

JANUARY 14, 2015 WASHBURN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

4:00 P.M. Washburn Public Library – Book Bin Room

Members Present: Rick M. Geisen, John Baregi, Peter Bremner;
Christine Kelly, Taylor Pearson

Members Absent: William D. Olson, Jon Wheeler

Municipal Personnel Present: Mayor Scott Griffiths, City Administrator Scott J.
Kluver; Ken Cammilleri, Assistant City
Administrator

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chair Geisen in the Book Bin Room of the Library at 4:05 p.m. It was noted that Council members Avol and Nowakowski were in attendance.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 10, 2014 – Baregi moved and Pearson seconded to approve the minutes of December 10, 2014. Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion on Potential Development/Redevelopment Projects in Washburn – Guests Invited – Sharon Hacker was present as guest of the month, and she shared her knowledge of hotel management and the hotel market with those present. Ms. Hacker, who worked for a management company, stated that generally, if an individual opened a 50 room hotel in a small market like Washburn, an average year-round occupancy of 50 percent would likely be needed if there was no debt involved in the project, and 70 percent occupancy would be needed if there was debt involved in the project. Prices would need to be higher for peak season and special events. There is a demand for pampering, but that increases costs. Items such as pools/hot tubs would need to be studied more. It was suggested that the reasons why visitors come to Washburn be identified, and that it is important to understand that tourism cannot alone support hotels. It was also suggested that an analysis of the existing room stock be taken along with market information of the Washburn area. Nowakowski stated she had researched some basic market study questions that she would be willing to work on. Discussion occurred on marketing hotels, the importance of room tax to the Chamber for further marketing, and if the WDA could assist the Chamber with their needs to help attract visitors to stay in Washburn.

Future Agenda Item Topics – Have the owner of Ehler’s Store, or Rocky Kavajecz speak at the next meeting. Invite the Chamber to discuss their needs with the WDA, and ask Sharon Hacker to come back in May or so to follow up on any new information.

Adjourn – Bremner moved and Baregi seconded to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott J. Kluver
Executive Director