

ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2021

Members Present:

Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Robert Allen
Marty Crawford
Matt Smallheer
Rick Vernier

Members Excused:

Jerry Dinges, Assistant Chairman
Robert Trentman

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Director
Jennifer Little, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

May Brown, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 805

Call to Order:

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Governor's Executive order issued March 23rd, 2020 which closed County buildings to the public, the Economic Development Committee Meeting was held via conference call. Chairman Ken Sharkey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and took roll call.

Due to the nature of the meeting, Rick Stubblefield asked each member the following: "Do we have your authorization to sign your name electronically if needed?"

Response:

Chairman Ken Sharkey – yes
Robert Allen – yes
Marty Crawford – yes
Matt Smallheer – yes
Rick Vernier – yes

Approval of the March 18, 2021 Committee Minutes (action required):

Chairman Sharkey called for action on the March 18, 2021 Committee minutes. Mr. Vernier made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Allen. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Director's Report):

Rick Stubblefield informed members the food processing and aerospace projects discussed at the March meeting are still pending.

Rick Stubblefield stated he had a great visit last Thursday and Friday with the Deputy Director of DCEO and the Deputy Director of DCEO's Workforce Development. They were here to visit St. Clair and Madison counties and were incredibly impressed with the work being done and the potential in the region. Mr. Stubblefield stated they also had a great meeting at the airport with Bryan Johnson. There was a lot of discussion regarding the Metrolink expansion and bringing it to the airport. The expansion would bring great job opportunity and would alleviate transportation issues in areas that are underserved. Mr. Stubblefield noted they also visited the Broadview Hotel in East St. Louis who received a grant from DCEO to assist with renovations. They also visited a number of workforce and apprenticeship locations.

Rick Stubblefield stated he has been speaking with EDA as well as Kevin Terveer with SIMPAC. EDA has new directives coming out with the new administration that are very specific in terms of equity areas. EDA wants funds going to areas that have been traditionally underserved by EDA. The new directive will open opportunity regarding infrastructure. Mr. Stubblefield noted much of it will still be tied to Workforce Development such as apprenticeship programs. He noted the Broadview Hotel project has the capacity for individuals to work in apprenticeships with the trades. He stressed the County is in a good position for the direction EDA is looking to go. Mr. Stubblefield will be pulling information together to submit applications in the next couple of weeks.

Rick Vernier asked if the new mayor was able to meet with the Deputy Director of DCEO. Mr. Stubblefield responded yes; he was able to introduce her during a lunch meeting. He noted Mayor Gregory came prepared with questions. Mr. Stubblefield expressed DCEO seems eager to work with her. He explained DCEO funds a variety of programs and grants are available. Mr. Vernier expressed Mayor Gregory appears to be very engaged and dedicated. Mr. Stubblefield expressed the relationship between the County and the City of Belleville will be strengthened moving forward.

Marty Crawford asked if DCEO will be assisting with the sewer project in Centreville. Mr. Stubblefield responded he was uncertain, but they were asking about it. Mr. Stubblefield stated he informed DCEO Heartland Conservatory had received funding and was going to begin the planning project. He also stated he believes a federal grant application has been submitted for \$22 million. DCEO is interested in learning more about the project as it is now an application they can consider. Mr. Stubblefield stated grant awards will be bigger; they have historically been \$1-3 million and are now \$4-7 million; EDA is willing to fund up to 80%. He expressed he will continue to work with Kevin Terveer to move projects forward.

There were no further comments or questions.

New Business (Airport Director's Report):

Due to a conflict, Bryan Johnson was unable to attend.

New Business (Military Affairs Director Comments):

Due to a conflict, Kimberly Huth was unable to attend.

Other Comments:

None

Adjournment:

There were no additional comments or questions from the Committee. Chairman Sharkey asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Crawford so moved and it was seconded by Mr. Vernier. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:15 p.m.