



**West Fargo Economic Development
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 13th 2023
3 -5pm**

The City of West Fargo Economic Development Advisory Committee met on Thursday, February 2nd, 2023, at 3 pm.

Voting Members Present: Eddie Sheeley (Chair), Nicole Steen-Dutton (Vice Chair) Jaysen Schock (Past-Chair), Paul Matthys, & Tom McDougall, Jeffery Volk.

City Staff: Casey Sanders-Berglund (Economic Development Manager) Aaron Nelson (City Planner) Nick Lee (City Assessor)

Ex-Officio Members: Joe Raso (GFMEDC)

City Commissioners: Roben Anderson and Brad Olson

Eddie Sheeley called the meeting to order.

Jaysen moved and Paul seconded to approve the minutes for February 2nd, 2023. No opposition. Motion carried.

Jeff moved and Jaysen seconded to approve the Order of Agenda. No opposition. Motion carried.

Casey Sanders-Berglund presented four applicants for the Child Care Facility Improvement Grant (Child Care Workforce Grant).

The Summit application was presented. The score of 14 out of 15 was discussed noting that the renovations will aid in increasing capacity. The space is already available but the funds to fit this area up are a priority. Given this grant the facility will be able to prioritize making these changes to add to their capacity.

Nicole moved and Jaysen seconded to approve the application at the requested \$49,998.00 amount. No opposition. Motion carried.

The YMCA School Age Center application was presented. There was a total of eight separate applications submitted. Even though each application is under the dollar amount for EDAC approval the situation presented is unique and pulling all applications together makes the most overall sense. In doing so the total requested amount for all locations is \$76,000.00 or \$9,500.00 per location. Each application received a score of 13 out of 15 as each one is identical by design. Each School based space is designed to mirror each other so they can be mobile and folded up compactly to all clean up and fit into a closet to be pulled out and set up each day. Additionally, staff move from site to site potentially and it is helpful to have the same equipment, set up, and plan in general at each location. The applicant has budgeted for the upkeep of the items applied for however would maximize the use of these grant dollars by shifting these



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funds to support hiring efforts which is a priority right now. These funds will not directly assist in increasing capacity. However, due to shortage of staff the sites have had to cap the current number of children they can take until they are able to hire more staff. Each site is licensed for 100 children and most currently cap around 75 children. Soon these sites will be used for full-day care during the summer and transition to after school care in the fall.

Jeff moved and Jayson seconded the motion to approve the set of eight applications at the requested \$76,000.00. No opposition. Motion carried.

The Sheyenne Learning Center application was presented. The discussion centered around the improvements for the floor needed in order to address the licensing and health code updates required by the end of the year in 2023. The additional \$3110.00 would be used to support the cost of the total of 16 cribs that need to be replaced. The Ownership story and the process of the last several months of learning that the new ownership group has moved through was shared and many members of the committee shared their appreciation and understanding of this risk taking. At the time of the application there were 115 children and 97 families that were supported through this center.

Paul moved and Jeff seconded the motion to approve the application with the request to get three plus bids to compare for the flooring work. No opposition. Motion carried.

The Creative Care Learning Center application was presented. There are two applications for this center. One is for the upgrades needed for lighting and additional items support and the other is to fit up a separate and new space that is currently used at this center for storage as a new infant room. The discussion focused on the lighting updates needed in this center. The lighting seemed to be a simple request as it needs to be safe however, the important conversation topics were around bids and the ownership of the building and the role the owner has in this situation.

The infant fit up allotment was discussed a positive and that if the capacity is there the group was supportive of creating a space for adding eight infant slots.

Paul moved and Jaysen seconded the motion to approve the application with the note that there should be three bids to compare for the electrical work and that a minimum of a five-year lease on this building should be confirmed so it is used for the support of childcare rather than the building modify to a new use. No opposition. Motion carried.



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Casey Sanders-Berglund presented the application for Cookie Krum's Enterprise Grant. The proposed work is an upgrade to the current space that will rework the space to a new atmosphere. The area will have a more retail and bakers space feel to it after the remodel. The goal is to continue to do the custom orders while adding to the business a larger menu, scoop ice cream, and potentially more events. The goal within the next five years is to add additional staff and have more partnerships with the other businesses along Sheyenne in the Downtown area. The business is eligible as it is in the Downtown Mixed-Use Zone and this owner and rented space has not used the grant in the past. The total project is estimated at \$29,867.00 and the grant would cover 50% of this total (\$14,933.00) through Economic Development Sales tax.

There was good discussion around the area and growth in the community and how this is a great fit for how it is growing. The scoop ice cream and increased retail hours were met with positive feedback. Enhancing the outside and street view by adding a light up sign was welcome. The discussion was also around the modest fiscally responsible financial request for this update to the facility. The committee discussed the flocculating inflation costs and what has been proposed in the past.

Nicole motioned and Paul seconded to approve the enterprise grant for the amount requested plus the flexibility of 11% due to inflation. No opposition. Motion carried.

The team from the Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC (Joe, Ryan, John, & Joey) brought forward some proposed or suggested strategies for the City of West Fargo to consider. The opportunity for this committee to review and offer feedback to Casey as well as share with the group in order to help guide the entire strategy for the Economic Development of the City.

Committee members to send any follow up feedback via email. No vote requested for this agenda item.

Nicole motioned and Jaysen seconded to adjourn the meeting. No opposition. Meeting was adjourned.

Chair, Eddie Sheeley