

LA CROSSE COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

September 6, 2012

Administrative Center – Room 3220

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Steve Doyle, Steve O'Malley, Gary Ingvalson, Patti Balacek, Dirk Gasterland, Tara Johnson, Megan Devore for Dave Lange, Mike Richards, Joe Veenstra, Tina Wehrs
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Don Brenengen, Ray Ebert, Sharon Hampson, John Wettstein, Dave Lange
OTHERS PRESENT:	Brian Fukuda, Greg Flogstad, Karl Green, Amy Peterson, Steve Michaels, Charlie Handy, Terri Pavlic

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 12, 2012

MOTION by Gasterland/Wehrs to approve the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund minutes of July 12, 2012. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Brenengen, Ebert, Hampson, Wettstein and Lange excused)

ARTS & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY REPORT

Steve Michaels, Principal of Hamilton and SOTA 1 Elementary Schools, and Supervisor of Fine Arts for the School District, was present to discuss the Arts and Economic Prosperity Report. One of his missions is to promote arts, participation and awareness in the community. A national study was continued this year that quantifies the impact that the arts have on the economic situation in regions throughout the U.S.

Some interesting statistics for the La Crosse area are:

- Total direct expenditures: \$9.4 million
- Fulltime equivalent jobs: 321
- Resident household income \$6.8 million
- Local and state government revenue \$0.9 million.

Brian Fukuda has the entire study if anyone would like to review it.

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Brian Fukuda reported that staff has been working with State Representative Steve Doyle and Patti Balacek from Western Technical College in developing a proposal for a new grant program that will assist area businesses as they continue to move toward economic recovery and increased stability. The program is designed to leverage a small amount of County funding with other resources to assist businesses in expanding into new product areas and diversifying their market base. Brian presented a draft of the proposal for review and comments. The grants would be between \$2,500 and \$10,000 and would ask for a company match of 25% of total cost at a minimum, as well as a non-profit match of 25% (the non-profit organization that the company is working with). Another component of the proposal is program sustainability. If the business is successful in achieving their desired outcomes, they could pledge a percentage of the grant amount or of their increased profits

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to go back into the program to help other businesses. After much discussion, a couple of things that need clarification are: types of nonprofits needs to be clarified and decisions will be brought back to this committee as far as awarding the grant. This item will be put on next month's Economic Development Fund agenda.

PARK PLAZA UPDATE

Charlie Handy gave update on Park Plaza. Last month he informed the committee that we weren't able to obtain the loan/grant money from the State. Since then staff has met with a potential developer to talk about the site and Brian Fukuda and Charlie have done more research on the potential for doing a limited phase process. One thing that hasn't been utilized is a tax credits housing program so this will be looked into as our next step.

CDBG HOUSING CONSORTIUM UPDATE

Charlie Handy reported that the consortium (11 counties in southwest Wisconsin) met with Joanna Schumann from the WI DOA to discuss our plans for funding application, which we will be applying for in October. Two resolutions will be on the agenda for next month – one authorizing us to apply for the grant and one is for public participation plan for CDBG. Since La Crosse County is the lead county for our region, we will be responsible for administering the programs and therefore will have a number of steps that we will need to complete over the next couple of months to apply for these funds. We will hold the public hearing at this meeting and invite all 11 counties to attend the public hearing. We expect that the consortium will receive approximately \$850,000 (divided between 10 counties) for housing rehabilitation. Being the lead county, La Crosse would get approximately \$110,000 for administering the program.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND JOBS REPORT

Greg Flogstad distributed a loan status report as of June 30, 2012. **Crescent Printing** is current on their payments; total jobs is 41; haven't created any since the loan was made. **Platinum Press** has agreed to a payoff so this loan has been satisfied; **Skipperliner** is still in default, however there has been a new loan agreement; **Airborne Datalink** is still in default; still have a mortgage on Tim Boyd's home; **River Steele** – 137 jobs between the three and were expected to be at 77, so doing quite well in job creation; **Maid Rite** – current on loan but out of business; **La Crosse Day Care Centers** – loan is current and are at 57 full time equivalent employees – expected only 53 so they exceeded jobs by 4; **Skipperliner Griffith** - 34 employees; **CenturyLink** - these are not reported to us – but to the state; they were supposed to main 620 jobs and create 20.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND BY-LAWS

This discussion began last month. Dave Lange and Brian Fukuda put together a draft of the by-laws. They added "4 year terms with no term limits"; and "Officers" was spelled out – officers will be elected every 2 years and will coincide with County Board elections. Tara Johnson had some minor changes to the draft, which Brian will incorporate and bring back to the committee in October. They will also refer to the Revolving Loan Fund Administrator Plan prior to making any final changes.

NEXT MEETING – October 4, 2012 at 7:30 a.m.

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FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- LV Business park
- Biannual goals
- Commuter bus service - budget

ADJOURN

There being no further business, **MOTION** by Ingvalson/Richards to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 a.m. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Brenengen, Ebert, Hampson, Wettstein and Lange excused)

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

Recorded by Terri Pavlic