

Economic Development Committee Meeting

December 2, 2013

Chair Bluthardt called the meeting of the Economic Development Committee to order at 9:00 a.m. on December 2, 2013 in conference room #2, at the Vilas County Courthouse, Eagle River, Wisconsin.

Present: The following persons were present: County Board members: Ed Bluthardt, Ralph Sitzberger, Mark Rogacki, Emil Bakka and Chuck Hayes; others present included Bob Egan and Tom Nitz. No Media present.

Approve Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda to be handled in any order at the discretion of the Chair by Bakka and seconded by Sitzberger. Motion carried, all voting aye. Approve Minutes: Motion to approve the Minutes of the Meeting taken on November 4, 2013 by Sitzberger and seconded by Rogacki. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Economic Development Reports and Updates –

Vilas County Economic Development Corporation (VCEDC) updates:

- a. Incubator Report – Egan reported that 10 students graduated from the EC program with 5 students having a business plan for existing businesses, 4 looking to start a business and 2 will be successful. One couple wants to start a farm for challenged children. The plan seems solid and they are looking for property in the Eagle River area. They have applied for 501C3 status. Egan commends Nicolet College for all they have done. The director’s meeting was held in the new manufacturers building. Egan invited the committee to have their next meeting there also so the committee can have a tour. Pier d’ Nort is one tenant and is looking to warehouse easels and put them together. Bluthardt is concerned about using the incubator as a storage facility. “Found in the Barn” is another potential business that is interested. The EDC has several other opportunities as well. An energy audit was done on the Juday Building and all the lighting is being updated. WIBIC (Women’s Business Initiative) will be in the Cranberry Incubator at least 4 hours a week. The county approved the revolving loan fund committee so now the EDC is in the process of setting up a training session.
- b. Grow North – The next meeting will be December 6th at the WPS building in Rhinelander. The executive director has resigned and Grow North is looking for someone to take this position.
- c. Railroad Commission - Meetings will be held every other month now. There are 11 counties involved, with the UP becoming involved also. Several different studies are being done to see how the railroads would be an advantage for logging and manufacturing industries, road salt and sand could be brought here by rail and could be a potential customer. A lot of work still needs to be done to get the money up here from the state budget.
- d. Economic Development – Broadband - Stark updated the committee on the Phelps vote in November regarding the Kentucky Lake tower, the vote was defeated but will be put back on an April referendum. Stark handed out 3 sheets called “View on Vilas”. Report on file. Rogacki questions Stark on what this committee will do with this report. Sitzberger is on the livability part of NCR Planning Committee, and has put the broadband issue on the NCR plan. Discussion on how important broadband is for our area.

Monthly Budget Review/Statement of Bills – Nothing at this time.

Out of County Travel – Nothing at this time.

Correspondence and Communications –

Future Meeting Dates/Items – The next regular meeting will be January 6, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at the Hwy 70W business park incubator.

Adjournment – Bluthardt adjourned the meeting at 10:13 a.m.

Minutes reflect the recorder’s notations and are subject to approval by the committee. Submitted by: Gail Kukanich