City of Crystal Lake Economic Development Committee
October 23, 2012 – 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.

Roll Call/Attendance
Members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Haleblian, Reece, Riley, and Fowler were present. Members Hymes and Saidler were absent.

James Richter II, Assistant Director of Economic Development, and Elizabeth Maxwell, Planner, were present from staff. Also in attendance was Erin McElroy with the Lakeside Legacy/Dole Mansion.

Approve Minutes of the September 25, 2012 Meetings
Mr. Affrunti moved to approve the minutes from the September 25, 2012 EDC minutes as presented. Mr. DeHaan seconded the motion. On voice vote, members Affrunti, Dalzell, DeHaan, Haleblian, Reece, Riley, and Fowler voted aye. Motion passed.

Public Participation and Comment
Ms. McElroy said she is requesting the EDC's support for an Art Place Grant. They could receive up to $600,000 in grant money. This is a national grant which supports art initiatives in communities. Their intent is to work with the City, MCC as well as local artists, etc. They would also like to link with the Centennial Celebration Committee to hold art fairs, expositions, etc. during the centennial year. Ms. McElroy said that grant funds may also be used for improvements to the mansion itself. They want the arts center to be the center of the community.

Mr. Haleblian asked about the facility upgrade. Ms. McElroy said the funding would be mostly for programs but it could also be used for the facility. Mr. Haleblian suggested Ms. McElroy check out the Art Prize in Grand Rapids. It takes over the entire town for two days.

Ms. McElroy said they would like to host different programs all year around and would like to partner with MCC. Mr. Affrunti said there was an art show that was held every year in Crystal Lake called Art in the Park. It was very well received but suddenly it went away several years ago.

Mr. Reece asked when the letter of intent to submit for the grant is due. Ms. McElroy said it is due November 1st and if they hear back favorably, then the complete grant application is due in January.

The members were in support of Lakeside's proposal and applying for the grant. They would be willing to draft a letter of support for the full grant submittal.

Mr. Reece moved to recommend support for the Lakeside Legacy/Dole Mansion for their application for the Art Place Grant. Mr. Haleblian seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Long-term business anniversaries recommendation
Mr. Richter said the Council has been very supportive in previous years for recognizing local businesses that have been in business for many years. Thanks to the efforts of Diana Kenney with the Downtown Main Street and Mr. Reece with the Chamber, they were able to create a list of some of the businesses in town and

their anniversary dates. Mr. Richter added that previously the EDC has suggested that businesses celebrating 25 years or more should be acknowledged and it should be in increments of 5 years.

Mr. Haleblian said he is certain that Mayfair Carpets has been in business longer than 25 years and possibly over 30. Also Metro Bowl has been in business over 50 years.

Mr. Reece suggested that the Mayor read a general proclamation and give each business their own. That would streamline the presentation. Mr. Fowler said he doesn't really want to take away from the award. He would also prefer that this be done more than one time a year since there are many businesses that could be recognized.

There was a general discussion regarding the number of businesses to be recognized and the general consensus was 5 businesses is a good number at one time.

Mr. Reece moved to recognize the following businesses for their milestone anniversaries: Cardinal Liquors - 40 years, The Barn Nursery - 25 years, Affrunti Design - 25 years, Exceed Flooring - 25 years, and Nelson Jewelry – 50 years at the December 4th City Council meeting. Mr. Dalzell seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

Community Investment Awards nomination and selection

Mr. Richter said the Community Investment Awards have historically been given to businesses in the City to thank them for investing in the community. Mr. Richter suggested Camfil Far receive an award due to their significant facility enhancement project, costing over $600,000. He reviewed the reasoning behind his suggestions including remaining in Crystal Lake and expansion of their businesses. Mr. Fowler suggested that Aptar receive two plaques – one for their office and the other for the 90,000 square foot warehouse. Mr. Fowler suggested The Crystal Lake Plaza receive an award too. Mr. Richter said the Chamber is giving them the Pride in Crystal Lake award on Friday and suggested we can do this another time for them.

Mr. Reece moved to present the Community Investment Awards to Camfil Far and Aptar. Mr. Haleblian seconded the motion. On voice vote, all members voted aye. Motion passed.

I Shop Crystal Lake updates and gift certificate contest changes

Mr. Richter said the City is about half-way through the fiscal year and that it is a good time to review the I Shop Contests. The City received 1,590 applications from 249 people in the spring contest. There were 2,418 applications received from 268 people in the Summer contest. Currently the City has received 980+ envelopes for the Fall contest. He said there are two more contests scheduled for this fiscal year – the Holiday and Winter contests. Mr. Reece asked if we sent out press releases regarding the winners. Mr. Richter said yes and that no media outlet used the information for the summer contest. Mr. Reece asked if this is helping to increase business in Crystal Lake. Mr. Richter said yes.

Mr. Fowler said hosing the I Shop website is a good idea but there is little participation from businesses in maintaining their own listings. Mr. Richter said there are some businesses that use the site and those that do are big supporters of I Shop CL. Mr. Fowler asked how long we have left on tour contract for the current I Shop website and how much it is costing the City. Mr. Richter said our current contract runs through July of 2013 and we spend $5,000 per year. Mr. Reece said there could be a page on the City's website that could do about the same thing. Mr. Riley asked if the winners are on the website. Mr. Richter said they are on the websites and have been in the City news letter.

Mr. Reece discussed the article that was recently in the Northwest Herald regarding the Woodstock Chamber's promotion. He said it is brilliant. Mr. Haleblian said they do human interest stories on the businesses. Perhaps the City could do the same through I Shop CL.

Mr. Richter noted the prices for advertising in the Northwest Herald. Mr. Dalzell said he will contact the Northwest Herald and see what price he can get and see if we can get better pricing.

Mr. Richter said he is not sure why the back to school promotion is not working as well as anticipated. Mr. Dalzell said the schools are now creating school supplies packages that the parents can purchase. That is a fund raiser for the school and cuts down on trips to the stores for the busy parents.

Mr. Dalzell said he feels the website should be dumped. The money can be used towards advertising on the radio station in the morning drive-time. Mr. Reece said it is hard for busy business owners to find the time to use the I Shop website. He feels that one or two pages on the City's website would work.

Mr. Reece said they made a commitment for the contests to run for an entire year. They should be evaluated after that.

Mr. Haleblian left the meeting at this time.

Annual election of a Chairperson for the Economic Development Committee
Mr. Richter said in the Charter for the EDC it states that the Chairman should be reviewed yearly.

Mr. Affrunti moved that Mr. Fowler be elected Chairman and Mr. Riley be elected Vice Chair of the EDC. Mr. Reece seconded the motion. On roll call, all members present voted aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Richter congratulated Mr. Fowler and Mr. Riley on their re-election.

Organization reports:
Downtown Crystal Lake (Brian Fowler)
Mr. Fowler said they are getting ready for the Holiday shopping season. He said the Johnny Appleseed had the largest attendance so far and the weather was cooperative.

McHenry County Economic Development Corporation (Brian Fowler/James Richter II)
Mr. Fowler said the annual dinner was held recently. Mr. Richter said the business champion awards were given out and again there were no Crystal Lake businesses who won. Mr. Reece asked if we could get a copy of a submittal. Possibly there needs to be more content than what we are providing. Mr. Richter said he will look into it.

Chamber of Commerce (Gary Reece)
Mr. Reece said the sales of the early bird booths for the Expo 2013 are going well. There are 75 booths sold out of 140. They will be presenting the Plaza with their Pride in Crystal Lake Award Friday morning at 9:30 for anyone who would like to attend. Mr. Reece said the Community Harvest will be starting shortly.

City of Crystal Lake (James Richter II/Michelle Rentzsch)
Mr. Richter said there was nothing new to report.

Report to the City Council

Mr. Fowler suggested emphasizing the Aptar tour, the I Shop program, and business anniversaries.

Open Meetings Act Training Reminder

Mr. Richter asked that after the members complete the training to be sure that a copy of their certificate is sent or dropped off.

Comments from the Committee

There were no comments from the Committee.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.