

Economic Development Committee

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

7:00 A.M.

DEER PARK CLUBHOUSE

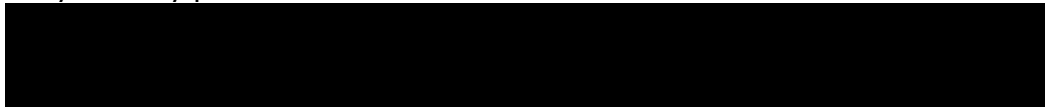
Attendees	Chairperson: Bob Knox Councillors: Mayor Mitch Hipsley, Councillor Dustin Brears, Councillor Darcy Zaharia (over the phone) Members: Don Reed, David McKerchar, Gwen Machnee, Marty Sveinbjornson, Raymond Sharp.
Invited Guests	Donna Brothwell
Staff	David Balysky (Business Liaison), Michael Eger (Director of Planning, Bldg. & Dev.)
Regrets	Councillors: Members: Brian Hilderman Guests: Juanita Polegi Staff:
Absent	Councillors: Members: Ayodele Komolafe Staff:
Recording	Zuleny Paulenko
Call to order	7:00 a.m.
Adjourn	8:32 a.m.

Adoption of Agenda	
Discussion	Review of agenda items for discussion
Motion 26-23	McKerchar That the agenda be approved as presented. Carried Unanimously

Minutes of the June 8, 2023 Meeting	
Discussion	Minutes from the June 8, 2023 meeting of the Committee were circulated electronically as part of the agenda package and paper copies were available at the meeting.
Motion 27-23	Machnee That the minutes of the June 8, 2023 meeting be approved as presented. Carried Unanimously

Secondary Suites – Michael Eger	
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eger provided clarity regarding garage suite regulations, explaining that the City of Yorkton must adhere to the safety code regulations mandated by the National Building Code and National Fire Code. Eger mentioned an intensive review was conducted in 2018, which revolved around building regulations. During this review, the concept of garage suites was discussed, but in the end, all parties decided not to move forward with it.

- Eger expressed his desire as a Planning Director to expand the density of neighborhoods to help with affordability concerns. However, there are key considerations to bear in mind for an idea like this, including:
 - Snow removal: Concerns were raised
 - Garbage pickup: People are upset when their garbage it is not collected.
 - Services like water and sewer: These services can be challenging or even impossible to implement, as the associated cost may offset affordability aspects.
- Eger mentioned that the City of Yorkton recently approved a four-plex development on 3rd Ave. One side consists of single unit dwellings, while the other side features a combination of single and semi-detached units. Residents in this area are quite upset about this decision, as it was not in line with their preferences.
- Economic Development is an important aspect for Council, but currently, this topic does not hold a top position on the list of priorities.
- Brothwell questioned the relevance of complaints to change the planning or the rules in regards of building an apartment suite above a garage. Asking Eger if there is a plan in place to facilitate the construction of such apartment suites above garages, expressing a desire to see some changes in this regard.
- Eger answered that there is no plan going forward as there has not been any demand from the community.
- Knox asked if there is any more viable plans to increase rental accommodations in the City of Yorkton right now.
- Eger pointed out existing measures in place, including flexible zoning. Currently, a large portion of the city is zoned for residential use, which allows for various residential development types. Additionally, tax incentives have been introduced to encourage new construction by offering a 5-year tax rebate. To clarify, Yorkton is viewed as high-risk market, and return on investment for these projects is seen as slow.
- Reed emphasized that the discussion should be focused on the essence of the housing crisis rather than the current state of the city.
- Sharp raised a question about the factors contributing to Yorkton being considered a high-risk market.
- Eger answered, that he could not answer that question definitively. The perception of Yorkton as a high-risk market comes from the banking industry and is based on insights gained through experience and discussions with other builders.
- Sveinbjornson acknowledged that Yorkton is often seen as a secondary market. Recognizing the housing crisis in the community and across North America. He questions, what steps can be taken to remove barriers and facilitate more development. What will be the long-term strategy for increasing rental suites and improving the ability to purchase property?
- The Committee discussed more about what can be done to create more opportunities to increase rental properties and construction.
- Reed raised a question about the different facilities around the City that are vacant, such as the former Sacred Heart Assisted Living facility, and if the City has any plans.



	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Hipsley added that the City Manager has been in contact with the province in regard to the matter. The Fire Chief has also been seeking assistance from other cities regarding the topic of 'tent cities' and at the same time monitoring this facilities for safety reasons. • The members of the Committee discussed the challenges and barriers people encounter coming with a proposal to the City and offered for the City to have a more responsive attitude. • Councillor Zaharia asked if we could allow garage suites only if they are street facing and doesn't believe that parking would be an issue resulting from the allowance of garage suites. Eger responded that parking is the number one complaint that the City receives from neighbours when density is added to neighbourhoods. • Councillor Zaharia asked if there are any action items coming out of this discussion. Reed responded, noting that the Committee agreed that this is more of a social or public issue rather than an issue for the Committee to deal with. • Eger explained that initiatives that add density to neighborhoods is the top complaint. Eger also clarified that there has been no applications for garage suites in the past 15 years, but if demand were to increase, the City would consider it. • Machnee added that this year there has been about 100 new international students at the college, resulting in high demand for housing. Highlighting that there is a potential opportunity to talk with Immigration Career Training and explore options.
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Parade of Homes Update – David Balysky	
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balysky updated everyone about his presentation to Council about the Parade of Homes idea, to which the Council approved development of a policy for the next Council meeting. • Mayor Hipsley clarified that there are a couple financial incentives for the builder and new owners, opening the potential to save money. • Sveinbjornson suggested that the policy not be limited to one lot per builder, but to make it more open. • Councillor Brears emphasized that the 5-year tax incentive is for anyone building a home right now. • Members discussed about lot prices still being a barrier, the potential market value in other centers compared to the City of Yorkton, the cost of living being high and the consequences about tiny home communities in York Landing. • Finally they all agreed that the Parade of Homes is a great opportunity to get people excited to move into new builds and others to purchase existing homes in the city.

Recommendation Regarding Lot Prices
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Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early in the meeting Reed asked about the procedure in regards to the recommendation put in place in the past meeting, because it was not possible to put into the minutes. • Balysky clarified that the recommendation in regards to discounting lots made in the past meeting could not be voted on via email. Balysky asked if this is something the Committee would like to pass as an official recommendation. • Balysky explained that the recommendation was mentioned when he presented to Council about the parade of homes. • The Committee discussed about the legal side of motions in the committees and wonder who is in charge of making these laws. Expressing that to this point a virtual vote should be legal by now. • Eger let people know that they are not the ones able to answer this, as this could have just been a technicality and clarified that just because there was not a formal motion, does not mean that is not dealt with or discussed further in Council and City administration. • The Committee said that it will be great to have closure and receive more feedback on the different topics that are discussed. • Mayor Hipsley reassured members that the Council members on this Committee do discuss topics from the Committee meetings but should do more to provide the Committee with follow up or feedback from those discussions.
Motion 28 - 23	<p>Councillor Brears That the City Clerk attend the first Committee meeting in January 2024 to provide orientation on how to proceed with meetings and motions.</p> <p>Carried Unanimously</p>

Reed exits the meeting at 8:06 a.m

Council Priority – Business Marketing: Yorkton Advantage Gaps & Targets	
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balysky mentioned that the Committee had talked last year about marketing materials, and now it has come be one of the current priorities of Council. • City staff would like to engage the EDC to help narrow the landscape of this priority and develop an action plan that will ideally create more economic leads and investment. • Balysky mentioned some of the strengths of the City of Yorkton. Letting the Committee know that he has made a SWOT analysis of the City of Yorkton and would like their input. Balysky questioned the Committee about the main pain points they have experienced as entrepreneurs that are part of the City of Yorkton. • Brothwell provided some pain points including lot prices, shortage of workers, and supply chain issues. Opportunity can be seen with the upcoming elections, to push more on the education side of things. • Councillor Brears made some suggestions regarding the brochure presented by Balysky.

Councillor Brears exits the meeting at 8:20 a.m

Reed enters the meeting at 8:20 a.m

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mayor Hipsley added that on a more positive note, Mayors from other cities are often asking what we are doing in Yorkton as they are always hearing good things about our city• Knox highlighted that civic pride within our own boundaries should be promoted more. As leaders we should start highlighting the good things happening in Yorkton.• Sharp contributed that the more positivity, the more growth we can see.• Brothwell added that this starts with a positive comment and being nice to each other.
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Next Meeting	Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 7:00 a.m. at City Hall.
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Adjournment

Motion 29 -23	Sveinbjornson That the Economic Development Committee Meeting be adjourned at 8:32 a.m. Carried Unanimously
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Bob Knox

CHAIRPERSON
Bob Knox

Zuleny Paulenko

RECORDING SECRETARY
Zuleny Paulenko