

DRAFT
Economic Development Committee
Minutes
April 10, 2013

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, April 10, 2013 @ 7:00p.m., in the Legislative Center's Liberty Room. Vice Chairman Bob Brown called the meeting to order. Members present were Russ Deverell, Jeff Metzger, Riley Oncken, Mark Pietrowski, Stephen Reid and Jeff Whelan. Others present were Jenny Johnson and Dan Kenney.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Metzger, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from March 2013.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Pietrowski asked if the agenda could be amended to include Mr. Dan Kenney who wanted to speak to us about DeKalb County Community Gardens. Vice-Chairman Bob Brown placed this issue under item #6a.

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

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Vice-Chairman Brown mentioned that at last night's Executive Committee Meeting it was mentioned that Chairman Metzger will be reading a Proclamation to recognize National Tourism Week. He also mentioned that the movie "At Any Price", which was filmed in DeKalb County, will be released on May 10, 2013 at Market Square Theater. He also said that after elections we have had a turnover in mayors in Cortland, Sandwich, Genoa, and DeKalb. We may want to invite these four new mayors to our meetings and see how they may tie into some of their vision for economic development.

Mr. Reid suggested that maybe there could be a Regional Summit that may be held, which would not only include school districts, but people with interests in economic development and the NIU President.

Mr. Pietrowski said taking that idea on a smaller scale just to start with, maybe, if it is appropriate, we could invite the new mayors and some of the current mayors to an Economic Development Committee meeting where we could hear what they are experiencing in their towns and cities, and then listen to what they could use help with or advise. Some of these people never contact

their county representative.

Mr. Metzger, said that one of the things that he had planned on doing, along with Gary Hanson, would be to bring in the new NIU President and bring in new people. Let me think about what would be best and then get back to you on this.

ARTS COUNCIL UPDATE – MS. JENNIFER JOHNSON

Ms. Johnson gave a brief summary on the Arts Council. They have found funding of \$500 for incorporating the Arts Council. Which they now have filed the 501c3 paperwork as a non-profit organization. She said that they have brought on Jay Rippy to work with them. They just sent out invitations to nine people to have on their board. They have reached out to Artists, NIU, business and youth development people. They are in the process of collecting data for a central website for artistic events that are happening at first. Their new name is the DeKalb Area Arts Council, which allows for a lot of growth. She did say that at first their meetings will be the 1st Monday's of the month and that they will be held at the Egyptian Theater.

Vice-Chairman Brown asked if anything came about with the idea of having a centralized ticketing since there seemed to be a lot of support for this idea.

Ms. Johnson said that the council will provide access for all of these people to communicate with one another. The council will do a central calendar and blog for the people, but that will be it. The rest will come from the artists. What the council will be able to do is mentor and facilitate. All of our backgrounds are in Art Administration so if the companies feel that they are lacking administratively, they can hold seminars on how to share space, resources, and cooperate with the other artists in your community. One of the things that the group of artists first mentioned at the initial meeting was a lack of storage. If those artists come to the council, and through grant proposals and a joint effort, the council can help to facilitate those things, but the council will not be renting a space. All of the art will be generated by the artists. The council will bring the artists together.

The committee thanked Ms. Johnson for her informative update.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION QUARTERLY REPORT – MR. PAUL BOREK

Mr. Borek gave his quarterly report to the committee. He mentioned that Triumph Truss and Steel closed on the acquisition of the former Tempo Components building in Kirkland. Seller Heartland Bank worked to resolve numerous liens on the property to enable Triumph to execute the purchase.

Triumph is venturing with Rehkemper & Son of St. Rose, Illinois, to produce wood and steel trusses for commercial and residential applications.

CST Storage is progressing with their expansion of business operations in DeKalb. Current expansion plan include development of production capability and capacity for large scale animal waste processing tanks for agriculture as well as the portable, bolt-together water tanks for the natural gas fracking industry. CST continues to hire new workers, sending them to Kishwaukee College for accelerated welding training. CST is pleased with the College's training and the support of DCEDC.

Mr. Borek mentioned that ThyssenKrupp, which is a diversified German industrial company. Their new containment facility on Dietz Avenue is in DeKalb. This operation receives, tests and inventories components and parts for Johnson Controls power seats assembly facility in Sycamore. ThyssenKrupp temporarily employed 100 workers when setting up the operation and currently employ 20 workers that are stationed at the Sycamore Johnson Controls plant. ThyssenKrupp is interested in establishing relationships with other manufacturers in DeKalb County and Northern Illinois.

Another item that Mr. Borek highlighted for the committee was the I-39 Corridor which is planning a Site Selector/Real Estate Broker Breakfast in Oak Brook, Illinois, to meet with and expose brokers to development sites in our market. The event will feature a presentation by Mark Goode of Venture One and possibly another developer in the corridor to serve as an effective draw for the event. The Corridor's public relations consultant is working with DCEDC and other members to identify and promote successes and deals within the corridor to trade publications.

Mr. Borek then spoke with the committee on how they can assist the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) efforts. Some of the points that Mr. Borek briefly touched on were as follows.

To promote an encouraging and accommodating attitude toward business operation, expansion and development at every opportunity in DeKalb County Government and throughout the County.

To support and strengthen the Public/Private Economic Development Partnership to facilitate sustainable and diversified economic development within DeKalb County.

To encourage competitive business attraction and expansion by supporting short-term local tax incentive requests approved municipal and educational taxing bodies.

To work in collaboration with DCEDC to participate in Strategic Economic Development Planning Activities as needed from time to time.

The committee discussed with Mr. Borek that the County and DCEDC need to work together to promote investment in business expansion. The committee needs to work with DCEDC on the Strategic Plan for Economic Development in DeKalb County.

Mr. Reid asked Mr. Borek if he knew how the County “sits” for housing and workforce?

Mr. Borek said that we have a good work ethic here. Some companies have mentioned that they moved here and were happy with the workforce. Our location is strategic with the western suburbs and Rockford. The challenge he said that they had was about 4 years ago looking for some “green fields” for Navistar. But they were looking to employ 1,000 to 1,400 engineers and we put together a lot of information on the availability of engineers in Kane, DuPage, DeKalb Counties and even Rockford. They mentioned how easy it would be for a reverse commute also. They eventually went to Lucent headquarters in Lisle that was vacant for quite a while. It gave DCEDC an opportunity on how they might look at competing for engineering jobs and facilities.

The committee asked Mr. Borek asked how the County is doing with the housing stock?

Mr. Borek said that he would like to look into the housing issue a little bit before he says anything yet.

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS – MR. DAN KENNEY

Mr. Dan Kenney approached the committee about the Local Food Systems. The average food travels 1500 miles before it reaches your plate, he said. In the State of Illinois we spend \$48 billion in food and \$46 billion leaves the state. Nineteen percent (19%) of the children in the county are food insecure as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Kenney said that one of the projects that he is working on is the DeKalb County Community Gardens. They started last year as a volunteer organization with 16 sites. This year they are expanding to all of the schools in Sycamore, HUD housing locations, etc. Over the last year they have established 40 partnerships and they have expanded to 36 sites for this summer.

They realized that there was not a lot of communication between the food providers and how they can best meet the needs of people in DeKalb County

who are food insecure. Therefore, they worked together with DeKalb County Community Foundation and the DeKalb County Community Services Department and Kishwaukee Health Systems to hold a food security summit with 65 participants. Out of that summit led to the DeKalb County Local Food Security Council. There are 35 members in the council who will be performing four basic functions, such as, serve as a forum, foster coordination, evaluate and influence policy and launch and support programs and services. (All of these handouts from Mr. Kenney are attached to these minutes.)

Mr. Pietrowski asked if any county board members can sit on the council?

Mr. Kenney said yes you can.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Brown, Vice-Chairman

Mary C. Supple, Secretary

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