

# Aldermen vote 6-1 to renew YEDC contribution

By Tony Scott

The Yorkville City Council voted Tuesday evening to continue its affiliation with the Yorkville Economic Development Corporation, following a presentation by the YEDC's executive director and a showing of support from economic development officials and developers throughout Kendall County.

The council voted 6-1 in favor of renewing a three-year commitment of \$45,000 a year in dues to the YEDC. Alderman George Gilson Jr., who said he preferred an annual commitment as opposed to a three-year deal, cast the lone negative ballot. Alderman Rose Spears also said she preferred a one-year commitment, but joined Diane Teeling, Robyn Sutcliff, Marty Munns, Arden Joseph Plocher and Gary Golinski in voting in favor of renewal. Alderman Wally Werderich was not present at Tuesday night's meeting.

During a presentation to the council, YEDC Executive Director Lynn Dubajic pointed out that, while the city has contributed \$45,000 annually to the YEDC since its formation in 2000, the equalized assessed value (EAV) of industrial and commercial development in the City of Yorkville has increased by \$95 million in that nine-year time span.

"That capital investment translates into dollars that are coming in to serve our residents with jobs, and opportunities such as choices for services, health care, different shopping choices," Dubajic said.

Dubajic also pointed out that the EAV from those developments means tax revenue coming from projects that do not impact the school district in the way of added students.

The municipal sales tax revenue for the city has also increased, from \$1,007,003 in 2000 to \$2,500,285 in the last fiscal year, Dubajic said.

The \$45,000 contribution from the city makes up approximately 18 percent of the total contributions to the YEDC, Dubajic said. When the YEDC first began, the city's contribution was around 50 percent of the total contributions, she said.

Dubajic said the YEDC is part of the Kendall Economic Development alliance, which includes economic

development officials from Kendall County and the municipalities of Montgomery, Oswego, Plano and Sandwich. However, she said the YEDC and other Kendall economic development agencies face competition for projects from surrounding counties.

She said the YEDC is needed to help bring bargaining power in an increasingly competitive market for projects.

Spears said she thinks what Dubajic and her office manager, Brenda Stombres, do is "just remarkable" and said she appreciates what the YEDC does. She said she has spoken with business owners who have dealt with Dubajic and has heard "nothing but positives." However, she also said she would prefer voting on the \$45,000 contribution from the city on an annual basis.

Munns said the YEDC "makes the city stronger" and that it's a "return on investment for the city."

Mayor Valerie Burd said that both she and Spears were on the council when the YEDC was first formed and that at the time she "wasn't 100 percent behind" Dubajic. However, she said Dubajic met with her and that, over time, she has grown to admire what she's done.

"Most people, when they feel someone isn't 100 percent behind them, they back off," Burd said. "She met it head-on and totally convinced me she was the one for the job. And all these years, I've grown to admire what she does more and more."

Gilson asked Dubajic if it would be "unreasonable" to ask for a yearly commitment instead of a three-year commitment. But Dubajic said that a three-year commitment would show that the city is behind its business community.

Sutcliff noted that she has a friend involved in the state Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and that he has told her that Yorkville has the best economic development director in the state.

"I think we're getting a pretty good value," she said.

Golinski agreed, and said the YEDC contribution is "money well spent," adding that he wouldn't mind making an even longer commitment.