

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes
October 27, 2009

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Thursday, October 27, 2009 @ 7:00p.m., in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium. Chairman Eileen Dubin called the meeting to order. Members present were Sally DeFauw, Julia Fauci, Mark Todd and Pat Vary. Members absent were Jeff Metzger, Sr. and Riley Oncken. Those present were Ray Bockman, Gary Hanson, Ruth Anne Tobias, Paul Borek, Tom Choice, Dave Juday, Margaret Whitwell, Cohen Barnes, Gary Evans, Ken Andersen, Dr. Robert Gleeson, Kevin Porter and Glenn Lee.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Ms. Vary, seconded by Ms. DeFauw, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from September 2009.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Ms. DeFauw, seconded by Ms. Fauci, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

EXEMPT EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS

Chairman Dubin explained to the committee that Mr. Bockman has advised the committee that the Supervisor of Assessments, Ms. Margaret Whitwell, has successfully completed her Standard Work Plan for FY2009 and her Professional Development Plan for this year. She said that the committee now needed to act upon Mr. Bockman's assessment.

It was moved by Ms. Fauci, seconded by Ms. Vary, and it was carried unanimously that the committee does concur with Mr. Bockman's opinion and that Ms. Whitwell has done an excellent job in her position as Supervisor of Assessments and that the committee wanted to thank her for it.

BUDGET APPEALS

Mr. Gary Hanson approached the committee about the one appeal that is before the committee tonight. That appeal refers to item #1290-8212: Delete the \$6,000 appropriation for the Go Green program.

Mr. Bockman suggested that the committee could place this \$6,000 in the County Board Budget so that any standing committee could utilize the funds for educational purposes.

Moved by Ms. Fauci, seconded by Mr. Todd, and it was carried unanimously to take item #1290-8212 and place the \$6,000 funds in the County Board Budget to enable all standing committees to utilize the funds for educational purposes.

AMENDMENT TO #R2007-62: TAX ABATEMENT AMENDMENT

Chairman Dubin explained that Mr. Bockman has mentioned that in Resolution #R2007-62 it states that Superior Industrial Equipment did not have its first full tax year until 2009. We, therefore, need to ask the County Board to amend that original resolution to simply move the start date back from 2008 to 2009. No other changes are proposed to this resolution.

Moved by Ms. Vary, seconded by Mr. Todd and it was carried unanimously to forward this resolution to the full board for approval.

NOVEMBER MEETING DATE

The committee agreed to cancel the November 2009 committee meeting.

THE TASK FORCE DISCUSSION ON THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY GRANT (IDCEO)

Chairman Dubin gave a brief review of the progress made over time to discuss this study conducted by Dr. Robert Gleeson, Associate Director of the NIU Center for Governmental Studies. She explained that this project began when she gathered a group of community leaders to help brainstorm on what role the Economic Development Committee had and what it could do to help attract more higher paying jobs to DeKalb County.

In a second meeting several representatives from State Government came to the session. The group discussed the need to explore what DeKalb County has that would attract better paying jobs. They decided to apply for a grant from the State agency and recently was awarded this grant to continue with this study.

After learning about the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation's strategic planning and the information they gathered the Economic Development Committee decided to change the grant to focus on economic sectors in DeKalb County currently paying higher than average wages and have the potential for additional job growth.

The grant's second phase is to work with companies in each of these sectors to identify opportunities that would generate more jobs in DeKalb County and to identify unique areas of business for the County. The results will be a number of recommendations for the task force to consider. The task force includes members of the Economic Development Committee and a representation of several members from the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation.

The task force then introduced themselves to each other and then Chairman Dubin turned to meeting over to Dr. Gleeson to give his presentation.

Dr. Gleeson said that this task force needs to identify 3 sectors in Phase I. We want to identify higher wage jobs. Doing this analysis right now, we are describing the dynamics that were going on before the collapse of the economy. We are 3 years into a 15 year strategy in this country. We need to end up with data that is current enough and local enough that will be equal to where our trading partners in Europe are today.

Before the crash, the gross product was about \$2.8 billion in 2007, that is, the total value added of all of the sectors in this County. Dr. Gleeson said that in his studies he found out that about 33,000 jobs are located within the County, which is a 5.5% growth from 2000 to 2007. More than half of the people that live in the County do not work in the County. The total population in the County is about 104,000 in 2009, which is a 16.8% growth from 2000 to 2008. More people come here from West of DeKalb than from the East. We draw a lot of people from Ogle and LaSalle Counties. Many of the people, east of here, which work in DeKalb County, live in Cook County.

Dr. Gleeson said that the median wage for DeKalb County for jobs, 2007 – 2008 is around \$27,500.

Dr. Gleeson then stated that he broke the information that he gathered for the report into two parts, the High Location Quotient Sectors in Quadrants I and II. The sectors included in this quotient is manufacturing, which was growing before the crash; agriculture that is stable; and special mention sectors like Health and Social Services.

The second part is broken down into the Low Location Quotient Sectors in Quadrants I and II. The sectors included in this quotient are: Management of Companies, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Information, Finance and Insurance, Construction and under Special Mention – Accommodations and Support Services. Dr. Gleeson said that a number of people under the Accommodations and Support Services were self-employed before the crash. Now after the crash we need to find out how many of them are still here? He also said that we have to ask if there is a capital infusion for entrepreneurs in our County? Are we performing well in sectors that investors want to invest in here?

Dr. Gleeson's findings produced 5 sectors for the task force to look at. They are: Manufacturing, Company Headquarters, High end potential entrepreneur pools, construction and construction management, and arts and creative enterprises. Under arts and creative enterprises, Dr. Gleeson said that a large amount of people who are not born in the U.S. live in Chicago and have created cultural fusions. The community can create an opportunity to brand itself with these cultural fusions.

Dr. Gleeson further explained that we need to give people a reason to move where

you want them to go, that is, research and developments are near the urban cities because they appeal to the people who are working in these companies.

He also stated that all five sectors that he has mentioned have a potential for higher wage paying jobs.

The task force discussed which sections that they wanted to target for Phase Two Work. They decided on the following:

- Bundle items #2 and #3, that is, Company Headquarters and Administrative Offices with high end business services, which could produce potential entrepreneur pools.
- They also included Manufacturing Company Network, and
- The Arts and creative Enterprises.

Dr. Gleeson advised the task force to think of who they can gather together in the community in these sectors and pull ideas from tonight's meeting. He said that the task force should come up with a suggested list of people for each of these sectors. We need to facilitate discussion for a better understanding of our region and a way to implement a plan of action, he said.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Dubin, Chairman

ed:mcs