CITY OF NISSWA
MINUTES – CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP EDA
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026 – 10:00 AM
NISSWA CITY HALL

Members present: Jennifer Carnahan, Bruce London, Jesse Zahn, Joe Hall
Other Members Present: Tom Pearson, City Attorney
Members absent: Mark Froehle
City staff present: Maggi Wentler, Interim City Administrator; Amber Moon-Peterson, Parks & Rec Director; Tom Blomer, Public Works Director; Steven Timblin, City Planner
Audience members: 2 members of the public were present.

A. Call to Order

Mayor Carnahan called the City Council Workshop to order at 10:01 AM on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Nisswa City Hall.

B. Economic Development Discussions

Tyler Glenn, Executive Director of the Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corporation BLAEDC), presented information regarding the reestablishment of an Economic Development Authority (EDA) for the City of Nisswa. He noted that the city's previous EDA was disbanded in approximately 2017, and outlined the process for reestablishing it, which would require drafting a resolution and holding a public meeting.

Mr. Glenn explained that an EDA provides various authorities to the city, including tax levying authority and the ability to own property. He noted that an EDA board requires a minimum of three members, including two city council members, but recommended five members as ideal to ensure diverse input from the community. He also mentioned that he had received a grant from the Initiative Foundation to develop a master plan for the city-owned property south of Highway 77 and west of Highway 371.

Council Member Hall inquired about the EDA's role in updating the city's comprehensive plan. Mr. Glenn confirmed that an EDA could take the economic development section of a comprehensive plan and revise it to develop a roadmap for the city.

Mayor Carnahan asked about the advantages of having community voices on the EDA board rather than just council members. Mr. Glenn agreed that having community representation would provide valuable diverse perspectives and backgrounds for development planning.

Council Member London asked for clarification about the minimum and recommended number of board members, with Mr. Glenn reiterating that while three is the minimum, five would be preferable to get broader community input.

Mayor Carnahan inquired about potential concerns from residents regarding an EDA's taxing authority. Mr. Glenn explained that typically an EDA pushes forward the city's established agenda and focuses on developing city-owned properties to increase the tax base. He clarified that the city council would still need to approve any sale of city-owned land.

City Attorney Pearson asked if establishing an EDA might lead to increased requests for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and other funding mechanisms. Mr. Glenn responded that in his professional experience, the existence of an EDA does not necessarily drive those conversations, as communities without formal EDAs still use TIF and abatement opportunities.

Council Member Hall asked about the EDA's potential role in examining zoning changes and development around the Highway 77/371 intersection. Mr. Glenn confirmed that an EDA could work with planning and zoning to take a comprehensive approach to development in that area.

The council also discussed the difference between an Economic Development Authority (EDA) and an Economic Development Commission (EDC). Mr. Glenn explained that an EDC serves only as an advisory board without legal authority, while an EDA has legal powers and signals to developers and the community that the city is serious about economic development.

City Attorney Pearson noted that the next step would be for the council to formally indicate at a regular council meeting that they want to establish an EDA and direct him to draft the necessary resolution.

C. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Council Member Zahn, seconded by Council Member Hall. Motion carried unanimously.

The workshop adjourned at approximately 10:30 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Carnahan, Mayor

Maggi Wentler, Interim City Administrator