

LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

April 5, 2012

Administrative Center – Room 3220

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Steve O'Malley, Gary Ingvalson, Jill Billings, Don Brenengen, Steve Burgess, Vicki Burke, Tara Johnson, Audrey Kader (arr. 7:47 a.m.), David Lange, Joe Veenstra, John Wettstein
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Steve Doyle, Dirk Gasterland, Dennis Manthei, Michael Richards
OTHERS PRESENT:	Brian Fukuda, Charlie Handy, Greg Flogstad, Karl Green, Sharon Hampson, Amy Peterson, Brian Law, Terri Pavlic

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 2, 2012

MOTION by Burke/Ingvalson to approve the minutes of February 2, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Doyle, Gasterland, Manthei, Richards & Kader excused)

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PUBLIC HEARING – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Brian Fukuda explained that this is part of our Citizen Participation Plan for Community Development Programs to accept CDBG funding from the State. With the acceptance of this funding, we must hold two public hearings - the first must be during the time of application and one during the performance of the funds. This opportunity for public input will meet the requirement of the second public hearing. **Motion** by Lange/Ingvalson to open and close the public hearing. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Doyle, Gasterland, Manthei, Richards & Kader excused)

SKIPPERLINER LOAN UPDATE

Dave Lange reported that they have had recent discussions and correspondence on the Skipperliner loan, but still have not received any payments. There was a payment made for taxes but not on the loan. Dave is proposing a sit-down meeting with all parties involved to resolve these issues.

TRACKING OF ECONOMIC INDICATORS

There have been many discussions in the past about trying to have some set of economic indicators that we could track on an annual basis to review each year and track the trends from year to year. Brian Fukuda suggested that committee members take a look at the link to Econowatch report, which the MRRPC puts together each year, and give him feedback and direction on what to track. UWL already keeps track of many of these economic indicators statistics. Following the economic indicators breakfast next week, staff will send out a follow-up e-mail with suggestions to see if there are any other indicators that we should be tracking. If necessary, this item will be put on next months agenda.

UPDATE OF CEDS REPORT – MRRPC

Brian Law with MRRPC presented a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs).

- Intro (purpose of CEDS, public/private participation)
- Identification of problems and opportunities

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- CEDS Committee conducted strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) exercise
 - Positives: manufacturing base, agricultural capacity; outdoor recreation and tourism, quality health care; cost of living; educational opportunities; etc.
 - Negatives: aging population and workforce, brain drain; income levels lag; government regulations and taxation; etc.
- Background – history, geography, climate, land use
- Infrastructure and education – road network, public bus transportation, bicycling, freight rail service, passenger rail service, water transportation, air, industrial parks, educational institutions
- State of regions economy – population and demographics, housing trends, poverty and income trends, educational attainment, employment trends, major employment sectors, economic production, per capita income, unemployment rate, manufacturing employment, top employment sectors
- Goals and objectives
 - Develop industry clusters
 - Buy regionally sell globally
 - Quality of place and tourism
 - Business expansion and innovation services
 - Infrastructure, public facility and renewable energy
- Plan of action
 - Partner and collaborate with EDOs and government agencies in the Region
 - Support industry cluster organizations
 - Help create a dynamic business environment
 - Provide planning services to the Region
 - Secure funding for economic development projects in the Region
- Performance measures
 - Private-sector funds leveraged by public investment
 - Jobs created and retained
 - Ongoing description of region's economic environment
- Integration with state's economic development priorities
 - WEDC guiding principles
 - Be bold – importance of innovation
 - Engage business – outreach to private sector for information and feedback
 - Operate as an extended enterprise – partnering and collaboration
 - Measure and be accountable – maximize return on public investments

UPDATE ON REGIONALIZATION OF REVOLVING LOAN FUN

Brian Fukuda informed the committee that this process is moving forward. The WEDC hosted a meeting of the county and local governments in our region to continue discussions of regionalization, but it was not very well attended. The MRRPC, 7 Rivers Alliance and UWL Small Business Development Center have offered to host another meeting in April to participate in these discussions. Gregg Flogstad distributed Wisconsin's regional revolving loan fund initiative. There are 12 revolving loan funds in the region that we are attempting to merge into one. Staff will stay involved in the discussions and keep the committee informed as this process continues.

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UPDATE ON EXIT 3 STUDY

The final study was completed by Ayres Associates to look at relocation of Exit 3 to open up property for waterfront development. A resolution next week will be going to the City Council to decide whether they want to go forward with the EIS process that would study the relocation in much more detail over the next two years. There does not appear to be a lot of strong support in the community.

NEXT MEETING – May 3, 2012 at 7:30 a.m.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Arts Board Update

ADJOURN

There being no further business, **MOTION** by Ingvalson/Veenstra to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 a.m. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Doyle, Gasterland, Manthei, Richards & Kader excused)

The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next Committee meeting.

Recorded by Terri Pavlic