

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes
May 11, 2011

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 @ 7:00p.m., in the Legislative Center's Gathertorium on the West Side. Chairman Pat Vary called the meeting to order. Members present were Bob Brown, Julia Fauci, Jeff Metzger, Sr., and Riley Oncken. Jeff Whelan was absent. Mr. Borek and Margaret Whitwell were present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Ms. Fauci, seconded by Mr. Oncken, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from April, 2011.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Vary asked to add item #8A.) Future items for the committee agenda.

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

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Vary, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, said that she will be inviting people who are involved with the Arts and Entertainment in the County to the committee's July meeting. She found many names involved with the Arts and Entertainment in the new DeKalb County Area Convention and Visitors Bureau brochure, and contacts from Debbie Armstrong that she would like the committee to meet with.

SUPERVISOR OF ASSESSMENTS REPORT – MS. MARGARET WHITWELL

Ms. Margaret Whitwell, Supervisor of Assessments, presented her Annual Report (on file in the County Board Office and Supervisor of Assessments Office). She said that the 2010 assessment year was another unusual year for the taxpayer, the assessors, her office staff and the Board of Review. Due to the real estate market, 2010 assessments were all reduced, with the exception of farmland, either by the township assessor or negative equalization factors, or both. DeKalb County's assessed value dropped by 105,975,264, almost 4.4% from last year's value. The 2,431,281,878 assessed value (does not include pollution control or state assessed railroad property) for 2010 included over 37,000,000 in new construction and a 10% increase in farmland assessments. The 2010 assessed value is very close to the 2007 county value of 2,358,766,883. 2011 will also bring negatives factors for the entire county, lowering the total value even more. Farmland will increase 10% in 2011 and again in 2012, as certified by the Department of Revenue.

The 2010 new construction assessed value of 37,326,923 (approximately \$112 million market value) is approximately 29% more than the 2009 figure of 28,842,062. 2010 construction figures were close to the 2002 values. Of the \$37 million new construction figure, over \$24 million was for the wind farm

towers, leaving all other new construction at about \$13 million. Comparing 2009 and 2010 figures, without the wind farm towers' values, the new construction for 2010 would have been approximately 45% less than 2009.

The number of new subdivisions created in 2010 decreased from the prior years. The number of subdivision platted in 2010 was 12; 2009 was 15; 2008 was 35 compared to 97 new subdivisions in 2004. There were 408 newly created parcels compared to the peak year of 2005 with 2260 parcels created.

The total value of exemptions in 2010 decreased approximately \$8 million to \$187,772,845 from \$195,801,781 in assessed value. This decrease was due mainly to a reduction in the Senior Freeze amount being reduced or eliminated due to lowered assessments. The exemption amount is the difference between the current assessed value and the frozen value. The County Extension Clerk subtracts the value of all the exemptions from the total assessed value before calculating the tax rates.

The median per acre sale price of bare farmland in DeKalb County in 2010 was \$8,177 compared to \$8,729 in 2009.

The Board of Review 2010 complaints were less than 2009, but the parcel count was greater. In 2010, 399 complaints were filed against 551 parcels versus 433 complaints and 530 parcels in 2009. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the parcel assessments were confirmed in 2010, whereas 40% were confirmed in 2009; and 73% were lowered in 2010 whereas 60% were lowered in 2009. The total number of assessment complaints and proposed changes by the assessors in 2010 was approximately 2.25% of the total parcel count, versus 2.6% in 2009.

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

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.

He said that recently the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation held a reception for the leaders in our community. Mr. Jim Webb from 3M spoke at this event. He told the audience that 3M has been in DeKalb County since 1985 and that with the new building that they are constructing now , it is the 5th expansion for them in our county. 3M owns or leases 1.9 million square feet in DeKalb County. They employ 570 employees in the County and service North America, Europe, Africa, Middle East, Latin and South America. He also said that 3M shipped 71 million cartons in 2010; with 195,000 cartons shipped daily.

REVIEW OF DR. GLEESON'S REPORT – WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

Chairman Vary reviewed the 3 areas that Dr. Gleeson suggested in his report for the County to pursue for economic growth. Those items are: manufacturing, more high tech, knowledge-based companies to move to the county; and how the county can help the arts and entertainment businesses.

Chairman Vary said that we need to look at what makes a sustainable community and an attractive community for people to bring in corporate offices. One of the suggestions in the report is the Arts and Entertainment. NIU has a top rated Art School and they have a very good Music School. She would like to invite the Arts and Entertainment group in the community to one of our meetings to discuss various issues with them.

Mr. Brown said that we should invite Upstaging to the initial meeting.

Ms. Fauci suggested that we look at inviting theater groups, dance groups, Music and Visual Arts personnel and NIU Convocation Center.

Mr. Borek suggested inviting Nocturne which is a video production company in DeKalb and Horizon Display Company.

The committee referred back to Page 7 of Dr. Gleeson's report. They wondered whether all the people who work at NIU were included in that chart. That seemed to be one item that the report did not include.

CONSIDERATION OF ABATEMENTS

Chairman Vary handed out a table abatement issue sheet that the committee discussed in 2007 for updating. She said that the committee can use this sheet as a review sheet. During the discussion, it was agreed that it could be simplified and shortened.

Ms. Fauci said that her concerns would be what the wages are when a new company asks for an abatement.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Vary, Chairman