

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
June 6, 2006**

The Economic Development Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Tuesday, June 6, 2006, @ 7:00p.m. in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Julia Fullerton called the meeting to order. Members present were Jerry Augsburger, Steve Slack, Jeff Metzger, Sr., and Mr. Sands. Mr. Haines and Ms. DeFauw were absent. Others present were Ray Bockman, Margaret Whitwell and Roger Hopkins.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Metzger, Sr., seconded by Mr. Slack, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from March 2006.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Sands asked if he could bring up a topic for the committee to discuss under New Business? The committee agreed that he could.

**Moved by Mr. Augsburger, seconded by Mr. Metzger, Sr., and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda.**

**SUPERVISOR OF ASSESSMENTS REQUEST - RESOLUTION FOR THE SENIOR FREEZE DEADLINE EXTENSION.**

Ms. Margaret Whitwell, Supervisor of Assessments for DeKalb County, approached the committee regarding the request to extend the deadline for the senior freeze. Back in 2005, the Court ruled in a Court Case that the Act that included the senior freeze assessment fee in it was invalid. New legislation reinstated the freeze and increased the limit from \$45,000 to \$50,000. Ms. Whitwell also explained that the State has also increased the deferral rate for seniors too, whereby seniors who have a total income less than \$50,000, the State of Illinois will pay their property taxes and put a lien on their property. The senior exemption has now been increased, too, from \$3,000 to \$3500. She is requesting that the committee forward the resolution for the deadline for the senior freeze exemptions to be extended to December 31, 2006. She said after the county board adopts this resolution, her office can then publish the deadline extension.

**Moved by Mr. Slack, seconded by Mr. Augsburger, and it was carried unanimously to forward the recommendation to the full board for approval.**

Annual Report for 2005

Ms. Whitwell, then reviewed her 2005 Annual Report for the committee. She highlighted various pages for the committee to review. She stated that on page 5 of her report, the parcel count shows that the numbers have increased by almost 5%, which was mostly in the residential area. She also said that subdivision counts were down over last year's numbers. Ms. Whitwell further explained that Cortland Township replaced Sandwich Township in parcel

counts last year. Cortland Township in FY2005 was in 3<sup>rd</sup> place for the numbers of parcels.

On page 6 her report discusses the percentage of parcels according to use. It shows that commercial parcels decreased slightly from 8% in 2004 to 7% in 2005. Page 7 shows that Equalized Assessed Values are just shy of \$2 billion dollars in 2005.

Ms. Whitwell further explained that in 2005 the total assessed value increased by 10.91% from 2004. The 2004 assessed value was 1,720,203,382 and the 2005 value is 1,908,070,316. The County's assessment increases have been fairly consistent over the years. This increase, however, was much greater than in the past even though farmland values decreased 10% for all soil types. The increase was due to reassessment, multipliers, and new construction.

The total numbers of exemptions in 2005 was 141,003, 187. In 2004 the total number of exemptions in the County was 132,227,821.

The number of subdivisions platted in 2005 decreased slightly from 97 in 2004 to 93 in 2005. The median per acre sale price of bare farmland in DeKalb County in 2005 was \$7,950. There were 2260 new parcels created in 2005 compared to 2085 new parcels in 2004. The additional number of parcels added to the parcel count was 1809.

On page 10 it shows that new construction increased by 51%. The value for residential has more than doubled, said Ms. Whitwell. Industrial new construction increased slightly, too.

Ms. Whitwell continued by stating that in the Mapping Department (page 17) the numbers have increased tremendously. They sold almost 12,000 maps last year. They updated about 300 pages last year, and processed 4,800 deeds from this department, too. On page 18 it shows a summary of things that have happened in this office covering 1998 through 2005.

The committee thanked Ms. Whitwell for her very informative report.

## **INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNICATIONS PROPOSAL**

Mr. Ray Bockman, DeKalb County Administrator, said that he mailed out a proposal from NIU Broadband Development to the committee last week. He said that his recommendation to this committee is to review it and see if the County should participate in such an effort. He also said that if the committee does recommend the County to participate that the participation be conditioned on being joined by other community partners in the effort.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that he thought that the committee was just supposed to be looking at what technology is out there right now. When he first recommended them to come and speak before the committee he was thinking that we were just going to find out what technology is out there. What we should possibly be looking for. He didn't know if the County was ready to pay

\$18,000 to bring a consultant in to see what we are doing. He spoke to an IT Director at Kane County and this person said that they are looking at their infrastructure upgrades and other possibilities. Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that he didn't know how the County felt about sharing information with other counties, but he has always found it helpful to see where others have gone and learn from what they did and spent money on. He feels that the committee has a lot of work to do, as a group, before they spend \$18,000. Mr. Metzger, Sr., also said that the committee needs to look at what is out there in technology based on economic development possibilities. The question is, if we get the technology will we be able to attract high-tech businesses, said Mr. Metzger, Sr.

Mr. Bockman said that is what they kept hearing that we didn't have the infrastructure and that we were falling behind.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that he thought that this committee could develop another committee to research this issue or that this committee would and not have staff work on it. He felt that is what the committee should be doing.

Mr. Bockman said that he felt that, in good conscience, he couldn't recommend spending \$18,000. He could see this committee appropriating some amount if other partners came forward too, to participate.

Chairman Fullerton said that this committee could put a survey out there to identify potential partners and float the idea out there. She continued by stating that an inventory of what exists in the county is a reasonable place to begin to examine this issue and that if we found partners to share the cost we could lower the cost considerably.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that he would check with Kane County and see where they are.

Mr. Sands said that we also need to look at what the future in technology could bring, that is, in ten years will fiber optic still be around?

Mr. Bockman said that he is asking the committee to review the handout and to see if they want to pursue the issue.

Chairman Fullerton announced to the committee that Kane County Economic Development Advisory Board is inviting us to attend a Breakfast on June 8, 2006 @ 7:00a.m. Chairman Fullerton said that if anyone would be interested in attending this event to please see her or Mary Supple, after the meeting.

Before adjourning Mr. Sands presented a couple of items for future discussion by the committee. The first item was: DeKalb County Government Policy Statement encouraging purchasing goods and services locally, within DeKalb County whenever possible. The second item was: Tax rebates for existing businesses in DeKalb County that expand their workforce (See Sheet Attached).

The committee will consider these issues for future meetings and discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Mr. Augsburger, seconded by Mr. Metzger, Sr., and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman Julia Fullerton

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Mary C. Supple, Secretary

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