

**DRAFT**  
**Economic Development Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**January 11, 2012**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, January 11, 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. DeKalb County Treasurer Mark Todd and Mr. Paul Borek 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 November 2011.**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

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

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Vary explained to the committee that back in September of 2011 she met with Ms. Beth Campen regarding the formation of an Arts Council. Ms. Campen and her son have been working very hard to get an Equity Theater Group launched here in DeKalb. It sounds like the first performance will be in March or April of this year. The Arts Council formation has been slow and Ms. Vary will continue to keep her hand in the mix. Chairman Vary said that she would like to host another meeting with the Arts and Entertainment Group to help organize a small group to get the Arts Council going.

Chairman Vary also mentioned that Julian Magdaleno, the County Board's past intern, researched some grants for the Arts Council and emailed them to her to review.

She then mentioned that someone contacted the office regarding the County's Go Green webpage and mentioned a link to a place on there regarding Energy Efficient "Green" Mortgages. Chairman Vary reviewed the links and is asking the County Board Office to place the links on the Go Green webpage. One of the things that this mortgage does is that it would allow the borrower to include and borrow more money for, let's say solar panels, added to their mortgage, she said.

Ms. Vary also handed out materials from the Economic Development Corporation's luncheon regarding KishCareer Link, copies attached to these minutes.

Mr. Borek said that Kishwaukee College is trying to promote the program to businesses and students to make the students aware of how manufacturing positions are continuing to grow. The students can "surf" the website at Kishwaukee College Career Link to see what is out there. Kishwaukee College also mentioned that they no longer are using the term "manufacturing" because the students were not showing any interest in the program. They are now using the wording "automated engineering technology." This is more accurate for the types of manufacturing jobs now available. The new change in the wording is working because around 37 students have signed up for the program so far.

#### **CONVENTION AND VISITOR'S BUREAU**

The Committee briefly discussed the resolution for the letter of support for the DeKalb County Convention and Visitor's Bureau as DeKalb County's agency of record for tourism promotions as required for this year's accreditation and financial support by the Illinois Office of Tourism FY12 Fiscal Year.

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

#### **REPORT FROM TREASURER MARK TODD**

Mr. Mark Todd, DeKalb County Treasurer, presented his 2011 Report to the committee. Mr. Todd said they had a very satisfying year in the Treasurer's Office for 2011. He said that his staff has been great to work with. He recognized Ms. Theresa Martin, his Chief Deputy Treasurer, based on what other county officials have said about her, as being "one of the top Deputies around" in the State of Illinois.

He said that he highlighted the things that he has done since he has been in office. He tried to look for inefficiencies in the office and save the taxpayers money. He noticed a high amount of overtime in the office. He and his staff recognized that most of the overtime centered around the property tax bills. He decided to outsource the project and his office saved all of the overtime on the project and saved \$2300 by outsourcing it. He placed an interactive tax bill on his website to help explain and

educate the public on the process. They also changed the style of the tax bill.

One of the other things that he is doing is expanding the Treasurer's business relationships with the County's major banking partners by implementing quarterly meetings and monthly updates.

Mr. Todd also automated the tax sale auction, by having tax buyers use computers at the tax sale. The new process is fairer and more transparent than the conventional live-call auction used in prior years. He said that they had the largest number of tax buyers ever for the annual tax sale. Joseph Meyers handles the sale and provides laptops for the tax buyers to use.

His office is also the County Collector and they mail out 50,000 tax bill annually. In 2011, they collected more than 190 million dollars in real estate tax revenue. Those tax dollars are distributed six times a year to more than 183 taxing districts, which include townships, road districts, cities and villages, school districts, fire districts and one streetlight district in Fairdale.

Mr. Todd is currently working on an Automated Clearing House (ACH), debit system for property taxpayers to be able to pay their property taxes from the County's website. If his office and IMO can get this program working this Spring for the first tax payment, our County will be the first in the State to do so. The service will be free and easy to use.

In preparing the 2012 department budget they utilized zero based budgeting, which enabled the Treasurer's office to exceed the amount of reductions originally proposed.

The committee thanked Mr. Todd for a very informative report.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION UPDATE - MR. PAUL BOREK**

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

He said that manufacturing productivity is increasing in the County. He continued by stating that six new industrial prospects (nearly 20% of total) have been identified since December 1, 2011. Extensive research, presentations, meetings and follow-up have been ongoing throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, particularly the last 6 weeks.

The committee thanked Mr. Borek for his report.

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

Chairman Vary said that she would like everyone on the committee to think about various items to work on this year and prioritize them. She would like to continue to look at how to retain local businesses and attract new ones. She would like the committee to look at how they could help the Economic Development Corporation.

One business industry that was suggested by the committee to take a look at was the health industry. The committee said that the arts and entertainment businesses do help to attract other businesses that the county would like to see move here, like knowledge-based businesses and manufacturing. They would also like to see more arts and entertainment businesses move here. After all of the suggestions are made next month the committee would then need to prioritize them.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Pat Vary, Chairman

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