

**Community Development Authority
of the City of Onalaska**

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

1

1 The meeting of the Community Development Authority of the City of Onalaska was called to
2 order at 4:01 p.m. on Wednesday, June 9, 2021. It was noted that the meeting had been
3 announced and a notice posted at City Hall.

4

5 Roll call was taken with the following members present: Ald. Jim Olson, Ald. Dan Stevens, Joe
6 Bucheger, Ann Brandau, Ron Johnson, John Lyche, Mike Gargaro

7

8 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Mayor Kim Smith, Financial Services
9 Director/Treasurer Fred Buehler, City Code Enforcement Technician Peter McColl

10

11 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting (December 9, 2020)**

12

13 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by Joe, to approve the December 9, 2020 meeting minutes as
14 printed and on file in the City Clerk's Office.

15

16 On voice vote, motion carried.

17

18 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes/individual)**

19

20 Mike called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that portion of the
21 meeting.

22

23 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

24

25 **Item 4 – Election of:**

26

27 A. Chair

28

29 Motion by Ald. Olson, second by John, to nominate and elect Mike Gargaro as Chair of the
30 Community Development Authority.

31

32 Motion by Ron, second by Joe, to close nominations for Chair.

33

34 Mike called three times for other nominations for Chair.

35

36 Vote on the motion for Chair of Community Development Authority:

37

38 On voice vote, motion carried.

39

40 B. Vice Chair

41

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2

42 Motion by Joe, second by John, to nominate and elect Ann Brandau as Vice Chair of the
43 Community Development Authority.

44

45 Mike called three times for other nominations for Vice Chair.

46

47 Motion by Ron, second by Ald. Olson, to close nominations for Vice Chair.

48

49 Vote on the motion for Vice Chair of the Community Development Authority:

50

51 On voice vote, motion carried.

52

53 Mike asked that Item 7a be addressed next.

54

55 **Item 7 – Update on Tax Increment Districts:**

56

57 a. Tax Incremental District No. 5 (Great River Residences Project)

58

59 Louise Olson of Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions told CDA members rents for the Great River
60 Residences are “right on target,” and there currently is 100-percent occupancy, with the
61 exception being the commercial space. Louise said the COVID-19 pandemic has made it
62 difficult to find a tenant, telling CDA members businesses first must recover before being willing
63 to invest. Louise said rental rates will slowly increase over the next year based on the unit and
64 the demand, and she described the project as being “wonderful” overall.

65

66 John asked Louise how the rents are in comparison to Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions’
67 projections.

68

69 Louise told John they are right on target with what was projected.

70

71 Ald. Stevens asked Louise if tenants have experienced any parking-related challenges.

72

73 Louise said no and told Ald. Stevens most of the parking spots are rented by the tenants, but
74 there still are a few spots available.

75

76 Mike inquired about feedback regarding noise from the nearby railroad.

77

78 Louise told Mike there has not been an issue since last autumn and said she believes trains no
79 longer blow their whistle when they pass the site. Louise said, “We haven’t heard anything.”

80

81 Ron inquired about the status of attracting businesses to the development.

82

83 Louise told Ron that Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions advertises on Facebook, CoStar, and
84 MLS, and she said Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions is seeking a specific type of business, such
85 as a coffee shop or an establishment that sells beer, wine, and sandwiches. Louise said the mom-
86 and-pop establishments first must recover from the pandemic.

87

88 Ron asked, “So you have nothing, then, in the works?”

89

90 Louise responded, “No. We’ve had a couple in the works and they just backed out.”

91

92 John complimented The Great Rivers Residences project and said it was completed on schedule
93 and is visually appealing.

94

95 City Administrator Rindfleisch said TID No. 5 will be generating the increment as expected even
96 with the business portion being unoccupied.

97

98 **Item 5 – Update from La Crosse Area Development Corporation (LADCO) Leadership**

99

100 LADCO Executive Director Tim Kabat introduced both himself and LADCO Economic
101 Development Coordinator Sam Bachmeier, and he said LADCO staff member Nancy Moua
102 serves primarily as the staff member for the Coulee Region Business Center, which is LADCO’s
103 small business incubator. Tim said LADCO is a nonprofit that is focused on the economic
104 development of both La Crosse County and the City of La Crescent. LADCO, which Tim
105 described as a member-driven organization, has approximately 90 members, including both
106 public and private, and Tim expressed his gratitude that the City of Onalaska is a LADCO
107 member. Tim told CDA members LADCO is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2021, and he
108 said LADCO hopes to return to focusing on business retention and expansion. LADCO also is
109 looking into real estate solutions, which it does in conjunction with the Wisconsin Economic
110 Development Corporation (WEDC) in an attempt to try to provide real estate solutions to
111 businesses.

112

113 Tim said he and Sam want to share LADCO’s 2020 annual report with the CDA, noting the
114 report includes some of LADCO’s project updates, its financials, and a list of its members. Tim
115 noted LADCO is fully staffed for the first time in a little while, and he also noted LADCO also
116 has new board members and what he described as “a lot of renewed and enthusiastic energy
117 going forward on development projects here in our region.” Tim noted the following from the
118 report:

119

- 120 • LADCO replies to inquiries from site selectors who are seeking either acreage or
121 facilities. LADCO has applied on the City of Onalaska’s behalf in the past, and it will
122 continue to do so in an attempt to sell and market sites located within the city. Tim said
123 LADCO looks forward to attempting to assist the city in finding commercial spaces. Tim

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124 noted LADCO had provided direct assistant to IC System, and he also noted LADCO had
125 worked with LB White.

- 126 • CDA members had received a handout that includes slides with a business climate survey
127 that was given to La Crosse County establishments. The survey includes information
128 regarding what local businesses are facing as well as some of the optimism in terms of
129 what they are looking forward to.

130
131 Tim told CDA members that LADCO is enthusiastic about both the City of Onalaska’s State
132 Trunk Highway 16 corridor plan and its downtown plan, noting Sam had followed those
133 processes. Tim said LADCO sees the work it has attempted to do along the STH 16 corridor,
134 including Valley View Mall and reusing some of the big-box stores. Tim said LADCO wishes to
135 work with the City of Onalaska and the CDA to determine if there are opportunities both for
136 redevelopment and new development. Tim told CDA members the same holds true for the city’s
137 downtown plan, and he said LADCO sees potential with its Coulee Region Business Center, the
138 incubator, and the future public market as a strong demand for food incubation and food
139 incubator space. Tim said the former Nob Hill site, which Kwik Trip was utilizing for some of
140 its commercial kitchen and recipes, is a site LADCO would like to try to explore, as well as
141 perhaps some space in downtown Onalaska.

142
143 Sam, who has been employed by LADCO for four years, addressed the Coulee Region Business
144 Center and said, “I’m learning two things. One, that it’s not very well known [and] that not a
145 whole lot of people know what it is, what it does, or the mission that it is and that it serves. The
146 second thing that I’m learning is how incredible of a community asset that it is.” Sam the Coulee
147 Region Business Center currently is a 35,000 square foot warehouse located off the George
148 Street viaduct on the north side of the City of La Crosse. It currently holds 19 businesses
149 between manufacturing and food incubation tenants. The 13 manufacturing tenants range from
150 one to 10 employees. Sam said the center has had history and past success that he believes
151 should be promoted, adding he believes it also has some great opportunity moving forward. Sam
152 said food incubation is one of those opportunities between the colleges (UW-La Crosse, Viterbo,
153 Western Technical College), and both downtown La Crosse and downtown Onalaska. Sam said
154 David Reay’s has been a positive addition to the area, and he told CDA members he believes
155 there are more opportunities which were identified in the City of Onalaska’s downtown plan.
156 Sam referred to Louise’s presentation on behalf of Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions and said,
157 “We have an artesian baker in the kitchen that I think is looking for some spots, and maybe that
158 spot at the Great River Residences is a great opportunity for them to get in there. [We are] really
159 just making sure our community [and] people like Louise know about the CRBC so they can
160 come to us and say, ‘We need a space out in Onalaska. You have a tenant who could potentially
161 fill that.’ So [we are] kind of creating those relationships.”

162
163 Sam told CDA members that LADCO is seeing increased demand, noting the CRBC’s
164 commercial kitchen is 1,800 square feet and is at peak capacity. Sam said the CRBC had added

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165 two more tenants in the past week, two more tenants have applied, and he told CDA members,
166 “We’re seeing a growing need for it.” Sam noted there are two commercial kitchens in Viroqua
167 – one that is 5,000 square feet, and one that is 3,000 square feet – and he said they are meeting
168 that demand without any difficulties. Sam said, “I have no reservations about being able to meet
169 a larger incubation facility. I’m pretty excited that we’ve got some opportunities here in La
170 Crosse with the Nob Hill location, [and] a few other locations we could work with. The City of
171 Onalaska School District also has a pretty tremendous opportunity with their FabLab application
172 working with some of our manufacturing tenants in that area. Obviously these are all things that
173 need to continue to be further developed, but I wanted to let you know that that work is there.
174 We’re open to people coming and looking at the facility and getting an introduction to some of
175 our tenants. Maybe it’s something we’ll look to formally coordinate. But in the meantime, if
176 anybody wants and has interest in coming and reaching out to that facility, you won’t regret it.
177 It’s a pretty cool operation.”

178
179 John asked how many of the incubator’s inhabitants possibly might need a storefront as opposed
180 to an industrial site.

181
182 Sam estimated there are two or three, including an Indian grocer who specializes in Pacific
183 Indian grocery and market items, including fresh produce. Sam said the grocer will be in need of
184 a storefront within the next year. Sam also said there are five or six commercial kitchen tenants,
185 and all of them are on a different timeframe. Sam said, “The goal is about one to three, with a
186 few years added on potentially for graduation. There really isn’t a whole lot of time between
187 tenants getting in there and tenants needing storefront space. I can provide more specifics.”

188
189 John said the City of Onalaska is attempting to create more excitement in the downtown district,
190 adding that food and beverages will do so. John inquired about the graduation rate on the food
191 and beverage side, and he also inquired about the success ratio when the tenants have
192 matriculated to outside venues.

193
194 Sam said, “We’ve had a nice success rate of tenants; I don’t have an exact number off of the top
195 of my head. But we’ve had quite a few food trucks in the past few years that I know of in
196 particular. If you know of Apothik ... The Damn Tasty is another food truck. There’s Cloude’s.
197 There was another food truck. We’ve had them. We’ve also had a few caterers. Pogy’s [and]
198 Serves You Right [were] out of the incubator. ... I can’t get you numbers right now; I can try to
199 do that. But we have had some good success rates, and that’s what we try to do. We want to
200 make sure we’re giving these businesses every opportunity to not not succeed, if that makes
201 sense. We’re providing them with opportunities, everything from financing to real estate
202 solutions. And that’s obviously where the City of Onalaska comes into play: finding solutions.”

203
204 Tim said, “I think that’s part of what we’re hoping to show is that success and that return on
205 investment. Sam is the longest tenured, and he’s been with LADCO for four years. Part of what

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206 we're doing is going back in some of the history and getting the information that you're talking
207 about: the graduates, the success rate, how many of those businesses are still viable. We know
208 there has been close to 100 businesses that have gone through the incubator since its start in the
209 early 90s. As far as the percent that are food and beverage, that's something that we can follow
210 up and get back to you through staff, if that's OK.

211
212 What we're hoping to really ramp up is that programming and technical assistance so that our
213 tenants graduate and then have kind of that next location. That's where we really need to work
214 with the communities so that whether it's a food truck that's looking for events and places where
215 they can come and take the next step or to a storefront, we're hoping to work with all the
216 communities to be able to identify those, and to have that to offer our tenants so that they then
217 have a direct connection to Eric and [Planning Manager] Katie [Aspenson] and members of staff
218 to be able to take that next step."

219
220 Mike said, "I know part of the process of us getting through and getting our support for the
221 organization four or five years ago, I think – obviously last year probably notwithstanding – is to
222 have an event here in the city for one of the keystone events that you are running. I guess that
223 was one of the things we always asked for, typically at the Omni Center because of the space.
224 It's easier parking than downtown, depending on the event. ... That was one of the things that
225 we've kind of handshaked, if you will, to make sure not that it was contingent, our support of the
226 organization, but one of those things that we kind of like to have."

227
228 Tim said LADCO is looking to plan probably two in-person events through the rest of 2021:
229 LADCO's Industry Appreciation/Economic Forum, and its annual meeting. Tim said, "We'll
230 work on that, because the Omni Center would be a great location for either one of those events."

231
232 John asked if any of the COVID-19 relief funds have impacted the recruitment process.

233
234 Tim said, "I think the biggest challenge that everybody talks about is the workforce piece. There
235 is this pent-up demand that just about every type of business is experiencing. I think some of
236 that is reflected in those survey results. The challenge is for us to work with our partners so we
237 have good working relationships with the SBDC, the Small Business Development Center,
238 Workforce Connections, Couleecap – kind of everybody that's in this field – trying to grapple
239 with, how do we provide, because this is a great place to live and work in this whole region. If
240 we can get them here, they're hopefully going to stay and invest. The federal piece and the kind
241 of the unprecedented dollars that the federal government is providing to the localities and the
242 nonprofits, we definitely want to have an impactful project or two to be able to leverage those
243 dollars. That's something that we're working on with La Crosse County because they've
244 identified kind of this working group to see if there are good uses and ways to leverage those
245 federal dollars, and the same with the State of Wisconsin.

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247 I think the end of the tried-and-true economic development, the building relationships, the
248 conversations with businesses to see if they want to grow and expand and what their challenges
249 are is something LADCO has done historically, and it's something we look to continue and get
250 better at. Those real estate solutions, especially when you've got an almost brand new plan
251 downtown and looking for redevelopment sites on the Highway 16 corridor, that's where we'd
252 really like to work with you and the owners of those properties to somehow do the matchmaking
253 and get that to happen."

254

255 John referred to the City of Onalaska's downtown and STH 16 projects it had engaged a couple
256 years ago, and he asked Tim if there are any gaps, openings, or opportunities the city had missed
257 and that he would like to see.

258

259 Tim referred to the map of the STH 16 corridor and said he believes the gateway the City of
260 Onalaska serves to the larger region of individuals coming off Interstate 90, as well as the
261 connections to the La Crosse River marsh, is an area everyone should be working hard to take
262 advantage of. Tim noted Valley View Mall has undergone some changes and has a new
263 manager, and he said he believes there is a significant opportunity between the Valley View Mall
264 side and the City of Onalaska's identified areas when it wants to see activity occur. Tim
265 commended the City of Onalaska for recommendations and seeking ways to increase pedestrian
266 and bicycle traffic. Tim told John he cannot think of any gaps in the downtown district and said,
267 "I think the fact that you're trying to improve alleyways and turn them into something that is
268 vibrant and inviting and pedestrian-friendly just makes a lot of sense."

269

270 **Item 6 – CDA Financials:**

271

272 A. Year End 2020

273

274 Fred reported the following:

275

- 276 • The CDA's assets (cash and investments) totaled \$444,466.51.
- 277 • Interest income totaled \$2,150.36 (\$7,000 was budgeted).
- 278 • The interest rate in August 2020 was 0.15 percent, and it currently is 0.09 percent.
- 279 • Membership for both the 7 Rivers Alliance and LADCO will appear in the 2021
280 financials as no paperwork reached the Finance Department in 2020.

281

282 B. January-May 2021

283

284 Fred reported the following:

285

- 286 • Interest income totaled \$97.36 (\$700 was budgeted).
- 287 • The \$15,200 under "Subscriptions and Dues" is for membership in both LADCO and the

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288 7 Rivers Alliance for 2020 and 2021.

289 • Revenues totaled \$97.36, and expenditures totaled \$15,200 for a deficit of \$15,102.64.

290

291 John addressed the investment accounts and asked Fred where the funds may be invested, and if
292 there are alternatives to treasury bills.

293

294 Fred said it must be safe securities because it must be secured either through repurchase
295 agreements “or something safe enough that it meets the criteria from our auditors, Hawkins
296 Ash.” Fred added, “Right now, it doesn’t matter where you are. For example, I have ICS funds
297 of the city, and on \$3.2 million, I got \$30 interest last month. Interest rates are just not very
298 attractive.”

299

300 John suggested that an investment could be made in land accumulation, for example.

301

302 Fred told John he would have make sure the auditors would be comfortable if the CDA wishes to
303 explore another avenue.

304

305 Mike asked Fred, “The \$15,000 for the year, that’s basically carryover ... it’s two years?”

306

307 Fred said it is two years and added, “Two years of expenses in 2021.”

308

309 Motion by John, second by Ald. Stevens, to approve the CDA Financials – Year End 2020, and
310 January-May 2021.

311

312 City Administrator Rindfleisch addressed the question regarding investments and said, “One of
313 the other catches is it also has to be liquid. We could spend money on land, but it would not be
314 in investment form. It would be like a purchase for development purposes. The end result can
315 be the same thing, but we would be calling it a purchase. ... The purpose would be stated
316 differently.”

317

318 Ald. Stevens asked, “Essentially we could realize the capital appreciation of the property at a
319 profit later, assuming that the property goes up?”

320

321 City Administrator Rindfleisch told Ald. Stevens he is correct and said, “The only catch would
322 be if the CDA wished to issue debt. Then it’s for business purposes, and it will be at a higher
323 rate than the tax-exempt breaks. We’re talking purchase [and] not debt. That’s sort of the one
324 big catch that you have to look at for purchasing land.”

325

326 John inquired about possibly making loans to businesses to leverage a new business to move into
327 a downtown storefront, with, for example, the CDA doing a second on the property. John asked,
328 “Is that legitimate for the CDA purposes?”

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329

330 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “Excluding investment side, yes. That would be CDA
331 purview to utilize funds for that purpose. The [Common] Council ultimately would have final
332 approval of a new program for that, but that would be something the CDA could develop and
333 invest in small business loans, storefront loans, [and] bid projects.”

334

335 John noted there had been a past discussion about utilizing a revolving loan fund in combination
336 with some of the SBA funds that were available as a way to entice businesses to the local area.
337 Earning \$39 doesn’t seem like a very prudent way to move forward.”

338

339 City Administrator Rindfleisch agreed it is not a large sum of money and said, “The Council
340 donated the land where TID No. 5 is, the Three Sixty project, to the CDA, who then technically
341 sold the land off for the purpose of increasing the pot of funds for investment purposes, for
342 business purposes. You’re definitely speaking in the heart of the matter of what the CDA exists
343 to be. We hopefully have said a lot, but there’s always something we can do with it.”

344

345 On voice vote, motion carried.

346

347 **Item 7 – Update of Tax Increment Districts:**

348

349 a. Tax Incremental District No. 5 (Great River Residences Project)

350

351 Fred noted he had distributed to CDA members a copy of the financial balance sheet for TID No.
352 5 dated December 31, 2020. The increment was \$58,470.16. Fred also noted the following:

353

- 354 • The Development Fund totaled \$250,000, which was issued to Three Sixty Real Estate
355 Solutions.
- 356 • The city has a yearly \$150 subscription to the Department of Revenue.
- 357 • The valuation on TID No. 5 was \$3,115,300 near the end of 2020. Anticipated cash flow
358 was approximately \$4.8 million.

359

360 Fred told CDA members he has not yet seen statistics from the Board of Review regarding the
361 value placed by the assessor now that the project is complete. Fred said he has reason to believe
362 the total value the city had estimated (\$9,734,000) will instead be approximately \$11 million, but
363 he added he cannot say that with certainty.

364

365 Ann asked if the \$3,115,300 was from 2020.

366

367 Fred said it was from 2020 and noted, “Keep in mind, you had the cement and just a little bit of
368 structure there, so there wasn’t a whole lot done. And I think they had the basement or the
369 parking portion done. There wasn’t a lot of activity that happened and was completed as of

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370 December 31, 2020. I haven't seen the figures for this year yet, but now that the project is
371 complete, that value should be pretty stationary. The only thing that is going to change in
372 reference to the TIF District is if there is any personal property as it relates to that business
373 coming in."

374

375 John said, "Basically why the valuation coming in will give or take 15 to 20 percent higher, that
376 should shorten the length of the TIF by that amount, I would suspect."

377

378 Fred said he does not know if it will shorten the length of the TIF because it is a little behind at
379 this time. Fred noted the city will take its share every year, and then it must pay off the loan to
380 Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions. The loan is over 27 years.

381

382 City Administrator Rindfleisch told CDA members the valuation is as of January 1, 2020 for the
383 revenue the city sees generated now, and he noted there always is a two-year gap in any TIF
384 increment generation from when the valuation is created and taxes are paid. City Administrator
385 Rindfleisch said, "Timeline-wise, we haven't even submitted our portion of payments to Three
386 Sixty yet. They're not due yet from that first year. Even though it's been 100-percent capacity
387 now and fully rented out at what they expected market rates, there's always that delay for him to
388 recoup those costs just based on the timeline for how TIDs work."

389

390 John asked if the assessment date is still at the end of June.

391

392 City Administrator Rindfleisch told John yes and said, "The Joint Review Board has finalized
393 that, but they're finalizing the date as of ... That would have been January 1."

394

395 Fred referred to the balance sheet dated December 31, 2020 and noted the cash is a negative.
396 Fred explained the reason why this is so is because when the TIF District was established in
397 2019, Ehlers, Inc. was owned approximately \$15,000. Fred also noted the necessary paperwork
398 had to be submitted at the state level. This is why there is a negative balance of \$17,200.

399

400 John asked, "Did we get a break from them when we did TIF [No.] 6?"

401

402 John was told no.

403

404 Fred said the city must pay \$150 for each TID (\$300 total) each year.

405

406 City Administrator Rindfleisch said that while he does not have the financial figures from Ehlers,
407 Inc. in front of him, "[TID No. 6] was not as expensive as the first TID was. It was just really
408 straightforward this time around. While it wasn't necessarily a discount from the consultant, it
409 did cost less."

410

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411 Fred next addressed TID No. 5 through May 2021, noting there is \$41,118.32 in funds.
412 Regarding the expenses, Fred pointed out the increment (\$58,470), and the implement
413 anticipated was \$97,000. The only expenditure to date is the annual \$150 fee to the Wisconsin
414 Department of Revenue. Fred said based on the documents, the only activity that will occur
415 within the next one to two months is the city will take the necessary management fees, and Three
416 Sixty Real Estate Solutions will receive the balance.

417
418 Motion by Ald. Stevens, second by Ann, to accept the financials for Tax Incremental District No.
419 5 (Great River Residences Project) for 2020, and January through May 2021.

420

421 On voice vote, motion carried.

422

423 b. Tax Incremental District No. 6 (Sand Lake Road)

424

425 City Administrator Rindfleisch told CDA members TID No. 6 is the property located north of
426 what is referred to as the Mayo property located along Sand Lake Road, and across the road from
427 Traditional Trades' development. Traditional Trades owns this property at this time, and it
428 primarily will consist of residential units, with some mixed use. Some commercial properties
429 would be located toward the south of the project. The project phases that are now occurring is
430 called Area C, which is the first section of residential apartments and a condominium complex.
431 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted this is substantially similar to what is located on the west
432 side of Sand Lake Road, also noting up to 360 residences will be constructed in that area. City
433 Administrator Rindfleisch said it is more residential growth, but denser residential growth than
434 the city has experienced in the past.

435

436 City Administrator Rindfleisch explained the reason for the TID and the TID expense is
437 primarily for utilities in this area, noting water and sewer eventually will have to run through this
438 parcel from the north to the south to both access and develop the Mayo property – the sewer in
439 particular. City Administrator Rindfleisch said the stormwater would have to run north to south
440 through the Mayo property for future development so that it may reach the new stormwater
441 pondage located adjacent to the existing one located south of Menards. City Administrator
442 Rindfleisch said the city must be in partnership with the developer, and he told CDA members
443 that at this point in time, the only oversizing of utilities is the sewer utility that is going in. As
444 the developer constructs the project, the developer will have deeper and larger sewer pipes than
445 necessary for each section that is built out, and it then will be built in sections. After such time
446 that increment is generated, the city will offset the difference between the developer's actual cost
447 and what the developer's cost would have been for its own development itself so that the city
448 may have access.

449

450 City Administrator Rindfleisch told CDA members the second portion of what is occurring there
451 is not necessarily related to TID expense, but rather for development purposes, is in exchange for

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452 the developer paying park fees up front, the city eventually will be receiving the bluffland that is
453 present in exchange for the park fees. City Administrator Rindfleisch said there ultimately will
454 be a letter of credit in the meantime so that the city will have the park fees if the development
455 fails. The city will exchange the park fees for the bluffland at such time if the development
456 succeeds. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "That's been a large goal of the city: to kind of
457 access and connect for public purposes the blufflands area," and he told CDA members the
458 developer will construct a public trail on the bottom of the bluffland for all public access to that
459 area. City Administrator Rindfleisch said those are additional costs the developer normally
460 would not incur, and hence be reimbursed again via the exchange of funds through the TID
461 District. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It's probably the lowest risk the city could
462 possibly take. It's only in exchange for the development and hitting particular benchmarks
463 would increment ever be generated. If those benchmarks are not occurred, the increment is not
464 given out. But the increment will always be earned, at least by the district, before exchange. It's
465 been a pleasure to work with the Aspensions and Traditional Trades on this project right now, and
466 we're looking forward to seeing some progress. You can ask, for the CDA's purposes and for
467 financial purpose, January 1 of 2020 valuation and the base valuation ultimately for this project,
468 which would be January 1, 2021 is effectively zero. It is agricultural land right now, and without
469 any developable value there. A year from now, we'll be talking about this and we will have
470 some increment to show based on the January 1, 2022 amount, which we won't collect until the
471 end of 2023. At least we'll have some increment at that point in time to offset those costs."

472
473 Ald. Stevens asked City Administrator Rindfleisch to describe the land that would go to the
474 parks; specifically, the amount of land and where it is located.

475
476 City Administrator Rindfleisch said that of the 40 acres that are available there, approximately
477 20 acres is bluffland and not necessarily buildable, leaving another approximately 20 acres. The
478 property is located north of the Riders Club Road roundabout portion when one runs along the
479 ridge to the end of the lot on the north side of the plot. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "A
480 good portion of it is not necessarily developable, but it's prime land that otherwise we'd have to
481 be paying to acquire."

482
483 John asked, "Because of the nature of where it's located in respect to the Mayo property, and
484 we're having to run the sewer through the Mayo property, is that going to have any impact on
485 what Mayo wants to do?"

486
487 City Administrator Rindfleisch told John he has been in contact with Mayo and said it only can
488 benefit Mayo as it does make it easier to develop. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "It's not
489 in the TID District, but it's immediately adjacent to a TID District. The district could be
490 amended to also include the Mayo property, if need be, or a new one could be created for the
491 Mayo property if it's developed. But in conversations with them, they don't intend to dispose of
492 the land. But it does make the land far more developable for them to have sewer and water

493 access.”

494

495 John’s question was inaudible on the recording.

496

497 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “We do have lines of communication open with Mayo
498 regarding the land, which I don’t think we’ve necessarily had in the past. [There is] nothing to
499 report of anything that’s been hitting the timeline anytime soon. They met with the CDA to see
500 what interests they would have in the parcel and get some ideas that way. I believe that was very
501 fruitful, and it has provided a thought for Mayo. But I don’t have any word if there is anything
502 jumpstarted at this point in time.”

503

504 **Item 8 – Update of 2020 Annual Building Permit Report and 2019-2020 Planning/Zoning**
505 **and Inspection Departments Report**

506

507 City Administrator Rindfleisch’s report included the following:

508

- 509 • Both commercial and residential building permits have shown slight increases from 2018
510 through 2020, reversing a downward trend that existed from 2013 through 2017.
- 511 • More building permits were issued in 2020 compared to previous years despite the
512 COVID-19 pandemic. City Administrator Rindfleisch attributed this to citizens staying
513 at home more and deciding to enhance their homes, and he said, “It does not necessarily
514 mean that there’s much more growth in the number of homes being developed for
515 building permits for single family in particular. As you can see later on, that number has
516 stayed flat in terms of number of new homes being built.”
- 517 • Per the data on page 9, the valuation of three single family detached homes in both 2019
518 and 2020 increased from \$1,406,000 in 2019 to \$1,951,951 in 2020. City Administrator
519 Rindfleisch noted the lots are expensive, which in general leads to expensive homes for
520 development, and he said, “We do not have the large farm field for several hundred
521 single family detached homes. You’ll see that number probably in the per unit increase,
522 but [there] probably [will not] be substantial increases in the number of single-family
523 homes. Having said that, we do have some continued areas for growth that have either
524 been annexed in and are looking for development. Crestwood Boulevard is the one
525 we’ve talked about recently. The street was annexed to city standards. There are lots
526 available on top of the bluff there. ... The Manske property has also been annexed in, and
527 we do have plans for that parcel as that would include some single-family homes, as well
528 as multifamily units.”

529

530 John asked City Administrator Rindfleisch to give him a clean, clear definition between “single
531 family attached” versus “single family detached” and “duplex.”

532

533 City Administrator Rindfleisch told John he does not have that information at this time and said

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534 he will give him definitions at a later date “because what’s single family detached and what’s a
535 townhome – is that attached or is that detached versus duplex, which is also attached, but is it a
536 zero-lot line detached or not? I don’t know how that is.”
537

- 538 • There was a decrease in multifamily apartment buildings between 2018 and 2020.
539 However, City Administrator Rindfleisch also pointed out, “We have far more apartment
540 buildings going up than ever before. That’s just a function of the delay between the
541 building permits and the completion of the projects.”
- 542 • The valuation of four multifamily apartment buildings has decreased from \$23,940,691 in
543 2018 to \$12,738 for six buildings in 2019, and to \$5,800,000 for one building in 2020.
544 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted some of the buildings that are included are the ones
545 that have not necessarily been filled yet.
- 546 • The following site plan reviews were completed in 2020:
 - 547 ○ Nutbush, 1033 2nd Avenue North (4,316 SF Restaurant) (\$1.14million value).
548 Nutbush moved from the City of La Crosse to the City of Onalaska. Half of the
549 parking lot at the site of the old establishment was located in La Crosse, and the
550 other half was located in Onalaska. The owners wanted to upgrade the facility,
551 but they could not do so in what was the floodplain. Therefore, a new
552 establishment was constructed on the north side of the parking lot, which is
553 located in Onalaska.
 - 554 ○ Advanced Auto Parts, 9396 State Road 16, (8,069 SF Commercial Building)
555 (\$700,000 value).
 - 556 ○ Massimo Mua Development (Former Payless Shoes), 9362 State Road 16,
557 (5,744 SF Commercial Addition) (\$447,634 value). This includes both Stanton
558 Optical (2,818 Tenant Build-out) (\$125,000.00 value), and Charter
559 Communications (2,926 Tenant Build-out) (\$275,000.00 value).
 - 560 ○ Chipotle Mexican Grill, 9417 State Road 16, (2,400 SF Restaurant)
561 (\$450,000.00 value).
 - 562 ○ 2 Brothers Powersports: 905 Oak Avenue South (11,520 SF Storage Building)
563 (\$450,000 value).

564
565 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “It’s indicative of when those permits were pulled in 2020,
566 but a lot of what we talked about here that were successful at openings of permits were pulled
567 earlier. The \$10 million Holiday Express building, for example, isn’t showing here as 2020 even
568 though it opened in 2020 because permits were pulled earlier.”
569

570 John asked if the city has had any contact with any of the big box owners who currently have
571 vacant buildings.
572

573 City Administrator Rindfleisch told John the vacant Shopko property is currently the city’s
574 largest footprint, and he said there have been conversations with the owners, who have some

575 ideas, but there currently are no major tenants slated for that parcel. City Administrator
576 Rindfleisch said the owners are analyzing their investments regarding how they wish to proceed,
577 and he stated, “[There is] nothing that can be public at this point in time because nothing has
578 come to the CDA, the Plan Commission, or otherwise. They’re just thinking about it right now.”
579 City Administrator Rindfleisch also said has been no communication regarding the former
580 Gander Mountain site.

581
582 John inquired about both the Fauver Hill site and the now-vacant TGI Fridays site.

583
584 City Administrator Rindfleisch told John there are “plans afoot for both of those,” noting
585 construction of a Chick-fil-A restaurant at the Fauver Hill site is expected to be completed either
586 in late 2021 or early 2022.

587
588 **Item 9 – Update of 2021 Building Permit Summary (January – May)**

589
590 City Administrator Rindfleisch told CDA members he had just covered Item 9 and said he will
591 return to Item No. 8.

592
593 **Item 8 – Update of 2020 Annual Building Permit Report and 2019-2020 Planning/Zoning
594 and Inspection Departments Report**

595
596 City Administrator Rindfleisch’s report included the following:

- 597
- 598 • Staff members include Planning Manager Katie Aspenson; Lead Building Inspector Brad
599 Neumeister; Office Clerical Support Lisa Schmidt; and City Code Enforcement
600 Technician Peter McColl. The city subcontracts to GEC for additional inspection
601 services. Cindy Genz (Office Clerical Support), Calvin King (Commercial Building
602 Inspector), and Mac McGuire (Plumbing and Heating Inspector) all retired in 2020.

603
604 John asked if the city will continue utilizing the services of contractors long term in place of
605 hiring employees.

606
607 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the Common Council’s budget in the last year only included
608 the Lead Building Inspector position, and not for hiring and benefitting the other positions. City
609 Administrator Rindfleisch said he is recommending continuing to utilize the services of
610 contractors “mainly because the kind of work that we do is so variable.” City Administrator
611 Rindfleisch addressed inspections and said there are times there are significant projects coming
612 on, but perhaps then there are no projects the following month. City Administrator Rindfleisch
613 said, “It does allow the flexibility for right-sizing our Inspection Department, depending on the
614 rise and fall in the economy.”

615

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- 616 • The Unified Development Code and Zoning Ordinance update occurred in 2020. City
617 Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes it is “a significant improvement from where
618 we were,” noting it is half the size of what it previously was. City Administrator
619 Rindfleisch said developers and residents have told him it is easier to locate information,
620 and also be informed regarding how they need to proceed.
- 621 • There were 119 property maintenance violations in 2020, compared to 93 in 2019, and
622 122 in 2018.
- 623 • The Plan Commission approved 33 applications in 2020, compared to 24 in 2019.
- 624 • The CDA and the Common Council approved both the State Road 16 Corridor
625 Redevelopment Study and the Downtown Onalaska Redevelopment study in 2019.
- 626 • Onalaska was recognized as a “Tree City USA” for the 20th and 21st consecutive years.
627

628 John asked if there is any funding associated with “Tree City USA.”
629

630 City Administrator Rindfleisch said the city receives no grant funding for “Tree City USA” and
631 told John it is in recognition for funds the city already has utilized on behalf of those projects and
632 filed a report.
633

- 634 • The Inspection Department’s accomplishments in 2019 and 2020 include:
- 635 ○ In 2019, City Inspectors provided field training to the State of Wisconsin’s new UDC
636 code consultant on Electrical and Building field inspections.
 - 637 ○ In 2019, City Inspectors created new “Checklists” to assist homeowners and
638 contractors for decks, additions and basement build outs to ensure proper paperwork
639 and permits are provided for projects.
 - 640 ○ City Inspectors continued to pursue new Inspection Credentials in 2019 & 2020.
 - 641 ○ Attended multiple training seminars for all aspects of construction throughout 2019 &
642 2020, and were active members with Inspection Associations of Wisconsin. The
643 Inspection Department staff assisted organizations and in training events.
 - 644 ○ In 2019, the City contracted with General Engineering Company (GEC) to complete
645 residential building inspections on behalf of the City of Onalaska. In 2020, GEC took
646 on additional inspection duties including plumbing, HVAC, and building for
647 residential and commercial development.
- 648 • The total number of commercial permits issued in 2019 was 102 permits, exceeding the
649 five-year average of 93 permits.
- 650 • In 2019, city staff reviewed 22 site plans for major commercial, multifamily projects
651 including renovations, new construction, and additions. The following projects had a
652 minimum value of \$1 million:
- 653 ○ Onalaska Great River Residences (\$11.1 million)
 - 654 ○ Dahl Honda Automotive Dealership (\$5 million)
 - 655 ○ Wisconsin Kenworth Dealership (\$3.15 million)
 - 656 ○ Abbey Court Apartments (\$1.8 million)

Reviewed 06/15/2021 by Katie Aspenson

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- 657 ○ Hot Springs Spas & Pool (\$1.7 million)
- 658 ● The following is a list of other building permits issued for larger commercial projects,
659 with a minimum value of \$250,000:
- 660 ○ Target (\$1.3 million)
- 661 ○ Gundersen Health System (\$550,000)
- 662 ○ Coldwell Banker River Valley Real Estates (\$342,000)
- 663 ● A total of 1,209 permits were issued by the Inspection Department in 2019, totaling
664 \$329,044.50, all of which goes into the General Fund. The breakdown of permits is as
665 follows:
- 666 ○ 300 Building Permits totaling \$172,933.75.
- 667 ○ 208 Electrical Permits totaling \$75,432.34.
- 668 ○ 245 Heating/Air Conditioning Permits totaling \$27,364.21.
- 669 ○ 205 Plumbing Permits totaling \$37,190.50.
- 670 ● In 2020, city staff reviewed seven site plans for commercial projects including
671 renovations, new construction, and additions. The list of projects with a minimum value
672 of \$500,000 includes:
- 673 ○ Holiday Inn Express (\$10 million)
- 674 ○ Coldwater Creek Apartments (\$5.8 million)
- 675 ○ Nutbush (\$1.14 million)
- 676 ○ Chipotle Mexican Grill (\$800,000)
- 677 ○ Advanced Auto Parts (\$700,000)
- 678 ● The list of other Building Permits issued for larger commercial projects, with a minimum
679 value of \$300,000 includes:
- 680 ○ Ashley Home Store (former Toys-R-Us site) (\$1.2 million)
- 681 ○ Noodles & Company (\$350,000)
- 682 ○ Eyemart Express (\$320,000)
- 683 ○ Mathy Construction (\$300,000)

684
685 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted the following is part of Item 9 – Update of 2021 Building
686 Permit Summary (January – May):

- 687
- 688 ● 48 permits have been pulled totaling \$1,824,472.
- 689 ● 21 commercial permits have been pulled totaling \$1,195,960.
- 690 ● The following major projects are expected to begin this summer:
- 691 ○ Abbey Court Apartments (83 units)
- 692 ○ The Fields Development (360 units)
- 693 ○ Morrie’s Automotive (auto dealership)
- 694 ○ North Kinney Coulee Apartments (two 50-unit buildings)
- 695 ○ YMCA (pool/sauna area building addition)
- 696 ○ Chick-fil-A (restaurant)
- 697

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698 Mike inquired about the number of apartments currently in the city, noting there are 550
699 apartments alone on the three aforementioned projects. Mike asked if it will be possible to fill all
700 of them.

701
702 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted he expects to also see the Century Place development,
703 likely in 2022, and he told Mike the developers generally have a better feel of what they will be
704 able to rent out so that they are able to break even. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he
705 believes they have been very accurate, noting there had been concerns about renting every unit at
706 the Great River Residences, which are located near the railroad tracks. City Administrator
707 Rindfleisch told Mike he does not know how many apartments are in the city, nor does he know
708 how many will be needed. However, City Administrator Rindfleisch also said, "As long as they
709 keep getting filled and they're quality apartments, people will rent them and we haven't hit the
710 cap yet, apparently."

711
712 Mayor K. Smith addressed the Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions property and its rentals, noting
713 the large, three-bedroom corner apartments were rented before the smaller units in the building
714 were. Mayor K. Smith noted she and other had recently toured the senior living center located
715 on Emerald Drive East, and she said she was told the large corner units were rented before the
716 smaller units.

717
718 **Adjournment**

719
720 Motion by Joe to adjourn at 5:14 p.m.

721
722 Mike adjourned the meeting.

723
724
725 Recorded by:

726
727 Kirk Bey