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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Economic Development Committee Minutes
October 6, 2015**

The DeKalb County Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 @ 7:00p.m. in the Administration Building's Conference Room East. Chairman Brown called the meeting to order. Members present were Mr. Faivre, Ms. Leifheit, Mr. Pietrowski Jr., Mr. Porterfield and Mr. Whelan. Ms. Polanco was absent. Others present were Ms. Christine Johnson, Mr. Gary Hanson, Mr. Greg Millburg, Mr. Doug Johnson, Ms. Deb Armstrong, Brad Hoey, and Ms. Robin Brunschon.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Whelan, seconded by Mr. Porterfield, and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes from September 1, 2015.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Ms. Leifheit, seconded by Mr. Faivre, and it was carried unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IHSA REQUEST

Mr. Hanson, DeKalb County Administrator, approached the committee regarding a resolution in support of the IHSA Destination DeKalb event that will be held Thanksgiving weekend this year. He is proposing that the DeKalb County Board donate \$10,000 this year from its Opportunity Fund for the event to the Community Foundation which is acting as the conduit for receiving donations for this Football Championship. He is also recommending that funding for the event equal \$5,000 for each of the years being held in 2017, 2019 and 2021. Discussion followed.

Mr. Brown said that he thought that when the County Board first donated money two years ago as seed money, that he did not think that the event organizers would be coming back asking for more money.

Mr. Pietrowski asked Ms. Armstrong if NIU has kicked in any money yet. Ms. Armstrong believed that the Foundation did give \$25,000 last time. She also mentioned that large amount of staff from NIU worked many hours with no pay two years ago. The IHSA committee is a volunteer committee.

Mr. Hoey said that a lot of materials that were used, signage, sponsorship materials, were all created in-house at NIU. The video board operation was done all pro-bono by the technical staff at NIU which cost \$14,000. All of these services were donated by NIU.

Mr. Faivre said that budget appeals are coming up and that he had sat on the board for the Ellwood House for twenty years and they never would have thought to come before a local government agency and ask for funding. He said that he would support a resolution that encourages people within the community to step up and support this event and not use taxpayers' dollars.

Ms. Armstrong said that IHSA does not provide any funding for this event.

Mr. Pietrowski asked what would happen if they do not raise all of the money that is needed (\$200,000) for the event. Who makes up the difference?

Mr. Hoey said that NIU would need to "eat" that shortfall.

Mr. Pietrowski asked, does NIU get any profit from this event?

Mr. Hoey said that it all goes into sustaining the event and we also get to recruit students to come to NIU. He said that it is a great opportunity for NIU to host this event.

Mr. Pietrowski said that he feels that we need to stick to our budget because he will be saying no in a few minutes to the County Clerk on his appeal. Therefore, he would have to say no to this request. We are in tight budget crunches and we need to stick to our budget goals. We need a committee to come up with guidelines of what we will award to individuals from our Opportunity Fund.

It was moved by Mr. Faivre, seconded by Mr. Pietrowski, and it was carried unanimously to support a resolution stating that the County Board encourages the people in the community to support this event, and to forward this on to the full board for approval.

Mr. Faivre also wanted it reflected on record that this is a good event.

FY 2016 BUDGET

County Clerk Budget Appeal:

Mr. Doug Johnson, DeKalb County Clerk and Recorder, approached the committee this evening regarding his budget appeal for Item #22 on the Budget Recommendations. He said that the person that this appeal applies to in his department works part-time in the County Clerk's office. She is fluent in Spanish, reading, writing and speaking. She helped Planning and Zoning with Evergreen Village and is the only person in this building that is fluent in Spanish, so she is called upon from other departments in the building. She makes \$10 an hour. Mr. Johnson said that he lost an employee recently to another job that paid \$1.00 an hour more. She also works on passports which are increasing recently because of people coming from Rockford to get their passports processed here. The revenue generated from processing passports, which is \$17,000 so far, would help pay for the increase that he is asking for this employee.

Mr. Pietrowski said that he knows that this employee is a very good employee and that Mr. Johnson should promote her at the first time that he can, like when a person leaves his employee and he can fill it with this employee and make her a full-time employee.

There was no motion made so the appeal was denied.

Chairman Brown then asked if there were any other budget questions from the committee.

Ms. Leifheit asked Mr. Hanson how much money was coming out of the Opportunity Fund in this year's budget.

Mr. Hanson said that it was \$450,000.

Ms. Leifheit said that the \$100,000 for a salary investigation she thought was a lot of money.

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

Mr. Hanson said that the resolution before the committee tonight for changes to the Workforce Development Area Intergovernmental Agreement pertains to a change in the law which, in turn, changed some of the terminology. These are updated documents so the chairman of each county, Kane, DeKalb and Kendall need to sign the document.

Mr. Pietrowski said that the documents are pretty much the same, not much of a change.

It was moved by Mr. Pietrowski, seconded by Mr. Whelan, and it was carried unanimously to approve the resolution and to forward it on to the full board for approval.

CONVENTION AND VISITOR'S BUREAU REPORT – MARY SUPPLE

Ms. Mary Supple, DeKalb County Board Coordinator, gave her monthly report on the DeKalb County Convention & Visitor's Bureau (CVB). Ms. Supple said that in their quarterly report for 9/30/15 the DeKalb County Convention and Visitor's Bureau board agreed to keep their costs down by transitioning with a separate person doing the payroll and Siepert's who works on the reports to file. Mr. Faivre suggested another accounting firm from Chicago that could help them reduce payments even more, he believed. Ms. Supple will get more information from Mr. Faivre so that she could relay this information to the DeKalb County Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

Ms. Supple said that the CVB announcements stated that Little Big Town will be hosted at the Convocation Center on October 29, 2015 and that they have sold 1500 tickets so far. Mr. Nerad from the Egyptian Theatre told them that they will be adding 3 more shows for December, January and February 2016. Jonamac Orchards is honoring the 1st Responders this year in the corn maze for Halloween. NBC Chicago highlighted this fact on their online report.

The other day, Mr. Cory Jobes, Director of the State of Illinois Tourism Bureau, was on WGN Mid-Day news and highlighted DeKalb County to visit for tourism. He mentioned Whiskey Acres, Jonamac Orchards and Cademon Brewery. It was great exposure for DeKalb County.

DEKALB AREA ARTS COUNCIL REPORT – MARY SUPPLE

Ms. Supple gave a report on the DeKalb Area Arts Council. She said that they are still waiting to file their 501 (c)3. Mr. Nerad said that this is their #1 priority to make this filing. There will be an Arts Summit held in December or January of this coming year highlighting what the local artists would like to see at this Summit. The website will be up and running hopefully this month. The Council also spoke about the Arts Corridor that will be going before the City of DeKalb. They are creating a database of companies that would like to be located in the proposed Arts Corridor. She said that looking at the proposed Arts Corridor, there are 40 companies located in this corridor already.

Ms. Supple also mentioned that the Lincoln Highway Coalition and the Lincoln Highway Association are two different entities. Ms. Kay Shelton is the President of the Coalition. The Association is run by the Chicago and Beyond Office.

Chairman Brown asked if anyone wanted a representative to come to one of their meetings from the Lincoln Highway Association.

Mr. Whelan said that maybe sometime next year it would be good to invite someone to visit with the committee about this Association.


ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pietrowski announced that the first meeting of the Economic Summit will be held on November 17, 2015 from 8:30a.m. to 11:30a.m. at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau.

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

Respectfully submitted,


Chairman Robert Brown


Mary Supple, Recording Secretary