

CITY OF HERMANTOWN

HERMANTOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Thursday, May 22nd, 2025 at 5:00 PM Central

Council Chambers, City Hall – Hermantown Governmental Services Building

Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Present
Councilor John Geissler:	Present
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Present
Councilor Joe Peterson:	Present
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Karen Pionk:	Present
Rob Unzen:	Present

CITY STAFF: Chad Ronchetti, Economic Development Director; Mia Thibodeau, HEDA Attorney; Eric Johnson, Community Development Director; Joe Wicklund, Assistant City Administrator

VISITORS: Jason Hale, North Shore Development; Emily Warner

1. ROLL CALL

2. MINUTES

A. Approve April 17, 2025 HEDA Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as presented. This motion, made by Geissler and seconded by Peterson, Carried.

Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Yea
Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Joe Peterson:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Karen Pionk:	Yea
Rob Unzen:	Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

3. MOTIONS

- a. Motion made by President Boucher to reschedule the June 19th, 2025 meeting to June 18th due to the holiday. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hjelle.

Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Yea
Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Joe Peterson:	Yea

Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Karen Pionk:	Yea
Rob Unzen:	Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

4. **RESOLUTIONS**

- a. Director Ronchetti presented the proposed easement acquisition of HEDA property along Lightning Drive. The acquisition is proposed by Minnesota Power for their Reliability Loop project. Commissioner Geissler asked what would happen with the payment, and Director Ronchetti said it would be deposited into the operations fund.

Motion to approve. This motion, made by Commissioner Hjelle and seconded by Commissioner Peterson, Carried.

Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Yea
Councilor John Geissler:	Yea
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Yea
Councilor Joe Peterson:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Absent
Karen Pionk:	Yea
Rob Unzen:	Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

5. **WORK SESSION**

A. Morris Thomas Housing Project

- a. Jason Hale of North Shore Development, a consultant hired by HEDA staff for the project, presented on the proposed model for funding and developing the land currently owned by the City of Hermantown near the corner of Johnson Road and Morris Thomas Road. The proposal was for HEDA to serve as the land developer. The site plan includes 37 lots, with the eastern side designated for housing due to wetlands on the west. The development would target workforce housing of a minimum of 5 units with price points around 115% of the statewide median income. The presentation included financial projections showing an estimated \$2.4 million in lot sales, \$133,037 in fees, and approximately \$67,000 in annual property tax revenue once developed. The project would take 26 years to break even, but the ROI over 50 years would be 74% annualized.

HEDA discussed the benefits of the project for the community. Commissioner Geissler spoke in favor of the greater density. Commissioner Pionk voiced a

desire to take the next step of soliciting Requests for Proposals from civil engineering firms to start preliminary design of the roads and infrastructure. Commissioner Geissler and Peterson supported that. Director Ronchetti asked for consensus from the Commission on this next step, and all Commissioners supported a solicitation of proposals.

6. **RECESS**

Motion to recess at 6:17 p.m. This motion, made by Commissioner Pionk and seconded by Commissioner Hjelle, Carried.

Mayor Wayne Boucher:	Yea
Councilor John Geissler:	Absent
Councilor Andy Hjelle:	Absent
Councilor Joe Peterson:	Yea
Councilor Brian LeBlanc:	Yea
Karen Pionk:	Yea
Rob Unzen:	Yea

Yea: 6, Nay: 0, Absent: 1

Recorded by:



Chad Ronchetti, Economic Development Director