

MINUTES
HERMITAGE COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 5, 2009

The Hermitage Community & Economic Development Commission held a regular meeting February 5, 2009 at the Hermitage Municipal Building, Conference Room #302, Hermitage, PA.

HCEDC Members Attending: Rex Knisley Members Absent: Bob Cucitrone
George Kraynak
Meg Grober
John Holliday
Tony Pagliaroli
Angela Palumbo

HCEDC Commissioner Representative: Bill Moder

Others in Attendance: Gary Gulla, City of Hermitage
Gary Hinkson, City of Hermitage
Marcia Hirschmann, City of Hermitage
Jeremy Coxe, City of Hermitage
Lynn Brest, City of Hermitage
Amy Gargiulo, City of Hermitage
Joe Pinchot, The Herald

I. GENERAL

A. Call to Order

Rex Knisley called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

B. Consideration of Approval of Minutes

The minutes were reviewed from the January 8, 2009 Regular Meeting. Bill Moder stated that he would like the minutes to include his comment regarding the Board of Commissioners recognizing the efforts of the City Manager and Department Heads for their responsibility and hard work on a challenging 2009 budget. John Holliday moved to accept the minutes with the inclusion of Mr. Moder's comment. George Kraynak seconded the motion. All members approved.

II. BUSINESS MEETING

A. Monthly Activity Report

Mr. Gulla stated that there were a few items that went to the Board of Commissioners and asked Mr. Coxe to update the HCEDC on the 2009 CDBG Program and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

B. Community & Economic Development and RLF Reports – December

The Revolving Loan Fund Repayment Reports were reviewed for December. All payments were current. For December the RLF program balance was \$121,477.22. Total available for loans based on projected repayments through the end of the year was \$121,477.22. The Landscape and Façade Improvement program balance was \$183,620.83. The total available for loans based on projected repayments through the end of the year was \$183,620.83.

George Kraynak moved to accept the RLF reports. Angela Palumbo seconded the motion. All members approved.

**C. 2009 Hermitage Regional Wastewater Treatment Facilities Project
- Consent Order & Project Update by Tom Darby, HMA Manager**

The City recently received a signed Consent Order from the Department of Environmental Protection giving the City until 2012 to complete improvements at the wastewater treatment plant. Currently Clark Borough, South Pymatuning Township on the east side of the lake, Jefferson Township, portions of Shenango Township and the Wheatland Industrial Area are being served by the City of Hermitage.

Improvements are estimated to total \$32,000,000, but the City will be applying for an H2O grant in the amount of \$16,000,000 to cover half the cost. Work planned for the plant includes the installation of two (2) anaerobic digesters which will produce a Class A biosolids waste product by a process that completely breaks down any disease pathogens or any kind of organic material. The biosolids can be used by nursery owners, land applied without any restriction, and is a grade soil supplement. To run the anaerobic digesters a large amount of organic material is needed. The City is looking at businesses such as Joy Cone Company, Dean Dairy, restaurants, etc. that would be able to take their waste to the digesters instead of hauling it out of state saving them disposal costs.

Methane gas is also produced during the conversion of waste to biosolids which could be used to run the generators. Hopefully enough electricity can be produced to both operate the plant and sell back to the electrical grid.

Mr. Darby reported on the following projects in the community: 1.) the Magargee Run Project on Route 62 which will take wastewater from Jefferson Township; 2.) a project on Daniel Drive which will pick up about a dozen homes that were on a septic system; and, 3.) infiltration work is being done on Buhl Farm Drive, Maple Drive, and soon on Pine Hollow near Mercer Avenue.

The chlorine gas disinfection system currently used at the plant for final disinfection of wastewater will be replaced with ultraviolet light. The new system will take more electrical energy, but the plant will be producing electricity with the new generation system being installed. The plant is currently rated 5 MGD (million gallons per day). With the completion of all the upgrades, the City will be requesting a rating of 7.7 MGD giving the plant extra capacity for any new industry or additional development in Hermitage or the surrounding communities.

With the signed Consent Order the tap-in ban has been completely lifted. The City is allowed 250 EDUs through March 2011. One EDU is for 400 gallons per day for one home. A restaurant typically uses 8 EDUs. The City has not received a significant amount of calls for permits since the ban has been lifted.

Mr. Darby was asked how electricity is sold or transferred back to the grid. He stated that it may be through a metered device going back to the grid.

The City has already received a Pennsylvania Growing Greener Grant for \$365,000 for the anaerobic digesters.

John Holliday moved to support the submission of the H2O grant application for \$16,000,000 for the 2009 Hermitage Municipal Authority Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvement Project. Tony Pagliaroli seconded the motion. All members approved.

D. 2009 CDBG Program

Jeremy Coxe explained that the City still has not received our final allocation because the Federal Budget is still on a continuing resolution. Until the federal budget is passed the City will not have a definite dollar amount, but has been told to expect about the same as last year which was \$370,799.

The first Public Hearing was held January 28, 2009. Only one comment was made from the Mercer County Community Counseling Center asking the City to support their project. The second Public Hearing will be held February 19, 2009. The application deadline is April 3, 2009.

III.

Other Business

Neighborhood Stabilization Program

Jeremy Coxe updated the HCEDC regarding the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. At the January meeting the Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution to file a joint application for Neighborhood Stabilization Funds with the City of Sharon and City of Farrell. The City of Sharon will be the lead applicant. The program's purpose is to stabilize neighborhoods with foreclosed properties. Funds can be used to acquire, rehab or resale properties in foreclosure or be used for demolition and revitalization of some neighborhoods. HUD has scored risk areas (scored 6 or above) where these funds must be used. The City of Hermitage is applying for \$300,000 as part of the joint application for the purpose of acquisition, rehab and resale of up to 4 homes. The properties must be resold to low-moderate income families. The target areas are in Patagonia, the Rombold Road area, and Census Tract 314 which is also the City's Neighborhood Improvement Program area. The application is due February 6, 2009.

Training and Workforce Development Building

Materials were submitted on time to the Economic Development Administration and were approved. Bid documents were authorized by EDA and construction bids are due February 11, 2009.

Ohio – Pennsylvania Initiative

Efforts are continuing to orchestrate interstate efforts. Approximately 60 individuals met at an economic development forum to identify strengths and weaknesses of the initiative and to offer suggestions for the initiative. Educational and workforce forums are also being coordinated. A summit will be held in late April officially designating the area a 5-county interstate region.

Angela Palumbo moved to adjourn the meeting. John Holliday seconded the motion. All members approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:19 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Gargiulo
Recording Secretary