Hiawatha Economic Development Corporation (HEDCO) met on March 21, 2019 in the Multi-Purpose Room at Hiawatha City Hall. Angel Suttie opened the meeting at 11:40 a.m. Members present: Nic Canfield, Kirk Hayden, Jeremy Ries, Hassan Igram, Chad Pelley, and Jon Dusek, Emily Upah. and Angel Suttie. Absent: Tyler McCarville, Mark Parmenter, Pat Callanan, Chris Sherman, Kyle Kunz, and Joel Rochleau. Guests present: City Administrator Kim Downs, Mayor Bill Bennett, Administrative Coordinator Ambyr Severson. Ron Corbett and Laura Thomas of Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance.

Business: Due to lack of quorum the members present only had discussion. No action was taken on any of the following items.

1. **Approval of Minutes and Financial Statements-**

Moved to May 16, 2019 meeting.

2. **Hiawatha Synchronist Survey Summary 2013-2019**

Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance Analysis Laura Thomas presented an overview of synchronist visits with interstate businesses throughout Hiawatha:

- Synchronist Prime
  - Economic development survey tool to assess needs, identify trends and problems, set strategy
  - Focused on >51% of business outside state of Iowa
- Synchronist Main Street
  - Economic development survey tool to assess needs, identify trends and problems, set strategy
  - Focused on small business and retail
- Breakdown by Business Sector
  - 32% Technology/Information
  - 24% Advanced Manufacturing
  - 24% Communications
  - 8% Industrial Goods
  - 8% Retail Related Operations
  - 4% Business Service
- Business Growth Indicators
  - 100% have introduced new products in the last 5 years
  - 92% plan on introducing new products in the next 2 years
  - 71% state sales are increasing
  - 60% states international sales are increasing
  - 71% state market share of key product/service is increasing
  - 70% state that merger, acquisition or divestiture activity in industry is increasing
- Community's Strengths
  - Diverse economy and being close to companies/customers
  - Heavy data users
  - Easy to do business in Hiawatha and access to I-380
  - Stable cost of living
  - Established business/customer relationships
  - Strong Midwest work ethic
  - Good educated and hardworking workforce
  - Talent pool and work ethic

  - Local government leaves you alone unless you need something. City wants to help.
  - Centrally located
  - Tax incentives, located in industrial park, good access to bike trails and retail
  - Engineers, workforce, cost of living, quality of life, small town atmosphere
- Community Weaknesses
  - Where are the true manufacturers?
  - Healthier food options
  - Truck access on Boyson
  - Labor pool and lack there of
  - Losing customers to China for chaper price to build
  - Not being closer to customer base
  - Additional family activities
- 71% of Companies Anticipate Adverse Legislative Changes
  - Unions
  - ACA & workman's comp.
  - Health insurance costs
  - Taxes, regulations, osha
  - Defense budget
  - Legislations pertaining to ambient noise in nursing homes
  - Tariffs
  - Cap and trade legislation
- Barriers to Growth
  - Lack of qualified/available workforce
  - Landlocked at current location
  - Cost of land is very high
  - Growth comes from outside Iowa
  - Salaries are fairly high – international much cheaper
- Workforce
  - 68% state they are experiencing recruitment problems
  - 44% state that the number of unfilled positions are increasing
- ICR Iowa
  - Works with ex-offenders and immigrants to meet in the middle and connect with employers
  - Provides workforce solutions to solve unique hiring problems
  - Internship opportunities with State of Iowa reimbursement
  - Talent attraction and retention to bring back "boomerangs" who moved out of state and are looking to return to Iowa
  - Inclusive ICR
  - Ignite ICR
  - Job boards
- Home Base Iowa
  - Provides a website to post jobs
  - Hires veterans first
  - Offers veterans discounts on services/products
  - City of Hiawatha will be a part of this program in May
- Location One Information System
  - Available property for sale or lease
  - Broker neutral to encourage growth
  - Offered on HEDCO's website

3. **Marketing Update-Kirk Hayden**

Spring/Summer Engagement:

- Create Content
  - April Business Story – Hawkeye Communications
  - May new issue of Hiawatha Pulse to highlight activities in Hiawatha
- Consider using HEDCO as a resource for Midtown
  - Tell a story, include developers and visualize
  - Engage community – "What would you like to see?"

4. **Update on working with Cedar Graphics to send out a mailer/postcard to businesses for sponsorships**

Moved to May 16th Meeting

5. **"State of the City" presentation ideas and confirm date**
   - July 18th was chosen from 11:30-1:00. Event will be held at Hiawatha's Regional Kirkwood Center on Boyson Road
   - Thoughts about bringing in Keith Billick to speak regarding Midtown; Consider a economic forecast with developers, mayor, community development and city administrator.

6. **New Construction/Development Update**

Midtown

- $72 Million project
- Essential housing, work/live environment, commercial and retail

PAKAR

- $4 Million project
- 3 story mix-use including restaurant and retail

Tower Terrace Interchange/Road Update

- In negotiations
- IDOT may be able to swap funds
- Projects at state level instead of federal
- RISE dollars to help fund from I-380 to Highway13
- Joint application with county and communities for RISE and BUILD

7. Board Member Terms and Replacements-
   - Melissa White of Balance Fitness and Health,
   - CJ Kleene of Back in Line,
   - Corey Chestnut of Climate Engineers,
   - Brad Peterson of Peterson Pet Hospital,
   - Keith Billick of Side by Side
   - Jon Dusek and Chris Sherman will fall off the board due to term limits July 1, 2019

The next HEDCO meeting date is May 16, 2019 at 11:30

Next Hiawatha Summit Date: May 14 at 8:00 AM
FSB is celebrating their 50th year.

Other Discussion

Panda Marie's ribbon cutting is set for Friday, April 26th at 4:00 P.M.

Emily Upah advised that Alliant Energy is under a rate review starting April 1. Final rates will go in effect in January 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Angel Suttie, Secretary / Treasurer; acting chair

ATTEST:

Ambyr Severson, Admin. Coordinator