

Egan, chair, called the meeting of the Economic Development Committee to order at 9:00 a.m., on March 5, 2012 in conference room #2, at the Vilas County Courthouse, Eagle River, Wisconsin.

Present: The following persons were present: County Board members: Bob Egan, Emil Bakka, Ralph Sitzberger, Ed Bluthardt, & Jim Behling; others Ken Stubbe, & Rosemary Leveille

Media present:

The following County Board member was excused:

The following County Board members were absent:

Approve Agenda: Motion by Sitzberger, second by Bakka to approve the agenda to be handled in any order at the discretion of the Chair. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Approve Minutes: Motion to approve the minutes of February 6, 2012 by Sitzberger, second by Behling. Motion carried, all voting aye. Bakka made a comment concerning the consolidating of the Economic Development Committee stated in the minutes of February 6th. He stated that if it weren't for the committee there would be no VCEDC. Bluthardt and Behling explained how the thoughts of combining committees were going with the Executive, Ethics & Insurance and the Legislative & Judicial joint meetings. The joint committee has been discussing these thoughts along with giving more authority to the department heads but they are not ready to move forward or make any decisions until a decision to hire a Finance Director is made and if so they will need to include this person in making informed and well thought out decisions.

Revolving Loan Fund update – Debra Clemens

Deb Clemens was unable to make the meeting but has consented to coming to the May meeting. Egan and Stubbe explained that the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and Grow North are having issues on who will be included in the regional revolving loan, since the state is trying to have the revolving loans become regional instead of local or county. Grow North would like to become a regional revolving loan “hub” for the 5 counties that they represent now instead of becoming part of an 11 county region that knows very little of the rural areas in Grow North. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning (NCWRP) has some monies that Vilas County businesses can apply for, along with a micro loan fund of \$5,000 which is very accessible because of the minimal amount.

Economic Development Reports and Updates –

a) Vilas County Economic Development Corporation (VCEDC) – Bluthardt complimented Stubbe on the article that was submitted to the Vilas County News Review but also stated his disappointment in the fact that the connection to Vilas County was not mentioned. Stubbe announced several of the projects they are working on: 1) the VCEDC has exhiled all hopes of getting any of the “big” companies to extend their service to the area for broadband. So they have will be contracting with an engineering company to do a study on developing and designing a possible public and/or private company in the Northwoods for the Northwoods. The cost will be from \$60,000 to \$75,000 and the WEDC has consented to giving VCEDC approximately half of the monies needed for the study. 2) The incubator at the old Cranberry Products office will be opening soon. One of the requirements to the businesses will be a business class and also some volunteering will be required for the free or reduced rent and services at the center. Another incubator will be opening soon in Eagle River and a third location is being sought out in the western part of the county. 3) There is a contest for the Northland Pines High School students is design an “App” for the County for visitors which is going very well. Next year it will be expanded to the Lakeland Union High school students. VCEDC is looking forward to sponsoring a chapter of Future Business leaders of America in the future. 4) A link has been put on the Corporation’s website to connect Vilas County businesses with internet sales. The link is called “Buy Vilas County” and enables those businesses that would like to continue to supply their customers or just to have access to more sales of their products or services. 5) The state has furnished software that will link the Corporation’s website with vacant office and/or warehouse sites for all counties in Wisconsin. VCEDC will take the

responsibility of updating the Vilas County information for all to use which will help with housing businesses. 6) Stubbe has been working with the Transthermal Company looking for funding.

b) Grow North – Egan stated that Pilch and Barnet Marketing has been hired by Grow North. He presented their marketing plan for anyone’s perusal. Grown North will have a manufacturing meeting on March 6th, Northwoods Entrepreneur meeting in Tomahawk on March 7th, and a Northwoods Research Consortium in Tomahawk on March 15th. Nicolet College is thinking of offering social networking class for businesses. Grow North has taken on the unfunded “Link Wisconsin” project and is also sponsoring the Railroad Commission.

c) Other Economic Development Activities – Egan stated that the resolution on forming a Railroad Commission will be presented to the county board on the 20th of March.

Economic Development Budget/Approval of Bills –

Leveille discussed the budget update.

Out-of-County Travel –

Motion by Bakka, second by Sitzberger was made for Egan to attend the Grown North meeting in Antigo.

Motion carried,

Correspondence and Communications –

None for this month.

Future Meeting Dates/Items –

The next regular meeting will be Monday, April 2, 2012 at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment –

Sitzberger made the motion to adjourn the meeting second was made by Bakka at 10:15 a.m.

Minutes reflect the recorder’s notations and are subject to approval by the appropriate board or committee.

Submitted by: Rosemary Leveille