

Economic Development Committee

MINUTES

JUNE 08, 2023

7:00 A.M. CIVIC OPERATIONS CENTER -
BOARDROOM

Attendees	Chairperson: Brian Hilderman (left at 8:05 a.m.) Chairperson: Bob Knox Councillors: Councillor Darcy Zaharia (left at 7:55 a.m.) Members: Don Reed, David McKerchar, Gwen Machnee, Marty Sveinbjornson, Raymond Sharp, Bob Knox
Invited Guests	Donna Brothwell Juanita Polegi (left at 8:22 a.m.)
Staff	David Balysky (Business Liaison)
Regrets	Councillors: Councillor Dustin Brears Members: Guests: Mayor Mitch Hipsley Staff:
Absent	Councillors: Members: Ayodele Komolafe Staff:
Recording	Zuleny Rodriguez
Call to order	7:03 a.m.
Adjourn	8:26 a.m.

Adoption of Agenda	
Discussion	Review of agenda items for discussion
Motion 22-23	Bob Knox That the agenda be approved as presented
Motion 23-23	Don Reed To amend the agenda by adding - Garage unit living development Raymond Sharp To amend the agenda by adding - Arctic Gateway Carried Unanimously
	To approve the agenda as amended Carried Unanimously

Minutes of the May 11, 2023 Meeting	
Discussion	Minutes from the May 11, 2023 meeting of the Committee were circulated electronically as part of the agenda package, and paper copies were available at the meeting.
Motion 24-23	Councillor Darcy Zaharia That the minutes of the May 11, 2023 meeting be approved as presented. Carried Unanimously

Machnee enters the meeting at 7:06 a.m.

Sveinbjornson enters the meeting at 7:07 a.m.

Real Estate Market Conditions and Outlook – Remax Blue Chip Realty (Mark Zawerucha)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Zawerucha presented an overview of the market in the City of Yorkton, focused on residential and commercial challenges.- Zawerucha stated the benchmark price for houses in Yorkton this year is \$249,000 compared to 235,000 last year and 189,000-210,000 ten years ago, indicating an increase in home prices and interest rates.- May had 32 home sales, which is average. The busiest seasons are spring and fall, with sales ranging from 32 – 40 homes.- The main challenge in, not only Canada but also the United States, is low inventory. Yorkton is down by 17%, having only 52 listings compared to historical levels of 180-200 homes.- The inventory is primarily sourced from downsizing by older populations or through relocations by organizations like the RCMP.- Houses are selling quickly, with many selling within a day or week if priced appropriately, especially family homes with three bedrooms or more. Multiple offers are common.- Another challenge Zawerucha mentioned was the construction of new houses being insufficient to meet the demand and increase the inventory.- Zawerucha briefly mentioned the commercial market, which is at a historically low inventory with only 37 listings. Highlighting that clients are seeking flat warehouse space with heating, cement floors, forklift access, and large doors. Properties are selling quickly in the commercial sector, but prices are not significantly increasing.- Brothwell asked about the forecast for the next 2 – 3 years, having in mind the LDC builds and Richardson expansions.- Zawerucha answered that most of those companies likely will hire local workers or bring in crews who stay in hotels or Airbnb accommodations. He predicted that around five houses will be sold as a result, because he has noticed that many individuals, such as doctors, choose to rent if they are uncertain about staying in Yorkton. However, this highlights another issue – the lack of available rental properties.- Councillor Zaharia asked – What is the profile of the people buying properties now?- Zawerucha answered that the main demand is coming from people who either live in Yorkton looking to upgrade their house or terminate their rental situation as prices keep increasing.- Councillor Zaharia asked – What are the most desired commercial locations?- Zawerucha replied that there is a need for small retail space downtown and for industrial warehouses. In the downtown area, people are looking at the older buildings and for rentals that are around \$8 - \$10 dollars per square foot.- Brothwell asked - What would be a deterrent for clients to not go forward?- Zawerucha answered that has to do with the location and how much it takes to have the building up to standards.
Motion	No motion

Parade of Homes - David Balysky

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Balysky opened up the conversation around the idea of bringing a parade of homes back with the help of local builders or outside companies that might be interested. Asking for feedback to pursue this idea with local building companies.- The committee clarified what a parade home is and how it works. The idea is that builders from the area submit a recent home that they've built to be showcased and toured by anyone and everyone during set hours for a period of time.- Machnee asked what is the role of the City of Yorkton in all of this.- Balysky replied that the City would be looking after the organization of the parade homes, next to the promotion of different incentives that are in place about taxes and benefits to builders. This is because the City does not have a builders association to facilitate this.- The Committee discussed the idea and came to an agreement that is a good idea to pursue. They believe it will be good to build some enthusiasm within the people and increase awareness to build more.- The Committee then started a discussion about the lot prices that makes it difficult for construction companies to build and generate some profit.- Knox asked if the City would be inclined to do something with the lot-pricing situation. Generating some kind of incentive or promotion that could help.- Councillor Zaharia voiced his opinion in regards to a recommendation from the Committee saying – He doesn't think a recommendation coming from the Committee is going to do or change anything, he suggested that people will have to get a hold of any Councillor they know and present their idea and what needs to be done. Zaharia stated, that if it was him, he will give it away in the commercial area. Clarifying that the main issue is the Administration being stuck in repeating that you can't go less than what was put into that piece of land. He also added that it would be beneficial if along with the recommendation that multiple builders write a letter stating what they think and what would be helpful, hoping for a similar message to add more weight to it.- The Committee discussed further the recommendation proposed by Reed that they want to send to Council concerning lot prices being a limiting factor for new development in the City of Yorkton.- Balysky offered to write it down and share it via email with everyone to get an agreement and make a motion in the next meeting.
Motion	No motion

	Councillor Zaharia exits the meeting at 7:55 a.m. Hilderman exits the meeting at 8:05 a.m.
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Garage suites

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reed asked about the status of his last recommendation regarding the Zoning Bylaw being amended to allow secondary suites and more specifically garage suites.- Balysky explained that he raised this matter with Eger due to his involvement in planning, zoning, and development. However, he has not received any response or feedback thus far.- Reed asked why it is not going directly to Council.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Polegi emphasized that the minutes are presented to Council for their review. However, if Council fails to acknowledge and act upon the recommendations, despite the presence of the Mayor and two Councillors on the Committee, it raises questions about the significance of their roles. - The Committee discussed their unconformity with Council and Administration with their lack of attention to recommendations and solutions that this Committee has brought forward. Everyone would like to have feedback from Council and Administration.
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Arctic Gateway - Raymond Sharp

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharp brought information forward regarding the Arctic Gateway. He was told that the Arctic Gateway had secured funding of \$500 million after submitting all the necessary documentation to the government. However, on the day after the funding was received, the CEO was unexpectedly let go while the CFO continued finalizing things. Unfortunately, despite two years of hard work, the funding was lost. It appears that the Liberal Government may not have been supportive of the initiative, which could have greatly benefited Western Canada.
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Business From the Floor

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knox shared that the Chief Corporate executive with Emerald Tires from India came to Canada for the first time to learn more about the area and one of his stops was Yorkton, Saskatchewan. - The committee discussed their unconformity with the City of Yorkton departments and regulations that cannot help with a few things. - Machnee shared the new name of the college – Suncrest College – and the official head office is at the Trades and Technology Centre as it is the only piece of land the college owns, thanks to the City of Yorkton.
Motion	No motion

Polegi exits the meeting at 8:22 a.m.

Action Items

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation regarding lot prices to be drafted and sent via email for approval from the Committee.
Motion	

Next Meeting Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 7:00 a.m. at Deer Park – Meeting Room.

Adjournment

Motion 25-23

Sveinbjornson

That the Economic Development Committee Meeting be adjourned at 8:26 a.m.

Bob Knox

CHAIRPERSON

Bob Knox

Zuleny Rodriguez

RECORDING SECRETARY

Zuleny Rodriguez