

ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2021

Members Present:

Jerry Dinges, Assistant Chairman
Robert Allen
Matt Smallheer
Robert Trentman
Rick Vernier

Members Excused:

Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Marty Crawford

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Director
Jennifer Little, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

Bryan Johnson, MidAmerica Airport Director

Call to Order:

In Chairman Sharkey's absence, Jerry Dinges, Vice Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment Regarding the Agenda:

Mr. Dinges asked if anyone present had a question or comment regarding the agenda. There were none.

Approval of the May 20, 2021 Committee Minutes (action required):

Mr. Dinges called for action on the May 20, 2021 Committee minutes. Mr. Allen made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Vernier. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Director's Report):

Rick Stubblefield stated there has been a lot of interest from new businesses as well as those looking to expand and grow. A new aerospace company reached out regarding land near MidAmerica Airport. They are looking to build a \$125 million facility and employ 275 employees. Mr. Stubblefield submitted a proposal Monday.

Mr. Stubblefield stated he has been working with Belleville High School District #201 regarding a partnership for a Career Technical Education Center. District #201 had been working with Belleville for a number of years however was unsuccessful in reaching a deal. They are exploring the Kings Point property in Belleville and are looking to partner with IGD and its Workforce Development program. Mr. Stubblefield is optimistic about the partnership. He noted there is a large demand for career technical education as there are thousands of jobs available that are not being filled.

Mr. Stubblefield informed members a transportation and logistics company located in the St. Clair County portion of Madison, Illinois has reached out. The company moved out of St. Clair County ten years ago however a truck facility remains there. The company has sixty plus employees they are looking to bring back to the area. They are looking to build a \$1.25 million building. Mr. Stubblefield stated he is working with DCEO to partner on the project and noted DCEO has been very responsive.

Mr. Stubblefield stated he has been contacted by a consultant working with a buyer for Paule Recycling in Alorton that is looking to develop the property. He noted there is not an Enterprise Zone in that area. Rick Vernier asked if the property has already been sold. Mr. Stubblefield responded he believed it was sold at auction or this buyer is looking to acquire it at auction and is exploring what incentives exist to develop it.

Mr. Stubblefield stated he is working with a business in Caseyville that is looking to expand. Robert Allen stated they reached out to him a month ago looking for Enterprise Zone information. Mr. Stubblefield responded the business is also looking for energy tax credits through the Enterprise Zone; he is trying to connect them with Ben Denney with the state. Mr. Allen responded he provided them with the Mayor's information as well.

Mr. Stubblefield stated he has an upcoming meeting with the new Director of DCEO, Sylvia Garcia.

Rick Vernier asked if the BTHS #201/Kings Point project was a go. Mr. Stubblefield responded he believed negotiations are complete. Rick Vernier asked if #201 will take over the entire facility. Mr. Stubblefield responded yes; the facility will also open for Adult Education as well. He hopes IGD Workforce Development will have a presence in the facility as the Workforce program has apprenticeship and training funding available; he hopes to tie the programs together and commit funding. Mr. Stubblefield discussed the demand for apprenticeships and noted IGD has two apprentices at Terra Source. He stated an 18-year-old participant made \$60,000 last year; a 19-year-old participant made \$55,000 last year.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Smallheer made the motion to approve the Director's Report and Mr. Vernier made the second. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Airport Director's Report):

Bryan Johnson discussed job force at the airport; the airport and partners face some constraints in hiring; he noted the challenges are seen across trades. Boeing is looking for quality engineers; ATS is looking for more employees as well.

Mr. Johnson stated North Bay Produce is looking to expand. The company is currently working strategically with their shareholders and their board; it is likely a project will be underway within the next year including a 30-40,000 square foot addition to their existing facility. Mr. Johnson stated the expansion would not affect aviation as it will go back towards the road.

Mr. Johnson stated the airport has a Customs and Border Protection facility. The facility allows for the ability to process aircraft both for passenger and cargo in a limited fashion. He explained MidAmerica is not a true port like St. Louis which can process endless numbers of people. MidAmerica is a General Aviation Facility; Mr. Johnson stated that is being looked at because several iterations of standards have changed. He explained basic design of facilities, USDA, or security standards may change, other factors that drive the regulatory environment of CBP also drive change; what worked in 2006 does not work anymore. It is the last facility in the country that does not meet the requirements hence a feasibility study is being done to determine if changes can be made to the existing facility or if the airport needs to build a new one.

Mr. Johnson stated the parking facility has been expanded the past three consecutive years; the lot is up to 1,800 stalls. He is looking at introducing additional technology to capture traffic coming and going more accurately. The airport will begin utilizing card-in, card-out technology in which you slide a credit card when you enter the lot and slide the same credit card on your way out; it will give the exact dollar amount paid. The airport will also use license

plate reader devices; a car's license plate will be read on the way in to the lot, if the ticket is lost, the license plate can be pulled to determine when the car entered the lot. To enhance the customer experience, a canopy is going to be installed over the entrance and exit to the facility.

Mr. Johnson stated the airport currently has an economy parking lot, they are looking to establish a premium lot which will include a solar carport. The carport will cover 300 stalls. The solar carport will save the airport approximately \$100,000 in energy costs each year. The project adds to the airport's sustainability program. The carport will be financed through a power-purchase agreement. Premium parking spots will pay a slight increase in the parking premium. There is no out-of-pocket expense for St. Clair County or the airport itself for the project.

Mr. Johnson stated you can now buy any ticket, anywhere in the country, on any air carrier through the MidAmerica Airport website. A small percentage of the ticket sale comes back to the airport. He expects the sales will bring in approximately \$10-\$15,000 per year. Mr. Johnson stated there is also a free translation service for any language.

Mr. Vernier asked if the 300 additional parking stalls represents a 13% increase in overall stalls. Mr. Johnson responded he was unsure of the exact percentage and explained plans must be thoughtful and realistic regarding rate increases and how that effects occupancy. Mr. Johnson stated the CPA at MidAmerica is currently working to complete a financial analysis.

Mr. Vernier asked if North Bay Produce is expanding toward the roadway. Mr. Johnson provided a map of the area and noted the proposed location. He stated the expansion is a 30,000 square foot increase; they may look to add to that.

There were no further comments or questions.

Mr. Allen made the motion to approve the Director's Report and Mr. Smallheer made the second. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Military Affairs Director Comments):

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

Other Comments:

Robert Trentman asked about the Bobcat interest in land by the airport. Mr. Stubblefield responded Bobcat had gone back and forth with the City of O'Fallon regarding sewer and water line arrangements; Bobcat has since been bought out. Matt Smallheer stated he and County Board member Richie Meile are still working with the City of O'Fallon regarding the Rieder Road area and provided a brief update.

Adjournment:

There were no additional comments or questions from the Committee. Mr. Dinges asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vernier so moved and it was seconded by Mr. Allen. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:29p.m.