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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Economic Development Committee Minutes
November 13, 2013**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 at 7:00 p.m., in the Legislative Center's Freedom Room. Chairman Whelan called the meeting to order. Members present were Bob Brown, Riley Oncken, Mark Pietrowski, Jeff Metzger and Stephen Reid. Russ Deverell was absent. Others present were Anthony Cvek, Paul Borek and Dan Kenney.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Reid, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from October 9, 2013.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

DEKALB COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION QUARTERLY REPORT – PAUL BOREK

Mr. Paul Borek, Executive Director for the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC) gave his quarterly report to the Committee. He shared his State of the County Presentation PowerPoint that he also presented to the DCEDC Annual Dinner. The PowerPoint presentation highlighted many areas of economic development in the community including residential development which he indicated was starting to appear again in various locations throughout DeKalb County. Quality housing development is beneficial to attract higher end business and industry.

Mr. Borek also covered that municipal services and facilities are essential for developers, business and homeowners. Buildings like the new DeKalb Police Station and Hinckley Sewer Treatment Plant promote long term community development. He continued that commercial development is very important to provide goods and services to residents and businesses alike. There were many new buildings Mr. Borek shared such as, The Hampton Inn in DeKalb,

Faranda's Banquet Hall in DeKalb, two Resource Bank locations in Shabbona and Somonauk, Genoa's Piggly Wiggly, various new Casey's Stores and other new developments that are coming to Sycamore Road in the City of DeKalb.

Mr. Borek stated that health care is a very special asset in DeKalb County and the growth of Kish Health Systems has provided many specialty health services to residents in the community. He shared various new medical service sites that have been developed throughout the county.

The main focus of DCEDC is the attraction and expansion of industry to serve as a foundation of economic growth through the communities. They adopted an industrial growth initiative to accelerate development and expansion and as a part of that initiative they enhanced their inventory of industrial parks and development sites to provide site selectors with information they need to make an investment decision and to make this information available electronically and through their website.

Mr. Borek also shared information to the Committee about DeKalb County's Industrial Parks along with some of the assets, selling points and competitive advantages these parks possess. He also mentioned working with Legislation that will help give tax breaks to data center industries in hopes they will want to locate in the area.

In the DCEDC's work with industrial prospects as well as local industries they found that the most critical asset for industrial growth and attraction as well as well industrial expansion is the availability to train talented workforce. They have recently been working with Kishwaukee College, Northern Illinois University and DeKalb Ogle County Workforce Consortium to help educate and promote workforce as well as career development activities. Lastly he added that one of DCEDC's priorities is to be committed to increasing collaboration with industry and education because in doing so they can accelerate business growth and stimulate business attraction.

Mr. Cvek addressed that DeKalb County has been losing out on large commercial developments to Rochelle and while talking to people that did come here is helpful; he asked if DCEDC was doing anything to talk to companies that didn't come here to see what we can do to better position ourselves to compete for similar business. Mr. Borek answered that one advantage that Rochelle has that is impossible to replicate is that they have the intersection of Union Pacific and Burlington Normal Railroad and extensive access to railroads. Unfortunately DeKalb County does not have equivalent access to railroads but we do have other assets but one thing that we do not have that many other communities do is they benefit from being located in an Enterprise Zones, including Rochelle.

After further discussion on Enterprise Zones, the Economic Development Committee invited Mr. Borek to return to the December Committee Meeting to provide more information and help educate the committee a bit more on Enterprise Zones.

LOCAL FOOD UPDATE – DAN KENNEY

Mr. Dan Kenney introduced Sandra who works at N.I.U. in the Center of Governmental Studies, Policy Research Division. She is currently working with Mr. Kenney and helping research for the past year the number of possible initiatives local food is used as a regional development tool not just for economic but also for social and environment tools. And she is also gaging institutions and gaging the level of support not only from the University but also the whole region.

Mr. Kenney continued with presenting a PowerPoint presentation that provided information on food insecurities along with statistics involving food waste, poverty in the community and economic aspects of the food industry.

Mr. Kenney also shared that one of the things that DeKalb Community Gardens is currently working on is creating a local food security system, where everything is happening within a small radius of DeKalb County, this would include the production, process, distribution, access, consumption and also the resource waste recovery in the form of compost.

DeKalb County Community Gardens currently has nearly 40 sites with over 200 raised beds and 10 acres of growing area. They have also created 70 different community partnerships and sponsorships including business, organizations, agencies and municipalities. Last year the Community Gardens produced 2,500 pounds of food and this year they have produced more than 14,000 pounds that was donated to food pantries. In addition to food pantries, Mr. Kenney explained they have been working with the DeKalb County Health Department and also have provided food to Heritage Woods, Safe Passage, and Colonial House. There are also many sites that will be added next year which Mr. Kenney shared with the committee.

Lastly Mr. Kenney shared with the committee how he is collaborating with many organizations in trying to locate a local food hub here in DeKalb County and he also gave detail on what all that entails. He also gave a briefing on their farm to school project that is in the works.

Mr. Oncken asked about the funding of the food hub. Mr. Kenney answered that he is waiting for final analysis and they are weighing different options of funding right now. They are considering making it a L3C which is a limited profit company. Mr. Pietrowski invited Mr. Kenney to return to the committee when they have their final analysis and a business plan with funding put together so the committee can see what they can help with.

The Economic Development Committee thanked Mr. Borek and Mr. Kenney for their very informative presentations.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Mr. Oncken, seconded by Mr. Metzger, and it was carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Jeff Whelan

Tasha Stogsdill, Recording Secretary