

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
MARCH 11, 2009**

The Economic Development Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on Wednesday, March 11, 2009 @ 7:00p.m in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Eileen Dubin called the meeting to order. Members present were Julia Fauci, Jeff Metzger, Sr., Riley Oncken, Mark Todd and Pat Vary. Sally DeFauw was absent. Mr. Paul Borek, Aaron Ruder and Roger Craigmile were also present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Moved by Mr. Metzger, Sr., seconded by Ms. Fauci, and it was carried to approve the minutes from February 2009.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Ms. Vary, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments for the evening.

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Dubin informed the committee about the criteria list that the past committee members put together about two years ago. Chairman Dubin said that she thought that maybe the committee might want to put some questions down on this list relative to green jobs. When she spoke with Mr. Paul Borek, Executive Director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, he had mentioned that a lot of those intergovernmental agreements are coming up again. Maybe we could do something with that.

Mr. Borek said that the City of DeKalb's Tax Abatement Intergovernmental Agreement with the County of DeKalb (and other taxing bodies) has expired.

Chairman Dubin asked Mr. Borek why no one has approached this committee yet on it?

Mr. Borek said that this committee has not been approached yet by the City of DeKalb because they are looking at some amendments that would accommodate more technology oriented buildings and smaller buildings.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said then we might want to expand on question number 13.

Ms. Vary said, like "Are you trying to get L.E.E.D.S. certification?"

Mr. Oncken said another question (item #13) would be, "What is your environmental impact?"

Mr. Borek said that item #11, regarding claw backs, are included in the Intergovernmental Agreement.

Chairman Dubin asked the committee to review the list and if they have any other suggestions to bring those to the committee over the next month and that the committee will bring them back for the April meeting.

**Chairman Dubin then spoke about the status of the Tourism Letter issue.** She said that at the Executive Committee they decided to table it there. She then called Ms. Armstrong and asked her to write a letter asking for recognition so that she can receive the funding that other CVB's have received from the State once they become certified. Ms. Armstrong then wrote the letter and sent it to Chairman Dubin who now read it to the committee tonight.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that he spoke with Ms. Armstrong and told her that he was unhappy with the coverage of Sandwich. He told her that it was mainly focused on DeKalb and Sycamore and he would like to see it more a countywide guide. She said that she agreed. He told Ms. Armstrong that we would be happy to endorse her organization, but that he wanted a commitment from her that she would represent the entire county.

When he spoke to Ms. Armstrong about the two CVBs working together (DeKalb and Aurora) he hoped that there was not a conflict between the two. He is not sure yet on the funding between the two?

Ms. Armstrong said that Sandwich did work with Aurora because DeKalb had not been established yet. The funding is to Aurora and cannot be shared and shouldn't be competed for by DeKalb. He told her that it was fine as long as the committee understands that. She said that they do work very closely with each other though.

**It was moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Ms. Vary, and it was carried unanimously to recommend that a letter of endorsement be written for Ms. Armstrong so that she could receive the funds needed to become a certified tourism office, and to forward this recommendation to the Executive Committee.**

#### **DEKALB COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MONTHLY REPORT – MR. PAUL BOREK**

Mr. Borek, Director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, said that he had spoken with the DeKalb County Builders and Development Association a couple of weeks ago. With the impact that the economy has had on their industry last year, they are reinvigorated and have attracted new members by trying to support each other. One of the things that they are trying to advocate is rolling back some of the community impact fees to help them get back on their feet again. He has also seen that some of the smaller builders are incorporating energy efficiency and honing up on new technologies.

Chairman Dubin said that the unions are also looking at retraining and building in a different way.

Mr. Metzger, Sr., said that his college is up 14% in enrollment and he feels that people are going back to school and getting retooled.

Mr. Borek said that he thinks that Kishwaukee College numbers are up now too.

Chairman Dubin mentioned the grant that was a cooperative effort with Mr. Borek and the NIU Governmental Center was mailed. She spoke with Mr. Ashmore in Springfield and he mentioned that there is a new head of their department and that he feels that once the governor gets his budget drafted that things will loosen up in Springfield.

Mr. Borek said that a new dealership called Green Heron Alternative has opened in Hinckley. They will be selling wind turbines.

Mr. Borek mentioned that this year he would be focusing on trying to retain the businesses that we already have established here in the County.

He also mentioned that he attended a conference in Peoria called Promoting a Rural Renaissance moderated by the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs who collaborates with other small cities and towns in Michigan and Purdue University. He shared the agenda with the committee from this conference (included with these minutes). This group focuses on rural small towns and small cities economic development initiatives. They deliver a lot of resources and values to these small cities and towns throughout the state.

Also at this conference they focused on entrepreneurship in small towns and cities to improve their economies by using the resources that they have at hand. Mr. Borek also shared the PowerPoint handout on Building a Local Entrepreneurship Program. He said that Norm Walters who is semi-retired now from Western Illinois University, is now working with Dr. Gleeson at the Center of Governmental Studies here in DeKalb. Mr. Borek and Mr. Walters are talking about putting together a workshop here in Northern Illinois regarding Entrepreneurship to serve the Northern Illinois University territory.

Mr. Borek mentioned that in Wisconsin they have an Entrepreneurs and Inventors Club that they seeded with grants to individual counties. They gave away grants to each county, around \$5,000. They have about 31 clubs throughout the State of Wisconsin. They serve individuals with new small business ideas as well as existing small business owners.

Mr. Todd said that he would like to have a readily available funding source in this county for new business startups. We should look at a cooperation between the private sector and the public sector. This is done in Sterling, Illinois with a group called the Sterling Development Corporation. They have borrowing power on a line of credit with one or two of the banks out there. They own their own property to help feed money into startups that may not have all of the financial means to begin. We may want to look at their model, he said.

Ms. Fauci said that our own local banks need to not be so conservative with the money and help these new companies.

Mr. Todd said that we could look at the banks sharing the risks together.

Chairman Dubin has said that we should encourage these new entrepreneurs to work with the SCORE group at the Resource Bank who can help them with their business plans.

The committee discussed possibly holding a workshop for bankers regarding this issue.

Mr. Borek shared one more item with the committee, with regards to a report from 3M who is required through their abatement agreement with the City of DeKalb, to furnish a report to the City, summarizing what 3M has been doing in the community and how many employees that they have.

After a brief discussion the committee said that possibly DeKalb County should be asking for the same type of report from those that they have tax abatement agreements with too.

#### **GO GREEN INITIATIVE UPDATE**

Ms. Vary mentioned that she and Ms. Fauci have discussed an educational series of 1 or 2 talks. She thought that possibly Mr. John Laesch from the community could speak on retrofitting buildings and such.

She said that she and Aaron Ruder, County Board Intern, would be working together to get items out on the Go Green webpage. She is trying to make people more aware about recycling on this page. They are thinking about green jobs and conservation. She said that she and Julia are encouraging this committee to come forward with any suggestions if anyone has any.

Chairman Dubin asked the committee to think about seminars to be held in the fall of 2009 and let her know about it.

Ms. Vary said that we could word our notices as saying that the Economic Development Committee is sponsoring a Go Green Seminar of Retrofitting Seminar, etc.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectively submitted,

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Eileen Dubin, Chairman

ED:mcs

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