

**DRAFT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 1, 2005**

The Economic Development Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Monday, February 1, 2005, @ 7:00p.m. in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Jeff Metzger called the meeting to order. Members present were Steve Slack, Frank Van Buer, Dennis Sands, Julia Fullerton, Steve Faivre and Sally DeFauw. Others present were Ray Bockman, Roger Hopkins, Doug Dashner and Christine Johnson.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Van Buer, seconded by Mr. Slack, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 2005.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chairman Metzger said that he would like to amend the agenda to include item 6b.) property tax abatement.

**Moved by Mr. Slack, seconded by Ms. Fullerton, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Chairman Metzger asked Ms. Fullerton to begin her research on small business development in DeKalb County and to bring back her results at the next committee meeting in March.

**TOURISM BUREAU**

Chairman Metzger asked Mr. Slack to explain to the committee his findings on a tourism bureau in DeKalb County. Mr. Slack said that tourism is usually built around conventions centers and then having enough hotels to support the center. That is the one problem that the City of DeKalb has, that is, that it doesn't have the hotel support that it needs to take care that many people. Mr. Slack said that there is currently one person that works for the City of DeKalb in tourism at the Convention and Visitors Bureau. He also noted that the City of Sycamore does do some sort of tourism work in promoting their city.

Mr. Slack continued by stating that the County of DeKalb does have some areas that are tourist-oriented places of interest. Those would be the Sandwich Opera House, the Steingtunt Winery in Waterman, the Museum of Natural History in Sycamore that just opened, and possibly the casino in the future, if it opens in Shabbona.

Mr. Sands said that he has done promotions for visitors to come to his restaurant at Lake Shabbona State Park. He said that on Route 39 we could

place brochures at the rest areas around Paw Paw and then on I-90 at Belvidere. He said that 400,000 people a year visit Lake Shabbona and that is the second highest site in DeKalb County besides Northern Illinois University. Chairman Metzger asked Mr. Sands if he would be available to visit with the tourism group in the near future and Mr. Sands said yes.

Ms. DeFauw suggested that coordination with the various towns and cities in DeKalb County would be helpful. The committee suggested that it would be beneficial, if you had one tourism bureau for DeKalb County and to be able to send out one packet filled with every city, town and village's brochure instead of various ones going out from all over the county.

Mr. Sands also said that he feels that the woman that he has spoken to in Belvidere, would be willing to come and visit with the committee to discuss this further. The committee asked him to invite her to their next meeting on March 1, 2005.

#### **PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT**

Mr. Bockman approached the committee this evening regarding the resolution that the DeKalb County Board just adopted on January 19, 2005 regarding the Incentive Agreement with the City of Sycamore. He said that the City of Sycamore has approached him about the first company to request this tax abatement through this new program, called Fullco Industries, out of St. Charles, Illinois. He said that they met the requirement for the tax abatement under state law, that being, that they are moving an existing business and expanding the business. Mr. Hopkins also stated that they currently reside in a 15,000-16,000 square foot building in St. Charles and are land locked and do not have room to expand. They are a quality company like CCI who is opening in Sycamore this year, he explained. Mr. Hopkins further stated that another reason that Fullco is moving here is because of the affordable housing available in DeKalb County and the workforce.

Mr. Van Buer stated that he thought that when the county adopted this resolution that we would just get the recommendations that met the criteria and then we as a board would vote on it. Mr. Bockman said, yes, that is why I am bringing it before the committee this evening, because he had just received the request from the City of Sycamore two days ago and this is the process that he is taking. He also noted that this company does meet the requirements for the tax abatement. Once this committee approves it, then it will be forwarded to the full board for approval in a resolution. The committee wondered if there is a threshold that other Sycamore entities would want? Mr. Hopkins said that it already meets the threshold of Kishwaukee College.

Chairman Metzger asked the committee if they needed more time so that they could do more research on this item and then bring it back for their next meeting in March?

Mr. Bockman reminded the committee that the DeKalb County Board has already adopted two other tax abatements. He also said that if the

committee had questions on financial issues that they could contact Mr. Bill Nicklas, City Manager, of the City of Sycamore, and he could answer them for this committee.

Mr. Hopkins pointed out that this company has met all of the requirements stated in our resolution and that the competition that would happen would be that a bigger building could become available to Fullco Industries from outside our county.

Ms. Fullerton asked what the total tax break is and at what point do we begin to recoup our expenditures? Mr. Hopkins said that the total tax break would be about \$70,000 to \$75,000 for all government entities and that the county's share would be about \$5,000 to \$6,000. The payroll would be about \$1.6 million per year. Mr. Hopkins also pointed out that there are no expenditures with the company, so it will be all new revenues for the county.

After further discussion, it was agreed that the members would research this further and bring it back to the committee at the March meeting.

Before adjourning Mr. Slack asked Ms. Christine Johnson, DeKalb County Treasurer, is she could update the committee as to where the county is in the tax cycle? He had been told that Kane County was behind. Ms. Johnson said that since Ms. Whitwell, DeKalb County Assessor, was not present, that she would speak on her behalf. She said that all notices were mailed out on assessment notices and that appeals have been filed. The Board of Review is currently holding hearings on the appeals that have been filed and that they are a couple weeks ahead of schedule. She then reminded them that until the assessments process is completed that the county clerk's office will not be able to begin that tax extension.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Ms. Fullerton, seconded by Mr. Faivre, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Jeffery Metzger, Chairman

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Mary C. Supple, Secretary