

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes
February 8, 2012

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 @ 7:00p.m., in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Pat Vary called the meeting to order. Members present were Bob Brown, Julia Fauci, Jeff Metzger, Sr., Riley Oncken and Jeff Whelan. Mr. Paul Borek, Mr. John Acardo, Mr. Gary Hanson and Mr. Brian Gregory were also present

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from January 2012.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Vary said that she was placing Mr. Acardo first on the agenda.

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

ORDINANCE #2012-04: VITAL RECORDS FEE – MR. JOHN ACARDO, DEKALB COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER

Mr. Acardo, DeKalb County Clerk and Recorder, explained to the committee why he was bringing Ordinance #2012-04 to them this evening. He stated that late last year it came to his attention that the County Health Department was charging a different fee than his office was for vital records. This ordinance will equalize the fee with both departments in perpetuity so when one charge changes the other will follow suit. He did a comparison study within the region and found that our county's fees are still within a reasonable rate.

Mr. Whelan asked Mr. Acardo when the last time was that the County increased the fees.

Mr. Acardo said that it was about ten to twelve years ago.

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR DISCUSSION: MR. BRIAN GREGORY, SYCAMORE CITY MANAGER

Mr. Brian Gregory, City Manager of the City of Sycamore, discussed the City of Sycamore's economic development projects. He stated that with regards to public works projects the City of Sycamore has the 2nd water tower up and they have drilled a well there. The City of Sycamore will be building a well house there soon. The treatment plant has done Phase 1 of the expansion project. Once they get funding from the IEPA plus the use their reserves, they will begin Phase II of the treatment plant.

The residential side of development is currently moving along very slowly. Some people have shown some interest commercially right now. Sycamore has the courthouse project going on and they are looking at the Depot and currently doing work inside the building.

They have an incentive program for the Downtown façade improvement. They have a matching fund of up to \$5,000 with each business to get their façade's improved. They usually have one or two people a year that apply for this funding.

Mr. Gregory also said that construction may start as early as this summer on the old Fargo Motor Building site which is now owned by Pappas.

Mr. Oncken asked Mr. Gregory who monitors the businesses that are given tax incentives at the City of Sycamore and how often?

Mr. Gregory said that he monitors them and reviews them once a year.

Mr. Borek mentioned that the Chrysler plant in Belvidere is adding 1800 new jobs for an additional shift because of increased employment. We will also see an increase in employment at Johnson Controls here in Sycamore, who is a supplier for Chrysler. First Institute Training and Management, operators of the DeKalb Illinois workNet Center, are assisting Johnson Controls with screening and testing of candidates. Driv-Lok and other DeKalb County manufacturers are hiring to fulfill demands of customers like Chrysler.

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

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chairman Vary said that she wants to invite more economic development officers to committee meetings so next month she is inviting Jennifer Diedrich from the City of DeKalb Economic Development office to visit with the committee. She will be inviting Kevin McArtor and Mayor Todd Walker from the City of Genoa for April's meeting. The only other one is from the City of Sandwich and she is waiting to hear from them.

Chairman Vary said that the Arts and Entertainment Group meeting is set for Thursday, February 16, 2012 in the Gathertorium. She said all committee members are invited to attend.

Chairman Vary continued by stating that at the last luncheon for the Economic Development Corporation people heard from Mr. William Strauss with the Chicago Federal Reserve who gave a wonderful presentation. He said that the economy is definitely improving but it will be slow.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION UPDATE - MR. PAUL BOREK

Mr. Borek gave a brief update on what is happening around the County with economic development.

Mr. Borek said that at their Economic Outlook Luncheon, Mr. William Strauss of the Chicago Federal Reserve addressed 301 attendees at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau. Mr. Straus documented how, despite decreasing employment, strong productivity growth has enabled manufacturing output to grow faster than the U.S. economy over the past 30 years. Prolific productivity has become a competitive advantage for U.S. manufacturing and is a contributing factor in the sector's resurgence.

He also mentioned that the 3M Midwest Distribution Center has been nominated for a Build-to-Suit Project-of-the-Year Award at the upcoming Greater Chicago Food Depository, 24th Annual Chicago Commercial Real Estate Awards Dinner on March 8th at the Chicago Hyatt Regency.

The DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation continues to work on prospective industrial development prospects including several manufacturing projects. As economist William Strauss indicated, innovation and outstanding productivity is generating demand for U.S. manufactured goods resulting in expansion and new facility development requirements.

Mr. Borek also mentioned that the Illinois Tollway construction projects will benefit DeKalb County. Curran Contracting won two contracts totaling \$54.3 million for I-88 improvements. Most of the work will be handled out of their DeKalb facility near I-88.

The committee thanked Mr. Borek for his report.

DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIES: ARTS, JOBS, MANUFACTURING, INCUBATORS, ETC.

Chairman Vary said that with regards to prioritizing, we are seeing more of a health complex near Kishwaukee Hospital.

Mr. Whelan said that he heard that the Hospital will be tearing down the Windmill Plaza across the street from Hyvee and that the hospital will be expanding the complex to include office space.

She then asked the committee if they had any new ideas that they wanted to share.

Chairman Vary said that with the City of DeKalb, we may see more requests for curb cuts along Peace Road.

Mr. Whelan said as far as the County is concerned the County still owns some property near the theaters that are still for sale.

Mr. Oncken said that the County needs to continue to support the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation.

Ms. Fauci also said that the County needs to support the DeKalb County Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Vary, Chairman