

MINUTES FOR THE EDA MEETING OF AUGUST 19, 2025

President Weidt called the meeting to order at 5:58 PM

PRESENT: Chrun, Denaway, Krull, Puleo, Weidt

ABSENT: Shevchuk

STAFF: Bryan Bear, City Administrator

Rachel Juba, Community Development Director

Max Gort, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE EDA MEETING OF JUNE 17, 2025

Commissioner Chrun made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Denaway, to approve the June 17, 2025 meeting minutes.

Ayes: All.

Nay: None.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON EDA ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Community Development Director Juba presented some background on the history of the EDA, including how it changed the direction on how the City interacted with businesses. The EDA has implemented several ordinances, policies, and programs over the years to help Hugo become a more business friendly community, and several strong partnerships exist with the City due to the EDA's efforts. However, the EDA's role has shifted from actively developing new programs and strategies to one that provides support and connections for the business community it helped establish. Juba provided the sections of the EDA's bylaws that dictate its meeting frequency, and said that the meeting schedule can be adjusted to allow the group to be more flexible while continuing to support business growth and economic development.

Commissioner Puleo said that he appreciates the EDA's role in connecting businesses to the City, and wants to ensure they can still accomplish that function.

President Weidt said that the presentation highlighted a lot of previous accomplishments, and asked the EDA if there are particular areas they should be focusing on moving forward.

Commissioner Denaway said that staff has been working to accomplish a lot of the EDA's goals, and said that the EDA's success along with changing market conditions has created the current situation where the EDA doesn't need to be as actively involved. Denaway said that there will be lots of future instances where the EDA will need to be more actively involved in the discussion and making recommendations.

Commissioner Krull said that he hears a lot of comments from residents wanting to attract certain types of businesses, and feels frustrated that there isn't necessarily a perfect tool for doing that. Weidt says that there is a certain amount that the City has influence versus market conditions. Weidt

says that other communities have engaged more with purchasing and/or developing property for economic development, and that that process has its own set of risks and drawbacks.

City Administrator Bear points to a example of a barrier for business development being the shoreland ordinance, which the EDA initiated the process for changing after the most recent proposal for development of the Downtown Property was blocked by the DNR.

President Weidt says that there is still a need to meet with some regular frequency. Commissioner Puleo said that the EDA should be regularly informed about the state of development in the community, and said that he is comfortable with meeting at least quarterly with the ability to increase the frequency as needed.

Commissioner Puleo made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Denaway, to change the EDA meeting schedule to requiring quarterly meetings instead of monthly meetings.

UPDATE ON 165TH STREET AUAR

Juba gave an update on the Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) study of the 165th Street corridor that was listed as an action item in the 2025 EDA Goals. Juba said that the study's next steps include finalizing the land use options. Finishing the traffic study and road design, and drafting the AUAR document. The AUAR is expected to be adopted in early 2026, but the major decisions that will inform the next Comprehensive Plan should be made in 2025.

Commissioner Denaway asked if the interim improvement for 165th Street that's listed in the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is comparable to the current pavement standard of Elmcrest Avenue. Denaway said he's concerned with how long the interim improvement would last and create the same issues being seen right now on Elmcrest as development occurs along 165th Street, particularly without any pedestrian infrastructure. Juba said that the primary concern with completing the full urban section roadway at this time would be assessing the property owners for a much higher cost and acquiring right-of-way, which would likely force property owners to develop when they don't want to.

UPDATE ON STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Juba presented an update on the street reconstruction projects the City completed this year in the Beaver Ponds, Duck Pass, and Palmes Long Lake Estates neighborhoods, and on Ingersoll Avenue on the eastern shore of Sunset Lake. Additionally Washington County completed an improvement project on Highway 61 between Frenchman Road and 140th Street. In 2026, the City will be reconstructing the streets in the Bald Eagle Industrial Park, and City staff has been meeting with business owners in the industrial park to determine how to conduct the project with minimal impact to their operations.

Juba mentioned the City of Lino Lakes' plan to extend Otter Lake Road north to connect to Elmcrest Avenue, which ties into the discussion of the future of Elmcrest. Commissioner Puleo asked what Link Lakes' Land Use plan guides the parcels west of Elmcrest for, Juba says it's mostly guided for industrial development with warehousing and distribution centers. Puleo asked if it would be Lino Lakes' responsibility to improve Elmcrest with development going into their City, Bear responded that the

City of Hugo has been trying to make that case. Bear said that the EDA should have a discussion about the land use scenarios included in the 165th Street AUAR, which is mostly based around the future development of Elmcrest Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Denaway made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Chrun, to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 PM.

All ayes.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted.

Max Gort, Associate Planner