

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
OF THE CITY OF SUNSET HILLS, MISSOURI  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2007

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Business Development Committee of the City of Sunset Hills, Missouri met in regular session at City Hall Quarters, 3939 S. Lindbergh Blvd., in said City on Wednesday, May 23, 2007. The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present:	Don Darr	-Chairman
	John Basler	-Member
	John Littlefield	-Member
	Douglas McGuire	-Member
	Dan Merlo	-Member
	Rodney Stecher	Member
	Jerry Von Rohr	-Member
	Laura Rider	-Ex Officio Member

It should be noted that Ms. Kerry Borawski, member of the Finance Committee, and Dr. Andrew Glassberg were present.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Those present introduced themselves.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE DIRECTION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mrs. Rider explained that the Mayor has activated the committee to review the city's revenue sources as well as to preserve and enhance revenue. She referred to a packet of information distributed to the members last week explaining the different sales taxes and sources of revenue. The information also included comparisons with other municipalities with business license fees.

Mrs. Rider stated that perhaps the Committee should determine the direction and other data and analysis to review. The members should also consider if this could be done on an in-house basis or if outside assistance is desired.

Mr. Von Rohr stated that the when Mayor contacted him, it was his understanding that the purpose of the committee is to review various taxes for the city to be more business friendly. Therefore his thought is for the committee to review various taxes to see if they are business friendly and if they are not, the committee can make recommendations of what improvements or adjustments should be made.

There was discussion of the difference of a residential rate and commercial rate. There are municipalities that have determined to make this differential. It was explained that it is permissible to have different rates for residential and commercial.

The members discussed trends and projections. The projections for the next two years are annual deficits which can only be done for so long. Ms. Borawski stated that this is a concern of the Finance Committee. Mrs. Rider commented that there is a recommendation that 50% of annual budget be set aside and currently, the city has exceeded the recommendation in reserves.

Mrs. Rider was requested to obtain additional background information regarding what the city has done in the past for business recruitment, business retention, etc. There was also a suggestion to obtain a copy of a table comparing utility tax rates of different municipalities for the next meeting. There was a comment made regarding other municipalities having their own fire department, which would be more taxes paid to that municipality.

It was suggested to consider a utility tax comparison with municipalities located south of Highway 40.

The members proceeded to discuss the city's capital improvements sales tax rate. Mrs. Rider explained there is a 1%, 1/4% and a 1/2% capital improvement sales tax. In addition, there will be a 1/2% Parks and Recreation and Storm Water that will start being collected in October, which is not included in the budget.

Mrs. Rider explained the city receives a portion of the funds collected by the state for the renewal of license plates which is based on population. The city does not charge for stickers for vehicles; they are used for resident identification purposes.

A member asked what the city has been doing to attract businesses to the city. Mrs. Rider stated that she is not aware of anything being done over the last few years. The city has had a Business Development Committee in the past but it has not been active for several years.

Mr. Stecher stated that he has been on the Planning and Zoning Commission for quite some time and has spoken with many developers and business owners and is not aware of one complaint regarding the city's taxes.

The members discussed why the city has never had a major supermarket. A comment was made that the demographics are not good for a major supermarket in Sunset Hills.

Mr. Stecher stated that residents have spoken their opposition to commercial development in their neighborhood at Planning and Zoning Commission meetings.

The members discussed the occupancy of office space in the city is almost 100%. There was also discussion of the availability of land in the city that could be commercially developed. It was pointed out that there is vacant land located in the area of Old Gravois Road; however, much of this land is in a floodplain and the area would most likely be developed for industrial use not retail use.

The members continued to discuss license fees. Mrs. Rider stated that medical doctors do not pay fees to the city unless the doctor is selling products which would then be considered gross receipt taxes for the sales. She explained that there is also an annual business license tax based on square footage.

The committee discussed the possibility of increasing utility taxes and the amount of revenue the increase would bring to the city. There was also a brief discussion regarding property tax rates.

A suggestion was made to discuss at a future meeting the ease of the permitting and licensing process for businesses that are looking to locate in Sunset Hills.

There was a suggestion made for a comparison of revenues the city would receive from an office complex, retail complex and an industrial complex before the next meeting for the members to review.

Mr. Stecher stated that the city's Comprehensive Plan needs to be taken into consideration when looking at available land and the areas that are designated for residential, industrial and commercial.

### **ESTABLISH A DATE FOR FUTURE MONTHLY MEETINGS**

The members determined to meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Therefore, the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 27, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Recording Secretary,



Laurie Govreau

UNAPPROVED