics and will be attending a legislative summit this week. Ms. Maule is working on the parade and this year the non-profits will need to pay a $25 fee and chamber members will pay less than other businesses for space in the parade. Ms. Maule asked if there are any ideas for their Chamber magazine please let her know. Many people miss the paper copy of the Chamber information so the magazine is intended to fill that void. She also met with the Northwest Herald rep who said the paper will be going to a tablet format in the near future.

I SHOP
Ms. Baker apologized for being late. She handed out reports regarding the I Shop social media campaign. Facebook has moved to a pay to play mentality, and we get free exposure from "friends" on Facebook. Currently we are at 2,100 likes and some have unliked the page, which is normal. Things are "peaking out" as far as being viral. They are working on getting more photos of people shopping Crystal Lake. Ms. Baker said she is working with Diana Kenney and Downtown businesses. Also press releases have been sent to the Chamber. Currently they are creating a library of information that can be used at any time – doesn't need to be used only once. Sale notifications do well and then photos on Facebook. She has also posted videos and hopes to get more. As for Twitter we have 45,000 impressions and continue to get people engaged with I Shop. There will be more Tweets when the character limit goes away.

Mr. Affrunti asked what is driving the surge. Ms. Baker said the crowd's interest determines the surge which is depending on what is posted and if they want to share the information. She has worked a lot with salons in January since they haven't received much coverage. Mr. Reece said that is why people go downtown Crystal Lake - for ice cream and a haircut. Ms. Baker said she is grabbing content from the floral manager of Jewel and added that to the sites as well.

Mr. Fowler said the contract is through May. Ms. Baker said yes. Ms. Maule asked about Instagram. Ms. Baker said Facebook is larger but Instagram is growing. Ms. Rentzsch said it depends on who you are trying to reach. Ms. Baker said Instagram is more artistic and we would require the posts to be more thoughtful and have photos.

Mr. Fowler thanked Ms. Baker for attending the meeting.

Organization reports – continued.

City of Crystal Lake (Staff)
Ms. Rentzsch said Willow Creek's conceptual was before the PZC and CC. It would be a multi-year project. Mr. Fowler asked if they will keep Friendship House. Ms. Rentzsch said yes.

Ms. Rentzsch said they have received many resumes for the Economic Development Manager job advertisement and interviews will be soon occurring.

Ms. Rentzsch said Mr. Haleblian would love to stay on the Committee, but since the EDC makes recommendations to the City Council, he would not be able to continue as a voting member. She said someone has contacted Mayor Shepley regarding their interest to be a member of the EDC.

Mr. Fowler said there are many people who are unhappy with the Willow Creek proposal. There also may be some reworking of the intersection. Ms. Maule said the church is already in the City. Ms. Rentzsch said their congregation is almost 3,000 people and they hope to grow their membership to 5,000 for this site. Mr. Fowler said there are other satellite churches for Willow Creek so they would not be pulling from very far away. Ms. Rentzsch said this is drawing interest in the vacant property across Main Street. The City is also working with the Union Pacific to relocate their train car storage along Main Street. Mr. Reece asked what is the City's portion of the tax from the Willow Creek property. Ms. Rentzsch said she was not sure what amount of EAV this site was set at in the TIF district but she felt it would create additional pedestrian activity downtown and the project is spurring interest in other properties, which would help the TIF.

Mr. Haleblian asked about the old Oak property north of Crystal Lake Avenue. Ms. Rentzsch said the contaminates are still being remediated. Mr. Reece asked if there is contamination in the main building. Ms. Rentzsch said she was not aware of any contamination issue on the south side of Crystal Lake Avenue. Mr. Haleblian said the church already is funded to purchase the property. Ms. Rentzsch believes there will be people coming to this site via the train. In the Barrington site, it has to be self contained because there isn't anything within walking distance. Ms. Maule said this is a seven-day model. Mr. Fowler is concerned that the traffic will force people to avoid the area. Mr. Reece looked at the plans and said this site is completely self contained – nature path, splash pad, etc. How many of the congregation lives in town? How will this impact the downtown businesses? Ms. Rentzsch said they are trying to make the building visually pleasing to be an amenity for the entire community. Ms. Maule said this is their footprint across the country.

Mr. Reece said he has no problem with Willow Creek not paying taxes but he is sure that the restaurants, book store, etc. within the building won't be, too. Mr. Reece recalls that the Police liked when an event was held on this site, there are more ways to move the traffic in and out. Ms. Maule said most of the congregation is from Crystal Lake and the immediate area so there probably won't be that much of a lift when they build. She said there will be people who take the train. Mr. Saidler said on Sunday there is a shorter train schedule and he doesn't see many people taking the train from their current location.

Mr. Reece said it is a great concept and he doesn't know how this will impact the Downtown. That building will be 24-7 and the weekday use is a mystery. Mr. Fowler said the site will be improved. Mr. Reece sees this as a bank holds the property and sees someone wanting to pay good money for the site. He doesn't feel it will impact the downtown as much as some do. He feels this will be self contained.

Mr. Fowler asked about the possible new member and suggested he attend a meeting first. Ms. Maule gave his background and said she believes everyone will like him. Mr. Fowler asked what is the process. Ms. Rentzsch explained how a vacancy is filled if there are no candidates. At this time, we do have a qualified candidate that will be recommended for appointment at the next City Council meeting.

MCEDC

Ms. Rentzsch said the Comprehensive Economic Development Study (CEDS) was recently completed for the County. They are also working on intern programs for District 155. Ms. Maule said it is modeled after the Peoria program that is very successful.

Mr. Fowler suggested taking a tour of MCC. There is a lot going on there.

Comments and Suggestions from the Committee

Mr. Dalzell asked about the demolition of the former WalMart. Ms. Rentzsch reviewed the information she had regarding the ownership and their vision for the site.

Mr. Fowler won't be at the next meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.