

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE STAPLES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

February 25, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Staples Economic Development Authority was called to order by Chairman Murray at 5:02 p.m. on Tuesday, February 25th, 2025, and was held in-person at the Staples City Hall council chamber. Present were Commissioners Bendson, Case, Gerard, Gertken, and Murray. With Bjerga and Tappe marked as absent. Also present were Mark Anderson of the Staples World, SEDA Executive Director Lucas Wakefield, and the Staples City Administrator, Jerel Nelsen.

The meeting agenda was reviewed and Case moved to approve the agenda as written. Bendson seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous in favor. Carried.

Minutes of the January 28th, 2025, meeting were reviewed. It was moved by Bendson and seconded by Case to approve the minutes as submitted. Vote was unanimous in favor. Carried.

SEDA board held a discussion about business attraction and retention efforts. Wakefield gave updates to the board about current businesses considering investment into the city. The board gave suggestions as to what the preferred types of businesses might be, especially retail businesses and those not part of a large national chain.

SEDA board also discussed downtown buildings – especially opportunities to fill some vacancies and to ensure that the downtown is vibrant and welcoming. Specific discussion was had on various storefronts and what might be done to improve them. The board did not elect to take any further action on the topic for the time being.

Wakefield discussed the concept of a public-private partnership for real estate development – focused especially on residential housing for which the board and other entities have noted a substantial need. Wakefield asked the board whether they were amendable to the concept or whether they had a preferred course of action. Inconclusive discussion was had – with several members of the board requesting some additional time to consider the concept.

Wakefield updated the board on the status of the Small Cities grant being deployed in the City of Staples as well as on the Blandin Foundation Leadership Boost Grant.

A motion was made by Gertken seconded by Gerard to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m. Vote in favor was unanimous. Carried.

Lucas Wakefield, Secretary