

LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

La Crosse County Administrative Center, Rm. 3220

Thursday, March 4, 2010

7:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Doyle, Don Brenengen, Steve Burgess (7:40), Vicki Burke, Dirk Gasterland (exc. 8:40), Gary Ingvalson, Tara Johnson (7:37), Audrey Kader (7:43), Dave Lange (for Bill Shepherd) Dennis Manthei, Steve O'Malley, Joe Veenstra, Mary Jo Werner, John Wettstein

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Bill Shepherd

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF & GUESTS: Brian Fukuda, Charlie Handy, Karl Green, Margaret Norden, Jenny Kuderer

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chair Doyle called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None requested.

APPROVE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2010

MOTION by Manthei/Gasterland to approve the Minutes of February 4, 2010.

Motion carried unanimously. Kader, Johnson, Burgess excused.

RECOMMENDATION OF TIF POLICY

Brian Fukuda reported they were unable to find examples of any counties or municipalities that use a point system to score TIF's. He presented a revised policy draft with the following criteria added: 1. Does the proposed development conform to the municipality's comprehensive plan; and 2. How many jobs will the implementation of this project plan help to create? A copy of the City of La Crosse Planning Department's recommended TIF policy was distributed. Discussion was held regarding disparities among the property values in townships, municipalities, and cities; TIF's that were created to promote tourism vs. employment; the need to evaluate revenue streams to support the TIF; and the need for a system that can explain and support the decision to create a TIF to the taxpayer. Fukuda distributed a state publication that addresses TIF creation, and emphasized the need to evaluate the location vis-à-vis the market. Supervisor Kader spoke about giving weight to intangible spin-off effects, such as the expansion of the La Crosse Center that spurred downtown renewal. Charlie Handy suggested having two policies, with one policy specifically for incentives. Chair Doyle recommended further discussion at the April 1, 2010, meeting, to allow time for review of the City of La Crosse proposed policy.

APPLICATION MATERIALS FOR REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS

Brian Fukuda distributed a draft of a reformatted loan application that incorporated suggested changes from the February 4, 2010, meeting. He reported that, rather than creating a separate checklist, the checklist was incorporated into the application. Discussion was held regarding different criteria for small business start-ups and/or an explanation for not providing all requested information, and the value of externally-prepared financial statements and review by a CPA. Staff will follow up on miscellaneous editing suggestions.

LA CROSSE COUNTY "COMPACT" PRESENTATION

Brian Fukuda provided a report that was presented by Larry Kirch, City of La Crosse Planning Department, at the 2009 Collaboration Conference on the idea of regional cooperation and "acting as one," rather than competing with other local municipalities for jobs and higher income residents. The report included case studies of regional agreements in the Twin Cities, Racine County, Dayton, OH, and Denver, CO. A La Crosse County "Compact" would combine anti-sprawl land use planning, unified economic development, and tax base sharing. Fukuda also distributed copies of a workgroup report on challenging trends in La Crosse County, including the effects of urban sprawl, tax rate disparities, concentrations of poverty and their associated code enforcement and crime patterns, and increased investment in infrastructure. He spoke about *Cities Without Suburbs* by David Rusk, and Mr. Rusk's ideas for regionalism, including employer assisted housing; regional schools; unified economic development and tax base sharing; identifying the best places across the region for developments to occur; and multi-jurisdictional compacts. Discussion was held regarding tax base sharing, shared services, and numbers of people who take advantage of City of La Crosse amenities such as employment, cultural activities, sports, and education. Chair Doyle suggested a future meeting to focus on the issue of regional cooperation, with invitations to local mayors and administrators. Staff will report again at the April 1, 2010, meeting.

RESOLUTION RE: SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION TO CREATE REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITIES (RTAS)

The Resolution calls for support of the creation of a Regional Transit Authority, and directs the County Clerk to send a copy of the Resolution to area legislators, the Governor, and other interested parties. The RTA would grow jobs, spur development, and make the state more competitive in attracting business and jobs. A public hearing will be held in Madison. **MOTION** by Johnson/Kader to approve the Resolution Re: Support of Legislation to Create Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs). **Motion carried unanimously.** Gasterland excused.

UPDATE ON COUNTY OWNED PROPERTIES

An update was distributed on the Park Plaza and Fourth & Jackson properties. Steve O'Malley stated there have been multiple Requests for Proposal issued.

AGENCY REPORTS

- Economic Indicators breakfast will be April 6, 2010, at UW-L;
- High Speed Rail Coalition meeting will be on March 18, 2010, at the Train Station BBQ Restaurant, from 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Both the Minnesota and Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation will attend.

NEXT MEETING – APRIL 1, 2010, AT 7:30 A.M.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

LACVB - proposed Bridgeview Plaza welcome center and tourism promotion budget
Carol Wateski - rural funding

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Doyle declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Approved, April 1, 2010, Margaret Norden, Recorder