

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 14, 2008**

The Economic Development Committee and Health & Human Services Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Wednesday, October 14, 2008 @ 7:00p.m in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Eileen Dubin called the meeting to order. Members present were Kenneth Andersen, Julia Fauci, Jeff Metzger, Sr., Michael Stuckert, Ruth Anne Tobias and Steve Walt. Ms. Vary was absent. Others present were Ray Bockman, Paul Borek, Doug Dashner and Aaron Ruder.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Andersen, seconded by Ms. Fauci, and it was carried to approve the minutes from September 2008.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Dubin said that she was going to amend the agenda to include discussion on the Supervisor of Assessments evaluation motion. Ms. Fauci asked if the Go Green Energy Recap could go before the Budget appeal discussion? Mr. Metzger asked to amend the agenda to include an additional item regarding a comment from Representative Robert Prichard's "Perspective"? Mr. Andersen then asked if the committee could discuss the idea that local contractors could have the opportunity to bid all of our projects? He said that the committee could discuss it at next month's meeting too.

Moved by Ms. Fauci, seconded by Mr. Andersen, and it was carried unanimously to approve the amended agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chairman Dubin informed the committee that they needed to officially vote on the evaluation of Ms. Margaret Whitwell, the DeKalb County Supervisor of Assessments. They forgot to formally move to accept Mr. Bockman's recommendation.

Moved by Ms. Fauci, seconded by Mr. Walt, and it was carried unanimously, to concur with Mr. Bockman's evaluation of Ms. Whitwell that she has completed her Standard Work Plan and Professional Education requirements.

GO GREEN ENERGY CONFERENCE RECAP

Ms. Fauci said that we had about ninety-five people who attended the Go Green Energy Conference. There is federal money out there for alternative energy and jobs that could be created.

Chairman Dubin said that she felt that the presenters were very good. She also felt that the people who attended the conference were basically socially conscious and understood what go green meant. She would like to ask the committee to discuss how do we would use any funding we would receive to enhance the growth of small business in creating green jobs?

The committee discussed possibly having a half-day conference or a conference in the evening. They also have discussed possibly partnering with the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation to hold an economic fair highlighting the companies that have gone green and the green jobs that are out there.

They also discussed how the staff is trying to recoup some money from the people who signed up for the conference and never arrived to attend the event. So far the staff has recouped about \$60.00. In the future the reservation sheets will have a cut-off date or cancellation date.

Ms. Fauci said, if we decide to go forward with this initiative, and this committee is handling this issue, we should zero in more toward the economic. She would like to partner with the Economic Development Corporation since they already do conferences.

FY2009 BUDGET DISCUSSION

Budget Appeal #20 – Go Green Initiative

The committee discussed appeal #20 that states: **Deny the staffing and program costs for the “Go Green” initiative for a savings of \$16,000.**

Mr. Steve Walt, said that as the Vice-Chairman of the committee that he should have been asked if this committee should take care of the Go Green Initiative.

Mr. Bockman said that it is a proposal.

Mr. Walt said that he is going to resign from this committee as the Vice-Chairman since he doesn't feel that the Go Green Initiative belongs with the Economic Development Committee.

He also wanted to talk about the two proposals, he brought up ways of cutting the budget and as of today, nothing has been cut. The Finance Committee would be willing to transfer any cuts into one of our savings accounts, but will not be cutting the budget. The only item that he knows of that has been cut is the Spay and Neutering Program and Lobbying item and chose to put the money into the building fund.

He said that if it the lobbyists goes that route as a savings account, then he would rather it go to the lobbyists. He feels that the money spent on both of these items as they were intended. He is opposed to putting the money in the savings account or building fund. Because of this, Mr. Walt, said that he is withdrawing both of his appeals #20 and #26A.

Chairman Dubin said that in the discussion at the Finance Committee they indicated that their decision was attached to the tax cap.

Mr. Walt said that he doesn't agree with the forces that are opposed to the tax cap, I don't. He feels that tax caps saves taxpayers from us. He believes in tax caps.

Mr. Bockman said that he was opposed to tax caps when they were introduced and still is. The budget that was presented is fully compliant with the tax cap law. What his feeling about is really about the next two years. The County is the lagging indicator of economic recession. Next year and the year after will be tough years for us, revenues will be down. He doesn't like the term savings account because he feels that it represents dry powder and it's going to get burned up next year and the year after. To cut your budget when your revenues haven't fallen off right now knowing over the horizon there is a cliff that you are going to step off of, doesn't seem prudent to him.

Mr. Metzger's Issue: Representative Pritchard's Column

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that there was a Sandwich Chamber of Commerce seminar recently held. A paragraph in the column has raised some questions that Mr. Metzger is raising with Mr. Pritchard about common business mistakes. Once he gets those answers from Mr. Pritchard he will bring that information back to the committee in the near future.

Mr. Andersen's request to discuss local contractor's bidding on our projects.

Mr. Andersen said that he would like to begin discussion on how we select the bidders. The question came up at the last county board meeting about how we awarded the design work for a bridge. He was told that state law says that you do not have to go out and do bids. The heads of the various county departments could arbitrarily pick anyone they want, who are qualified bidders.

Ms. Fauci asked, this is for engineering?

Mr. Andersen said yes, but he felt that this idea could go out throughout the county on all of our bids.

Mr. Bockman said that it was his understanding that the bids requests go on our website and in the newspapers. The department heads are bound by law to advertise for bids and they are forbidden to hire local bidders if they were higher then other bidders.

Mr. Bockman also felt that this issue really belonged before the Highway Committee if it applies to them only.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Walt offered to take the issue to the Highway Committee since he sits on that committee and will ask that question. He will get back to Mr. Andersen with an answer.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectively submitted,

Eileen Dubin, Chairman

ED:mcs

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