

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes
February 9, 2011

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, February 9, 2011 @ 7:00p.m., in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Pat Vary called the meeting to order. Members present were Julia Fauci, Riley Oncken and Jeff Whelan. Mr. Metzger, Sr. called in to participate remotely in the meeting. Mr. Brown was absent. Mr. Borek and Emily McConville were also present.

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Ms. Fauci, and it was carried unanimously to accept Mr. Metzger's request to participate in the meeting remotely.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from December, 2010.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Vary, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, said that she and Riley Oncken had a breakfast meeting with Mr. Paul Borek, Executive Director of DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation and Mr. Dave Juday of Ideal Industries to seek the County's help with preparing the County for a pro-business atmosphere.

The meeting resulted in the fact that they felt that the County and EDC needs to focus on developing an environment that supports and nurtures business development and expansion, without favoring one industry or another. Manufacturing is the strongest private for-profit industrial sector in the county. A supportive business climate that focuses on expanding the industrial tax base will encourage manufacturers to expand and attract new manufacturers, as well as other industries. Most successful manufacturers today are actively engaged in research and development. They also require sophisticated business management, marketing and sale expertise. They discussed that most businesses already adopt resource management/recycling and energy conservation practices without much fanfare. It saves money and is good business.

Chairman Vary handed out a recap of what the committee has been working on for the last two years. She said that the committee had developed a set of questions relevant to requests for abatements – to encourage sustainability, tax base and good jobs. The committee began to support the DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Bureau with the production of their brochure. The committee and county board approved the

new Fiber Optics network that should be completed sometime this year and will make DeKalb County the Center for Northern Illinois. This project will be an important asset to attract technology industry. The committee has also held two small business workshops, the last one with the DCEDC in which resources including banks, Kishwaukee CC and Waubensee CC Business Development centers, and various speakers were available. Both Julia Fauci and Chairman Vary have given talks about Energy Efficiency and the GoGreen initiative to NIU and Rotary.

Ms. Jenny Tompkins told Chairman Vary, when they met, that there may be a NEA Grant that she is researching that the County may want to apply for. There might also be a DOT Tiger Grant - \$40Million Community Challenge Planning Grant, that Ms. Tompkins said could be available. She is researching these two grants further and will get back to Chairman Vary on them.

Chairman Vary also mentioned that she has been invited by Lynn Neely, a professor and former Assistant Dean of the Business School at Northern Illinois University, and her class to let them know about our Small Business Expo.

AMENDMENT TO THE MENDOTA ENTERPRISE ZONE AGREEMENT

Ms. Emily McConville of the Mendota Enterprise Zone approached the committee amending the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone Agreement within the City of Mendota of the County of LaSalle, Illinois. They started with 15 square miles and now that they have added the County of DeKalb and the Village of Waterman, they have 18 square miles. They are expanding to an industry right out of Mendota's City limits. Since they added the County of DeKalb and the Village of Waterman last year, they are required to get approval from these two entities in the amendment.

Julia Fauci asked what the advantages are for this?

Ms. McConville said that one of the benefits is a property tax abatement. A new waste water treatment will be built. The wording is the same as we passed last year, she said.

Mr. Oncken said that basically he felt that this is only a formality.

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to forward this item to the full board for approval.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MONTHLY REPORT – MR. PAUL BOREK

Mr. Borek, Executive Director of the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, briefly reviewed his monthly report for the committee.

Mr. Borek said that The Amtrak decision was favorably made on behalf of DeKalb County since it will now be going through Genoa. A new study prepared by the

engineering firm URS of Decatur more than confirmed the findings of previous studies which indicated that the DeKalb County route was less expensive, generated greater ridership and was the safest route requiring fewer roadway rail crossings. The City of Genoa and the Genoa Chamber are grateful to DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation, the County of DeKalb, and all other businesses, community, chamber and citizen partners who supported their efforts to secure this service and investment in Genoa and DeKalb County.

Mr. Borek then informed the committee that the 3M Regional Distribution Center in DeKalb's Park 88 was selected as the Industrial Build-to-Suit of the Year by the Chicago Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Parks. The award recognizes the significance of the \$25 million project in the Greater Chicago/Northern Illinois market.

The Illinois Employer Training Incentive Program (ETIP) and DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation are working with Kishwaukee College and IMEC to ensure that they are aware of the recruiting and training needs of expanding companies in DeKalb County. Multi-company ETIP applications are being solicited by the State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

The committee thanked Mr. Borek for his very informative report.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Vary, Chairman

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